



## **Seminar on "Religious Tolerance, Traditional Conflict Resolution, and Federalism: Contribution of Ethiopia to the Alliance of Civilizations"**

A Seminar on Inter-Community Dialogue and Alliance of Civilizations took place on November 11 and 12, at the UNECA Conference Center. The Seminar was organised by the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia in collaboration with Justice for All and Prison Fellowship Ethiopia, with the support of the Embassy of Spain, Casa África, and the Delegation of the European Union to Ethiopia.

The objective of the Seminar was to take a stock and emphasize the great diversity of Ethiopia from the Cultural and Religious point of view, and the peaceful model of coexistence, as well as to analyze how this model can enrich the UN Initiative of Alliance of Civilizations.

The Seminar counted with a wide variety of participants, including religious leaders and elders from the different Ethiopian regions, as well as some prominent figures such as His Excellency Dr. Fasil Nahum, Special Advisor to the Prime Minister, His Excellency Dr. Shiferaw Teklemariam, Minister of Federal Affairs and Honourable Kassa Teklebirhan, Speaker of House of Federation, who were present at the inaugural session along with His Excellency Xavier Marechal, Ambassador of the EU to Ethiopia, and His Excellency Antonio Sánchez-Benedito, Ambassador of Spain.

During the subsequent sessions, four presentations took place on the following issues:

- Contribution of Ethiopia to the Alliance of Civilisations. During this presentation, Dr. Fasil Nahum, who is the Focal Point of Ethiopia to the Alliance of Civilisations, explained how Ethiopia has been involved in the UN Initiative, and what are the next steps to take.
- Cultural and ethnic diversity in Ethiopia.
- Relation between State and religion in Ethiopia and religious freedom protection mechanisms in the Ethiopian Constitution of 1995.
- Ethiopian Federalism.

All presentations were followed by a fruitful debate during which the participants had the opportunity to raise their questions and reflections with regard to the presented subjects.

The closure of the Seminar was presided by the Special Advisor to the Prime Minister, Dr. Fasil Nahum. During the session, both Ambassadors intervened to underline the success of the Seminar, and the commitment of their respective missions with the fostering of peace and multi-cultural coexistence in the Horn of Africa.

Finally, Mr. Jorge Sampaio, UN High Representative for the Alliance of Civilizations, addressed to the participants by means of a video-conference in which he encouraged the Ethiopian Government to keep on working within the framework of the Alliance of Civilizations, and offered several concrete ideas on how Ethiopia can benefit from this UN Initiative.