Excerpts: The rationale and vision behind the Global Centre for Pluralism (GCP) established in Ottawa, Canada

"My interest in launching the Global Centre for Pluralism reflected my sense that there was yet no institution dedicated to the question of diversity in our world, and that Canada’s national experience made it a natural home for this venture."

His Highness the Aga Khan’s 2010 10th Annual LaFontaine-Baldwin Lecture, Institute for Canadian Citizenship (Toronto, Canada)
http://www.nanowisdoms.org/nwblog/9601/

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"I think Canada is a country that has invested in making this potential liability [of pluralism] become an asset, and I think that Canada has been perhaps too humble in its own appreciation of this global asset. It’s a global asset. And few countries, if any have been as successful as Canada has. Bumpy though the road is, and, as I said earlier, it’s always going to be an ongoing task."

His Highness the Aga Khan’s 2006 CBC Interview (3rd) with Peter Mansbridge (Ottawa, Canada)
http://www.nanowisdoms.org/nwblog/7959/

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"The effective world of the future will be one of pluralism, a world that understands, appreciates and builds on diversity. The rejection of pluralism plays a significant role in breeding destructive conflicts, from
which no continent has been spared in recent decades. But pluralist societies are not accidents of history. They are a product of enlightened education and continuous investment by governments and all of civil society in recognising and celebrating the diversity of the world’s peoples. What is being done to support this key value for society and for democracy in Asia and Africa, to preempt catastrophe, rather than simply respond to it?

"The Aga Khan Development Network intends to help create some permanent institutional capacity to address this critical issue through a Global Centre for Pluralism. It will be based in Ottawa to draw from Canada’s successful record in constructing and sustaining pluralist civil society. The centre will work closely with governments and with academia and civil society around the world. The centre will seek to foster legislation and policy to strengthen developing countries’ capacity for enhancing pluralism in all spheres of modern life: including law, justice, the arts, the media, financial services, health and education. I believe leadership everywhere must continuously work to ensure that pluralism, and all its benefits, become top global priorities."

His Highness the Aga Khan’s 2005 Keynote Address to the Nobel Institute’s Seminar: ‘Democratic Development, Pluralism and Civil Society’ (Oslo, Norway) http://www.nanowisdoms.org/nwblog/7255/

"Our hope and expectation is that the Global Centre for Pluralism will become a vital force in our world for research, learning and dialogue, engaging Canadians from all walks of life, and joining hands with a widening array of partners.

"I am grateful that the Government of Canada has contributed so generously to its material and intellectual resources. Making available the Old War Museum is a particularly generous and symbolic gesture. Let us replace war with peace. Our own commitment is to invest in this building so that it becomes a worthy testament to Canada’s global leadership in the cause of pluralism.

"Those who talk about an inevitable ‘clash of civilisations’ can point today
to an accumulating array of symptoms which sometimes seems to reflect their diagnosis. I believe, however, that this diagnosis is wrong -- that its symptoms are more dramatic than they are representative -- and that these symptoms are rooted in human ignorance rather than human character.

"The problem of ignorance is a problem that can be addressed. Perhaps it can even be ameliorated, but only if we go to work on our educational tasks with sustained energy, creativity and intelligence. That is why we felt the Global Centre for Pluralism was needed. That is why the Global Centre for Pluralism exists today. And that is why the Global Centre for Pluralism holds such enormous promise for all of our tomorrows."

His Highness the Aga Khan’s remarks at the 2006 Funding Agreement for the Global Centre for Pluralism Signing Ceremony (Ottawa, Canada)
http://www.nanowisdoms.org/nwblog/7929/

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