I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union.

The Candidate Countries Turkey, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, Montenegro*, Serbia* and Albania*, the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as Ukraine, and Georgia, align themselves with this statement.

Mr. President

Let me at the outset express our deep appreciation for the leadership of Spain and Turkey as co-sponsors of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations as well as the excellent work conducted as main sponsors of this resolution that the General Assembly has just adopted.

In the last year, we have witnessed a dramatic increase in radicalization and violent extremism. The adoption of this resolution comes in a time where the UN, its Member States and the international community—more than ever—need to step up efforts in promoting greater understanding and respect among civilizations, cultures, religions and beliefs, based on the human rights of all persons and the prevalence of the universal values at the heart of this organization.

* The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.
The task of the Alliance in its four pillars of activity, namely, youth, education, media and migration; as well as in promoting the values of conflict prevention, mediation and reconciliation is paramount to address the current challenges that we are facing.

The resolution stresses the role of the Group of Friends and Focal Points. We encourage the High Representative to have a continuous dialogue with both the Group of Friends and Focal Points on strategic priorities as well as concrete activities, thus ensuring the necessary ownership of the governments and partners supporting the Alliance.

We want also to acknowledge the work of UNESCO and the UN Secretariat in this area as well as other initiatives, among them the Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for Dialogue Between Cultures and the King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz International Centre for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue. We encourage the Alliance to benefit from the synergies and complementarity of all actors working in its remit.

Mr President,

The consensual adoption of this resolution is a clear sign of the importance that Member States attach to the role of the Alliance and provides the necessary political guidance to pursue its important work.