

**Remarks by Under-Secretary-General Miguel Ángel Moratinos,  
High Representative for the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations and  
United Nations Special Envoy to Combat Islamophobia, at the  
Second Parliamentary Conference on Interfaith Dialogue: Strengthening Trust  
and Embracing Hope; “Parliamentarians in Dialogue with Religion and Belief:  
Strengthening Trust and Embracing Hope for the Future”**

Italian Chamber of Deputies, Rome – 20 June 2025

The honorable Senator Pier Ferdinando Casini,  
IPU honorary President;

The honorable Dr. Tulia Ackson,  
IPU President;

Distinguished Parliamentarians;  
Distinguished guests;

It is a privilege to be with you today — in this chamber that represents the voice, hopes, and aspirations of people.

I thank Mr. Martin Chugong, Secretary General of IPU for inviting me to your esteemed gathering.

We meet at a moment when the world is facing daunting challenges: from wars and forced displacement, to the rising tide of hate speech, religious intolerance, and polarisation — all of which erode the very fabric of our societies, create fear and fuel violence. And I talk here about all forms of religious bigotry, against all religious communities across the faith spectrum.

As a UN Special Envoy to Combat Islamophobia and UN Focal Point to Monitor Antisemitism, I remain committed to stand up against all manifestations of hatred.

In such times, the act of dialogue — across faiths, beliefs, and ideologies — becomes an act of courage. It becomes a statement of hope. And it reminds us that trust is not given — it is built, conversation by conversation, action by action.

For the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, intercultural and interfaith dialogue in its broader sense has been and continues to be our *raison d'être*. Dialogue is anchored in our motto: Many Cultures, One Humanity.

Dialogue in all its forms continue to be our hope for peace.

When UNAOC was created in 2005, it was in response to a dangerous narrative: that civilizations were on a path of inevitable confrontation. Today, two decades later, we offer a different vision—one grounded in mutual respect, shared values, and the deep belief that our diversity is a source of strength.

Honorable representatives,

As Parliamentarians, you stand at the forefront of this effort. You shape the laws that protect freedom of religion or belief which are fundamental rights rooted in the Universal Human Rights.

You foster the political will to uphold and protect human rights for all.

And you provide an example — through your words and your deeds — that respect for diversity is not a threat to unity, but is rather its foundation.

Today's conference calls us to move beyond mere tolerance, toward genuine mutual respect and understanding.

It asks us not only to hear each other, but to truly listen — and through that listening, to find common ground.

To engage in a meaningful dialogue rather than indulge in monologue.

To build bridges instead of installing walls.

To deconstruct bigotry and the dehumanization of the other.

To embed empathy in our judgement and common sense.

At a time when divisive narratives and dehumanization rhetoric so often dominate our public spaces — and when digital platforms amplify voices of fear and hatred — gatherings like this one send a different message: a message that dialogue can heal, and that a shared future is still within our grasp.

Let us leave this conference with renewed resolve:

To strengthen trust — not only between religions and beliefs, but across political, social, and cultural divides.

To embrace hope — not as a naïve ideal, but as a deliberate choice to work toward a world anchored in dignity, equality, and peace.

Thank you.