



**Second Forum of the UN Alliance of Civilizations
Working Session #7: “Doing Business in a Multicultural World”
Tuesday 7 April 2009
9.00-10.45**

Organized by the Alliance of Civilizations and the UN Global Compact Office

Objectives

This year’s Forum will provide a platform for the launch of “*Doing Business in a Multicultural World*”, a joint publication of the UN Alliance of Civilizations and the UN Global Compact Office. The publication presents the challenges companies are facing as a result of growing cross-cultural tensions and showcases innovative corporate actions to address these challenges - by encouraging tolerance and cooperative intercultural relations.

This working session will bring together senior business, civil society and government representatives to examine the role of the private sector in promoting cross-cultural understanding and explore how all actors in society can more effectively collaborate in this area. Participants will also explore potential collaboration with the UN Alliance of Civilizations with the aim of establishing a network of private sector representatives interested in taking forward these issues.

Questions to Frame the Discussion

1. Why is the issue of cross-cultural understanding relevant to the private sector? How are companies overcoming the key challenges they are confronting in this area? Are there lessons learned that could be useful to others, especially in the context of the current global financial crisis?
2. How do government decisions and political considerations impact companies and their reputations overseas? What are the kinds of approaches companies have used to combat foreign communities’ stereotypes and biases against their countries of origin?
3. What are the specific actions the private sector can take (both individually and/or in collaboration with other stakeholders) to make a contribution to fostering cross-cultural understanding, tolerance and cooperative relations? Can the examples be replicated in other regions of the world?
4. What more can be done by business associations, NGOs, Governments and the United Nations to encourage company initiatives in this area and to help enhance collaboration towards more significant impact?

Format

This interactive session will be jointly moderated by representatives of the UN Alliance of Civilizations and the UN Global Compact Office. This session will not involve a traditional panel discussion. Rather, lead discussants will be called upon by the moderator to make a brief **three-minute intervention** in order to kick-off the discussion on each of the questions outlined above. Lead discussants will consist of senior business executives, civil society leaders and academic experts. Approximately 50-60 participants are expected to attend this session.

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Agenda

9.00-9.05 Opening Remarks by the Moderators

- Mr. Jean-Christophe Bas, Strategic Partnerships Manager, United Nations Alliance of Civilizations Secretariat
- Ms. Melissa Powell, Head, Strategy and Partnerships, United Nations Global Compact Office

Lead discussants will be called upon to make brief **three-minute interventions** to kick-off the group discussion as follows:

9.05-9.30 Discussion Question #1: Why is the issue of cross-cultural understanding relevant to the private sector? How are companies overcoming the key challenges they are confronting in this area? Are there lessons learned that could be useful to others, especially in the context of the current global financial crisis?

Lead Discussants followed by Group Discussion

- Mr. Enrique Iglesias, Secretary-General, Ibero-American Summit and Former President, Inter-American Development Bank
- Mr. Ahmet Bozer, President, Eurasia and Africa Group, the Coca Cola Company
- Dr. Mansour Javidan, Dean of Research and Garvin Distinguished Professor, Thunderbird School of Management
- Mr. Peter Barker-Homek, Chief Executive Officer, Abu Dhabi National Energy Company (TAQA)

9.30-9.50 Discussion Question #2: How do government decisions and political considerations impact companies and their reputations overseas? What are the kinds of approaches companies have used to combat foreign communities’ stereotypes and biases against their countries of origin?

Lead Discussants followed by Group Discussion

- Ms. Ümit Boyner, Vice-President, the Turkish Industrialists' and Businessmen's Association
- Mr. Effenus Henderson, Chief Diversity Officer, Weyerhaeuser
- Ambassador Leonidas Chrysantopoulos, Secretary-General, Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC)

9.50-10.15 Discussion Question #3: What are the specific actions the private sector can take (both individually and/or in collaboration with other stakeholders) to make a contribution to fostering cross-cultural understanding, tolerance and cooperative relations? Can the examples be replicated in other regions of the world?

Lead Discussants followed by Group Discussion

- Dr. Georgette Bennet, President of the Board, Tanenbaum Center for Inter-religious Understanding
- Ms. Ebru Cos, Managing Director, Turkey Office, Manpower
- Mr. Simon-Xavier Guerrand-Hermes, Chairman, Guerrand-Hermes Foundation for Peace
- Mr. Dave Baker, Vice President of Environmental and Social Responsibility and Chief Sustainability Officer, Newmont

10.15-10.40 Discussion Question #4: What more can be done by business associations, NGOs, Governments and the United Nations to encourage company initiatives in this area and to help enhance collaboration towards more significant impact?

Lead Discussants:

- Mr. Nikolas Analytis, Member of TITAN Group CSR Committee, Chair of the Hellenic Global Compact Secretariat and the Hellenic CSR Network Board
- Mr. Hüseyin Gürer, Chief Executive Officer, Deloitte Turkey
- Mr. Ali Faramawy, Vice President, Africa and Middle East Group, Microsoft

10.40-10.45 Closing Remarks