

## Dr. Nabil AlSharif Closing Remarks

Good afternoon Dear friends and colleagues, Heads of Networks of the Anna Lindh Foundation,

I want to begin by **thanking you** all for making the time and for participating to our annual meeting during these trying times. I have been following closely the proceedings of the sessions, and, on our part as Secretariat I believe that all the discussions that took place brought us closer to the **common goal of working closely and efficiently together to strengthen and sustain our Network of Networks.**

Our virtual meeting gains on more significance and importance as it takes place in the aftermath of the celebration of **25 years of the Barcelona Process.** Your exchanges, your voice, your ideas; the projects and initiatives from your **National Networks** are all manifestations of the commitment of the **ALF family, Secretariat and Networks** to the process and to putting such an important document to action.

Let us all be reminded that our meeting also coincided with a **global health crisis** that is unknown to our modern world and which has proven to have devastating economic and social impacts. As horrible a reality as it is, the **Covid-19 pandemic** serves as a harsh wake up call to us all of the need to revisit our vulnerabilities; to put our strategies to the test to make sure that our unique stance as a Network of Networks withstands all the challenges that the Covid-19 has posed, locally and regionally. Our meeting these past few days proves to be the embodiment of such withstanding. As our convention comes to a close today, one conclusion is crystal clear; our **coordinated tangible action** as a **Network of Networks** is the only way the ALF can respond to the crisis.

We are a unique family of more than **4,000 members** and as such everything we do stems from this uniqueness. On the 28<sup>th</sup> of November we commemorated the **Barcelona Process** in the only way the Anna Lindh Foundation can celebrate such a day in its own history and memory; we published the Anna Lindh Foundation **15-year Review** where we consolidate and engrave in memory to posterity the main achievements of the ALF with its National Networks and partners since its inauguration. The Review accounts for the many programmes and initiatives that

ALF carried out in partnership with thousands of its members and how its networks have always been and continue to be part of its programmes.

Over the course of the past few days we have come together, **Secretariat and Networks** to start a **process of discussions** that **will sustain beyond the time frame of this meeting**. We have concretely discussed together **strategic orientations** for the next programming phase of the ALF, as our programming has to be informed by the Networks, for the Networks.

We have also, for the first time in many years, revisited core **Strategic Documents** such as the proposed revisions of the **Networks Guidelines** and took up a good practice from the past to create a **Strategy** for the **Networks**. The exercises that we undertook to brainstorm and assess these frameworks, the tireless efforts on the part of the Networks Team, the assessments and late emails on your part all show a dedication to the purpose. The continuous agreements and agreements, to my view, are what is needed as **through dialogue we overcome misunderstandings and miscommunication** and come closer to being a collective force that is only stronger because of its innate **diversity**.

Dear colleagues, I hope you all found the meeting as enlightening and as enriching as I did and I look forward to our many exchanges and meetings that will stem from everything that we discussed together these days. The **future** looks brighter from where I stand today.

Thank you.