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First "Intercultural Innovation Award" at UN's 4th Alliance of Civilizations Forum in Doha

BMW Group and UNAOC honor ten cutting-edge initiatives

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Munich/New York/Doha (ots) - The "BMW Group Award for Intercultural Innovation in cooperation with the Alliance of Civilizations under the auspices of the UN" was bestowed upon ten initiatives from around the world at the fourth UN Alliance of Civilizations Forum on December 12. Jorge Sampaio, High Representative for the Alliance of Civilizations, and Konstanze Carreras, Head of Corporate Social Responsibility at the BMW Group, hosted the gala function for the Award for Intercultural Innovation. UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon congratulated the winners as well during the Forum.

This award represents a new kind of partnership between the private sector and the UN system, aiming to select highly innovative projects that promote dialogue and inter-cultural understanding and to make a vital contribution to safety and peace in societies around the world.

More than 400 proposals from 70 countries were considered for the award. They included projects from emerging countries such as China and Brazil as well as others, such as one from South Sudan, the world's youngest country, and another from the Solomon Islands, the world's smallest country. The award-winning projects cover a wide range of areas, including the role of youth and women in promoting intercultural understanding, immigration, integration, and the use of social media in fostering the collaboration among people from different parts of the world.

The Award for Intercultural Innovation aims to make the work of the awarded projects more impactful by connecting their initiatives to new resources and by helping them expand the scope of their work.

Among the winners of the first "Award for Intercultural Innovation": the project MEJDI of the Center for World Religions, Diplomacy and Conflict Resolution, which is dedicated to promoting peace and understanding in the Middle East, and the Canadian Maytree Foundation with their "DiverseCity onboard" initiative that fosters the empowerment of ethnic minorities in the Greater Toronto Area. The two projects won the first and second prize, respectively. The third prize went to the pan-European project CafeBabel.com, which convinced experts with its "Europe on the Ground" initiative, an intercultural journalism project.

Besides the three main winners, seven further projects were honored with the "Intercultural Innovation Award" in Doha, Qatar - among them the Brazilian Vaga Lume Association, the Italian "Chirom e... chino" project, the Middle Eastern radio project "All for Peace Radio (AFP)", the German initiative "Kickfair" as well as the educational project "Irenia" which focuses on the Mediterranean countries, the global "Universal Subtitles" concept run by the Participatory Culture Foundation and the Canadian "Youth Empowering Parents (YEP)" program. In addition to offering prize money, the UNAOC and the BMW Group are committed to help these projects expand and replicate in other settings where they may be useful. Winners will become members of the WIFI, the World Intercultural Facility for Innovation. WIFI is a platform for winners to connect with potential donors and mentors and to enter into a dialogue with other award-winners. Under the coordination of the WIFI team, they will participate in conferences and workshops; they will be connected to policy-makers and foundations; and they will become active members of the WIFI community of practical experts who help each other in achieving their particular goals.

This year's winners of the Intercultural Innovation Award are:

- All for Peace Radio Station www.allforpeace.org
- CafeBabel www.cafebabel.com
- Center for World Religions, Diplomacy and Conflict Resolution - MEJDI www.crdcgm.wordpress.com
- Chirom e. Chino chiromechino.blogspot.com
- Irènia, Jocs de Pau www.irenia.net
- Kickfair www.kickfair.org

- Maytree Foundation www.maytree.com
- Participatory Culture Foundation www.pculture.org
- Vaga Lume Association www.vagalume.com.br
- Youth Empowering Parents www.yepeducation.com

For further information, please visit: <http://Interculturalinnovation.org>

Picture material is available under www.press.bmwgroup.com.

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