

May 13<sup>th</sup> 2013

M. Jimmy DEENIHAN  
Minister of Arts, Heritage and the Gaetacht

Dear Minister,

Following the European Council's go-ahead to open discussions with the United States for a Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership, the European Commission has adopted a draft negotiation mandate with the United States for a Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership. The discussion regarding this mandate is taking place within the Council of the European Union, and the European Parliament will be consulted.

The work on this mandate is being undertaken with a sense of urgency that must not overshadow the importance of some crucial issues ; it is our duty to call your attention to the impact on the future of European cultural diversity in Europe and in the world, and of the sustainability of European cinematographic and audiovisual industry.

While the European Union and its Member States have made cultural diversity one of the foundations of the European construction and for years have been taking action to promote this objective, the negotiations being launched with the United States should not compromise our individual and collective efforts to uphold this shared commitment. This is why it is crucial for the European Union's position to be reasserted and fully maintained. The European Union has always excluded audiovisual services from any liberalisation commitment within the World Trade Organisation or as part of bilateral negotiations. Until now, the European Union has always been able to garner acceptance of its position from its partners. Moreover, the EU fully demonstrated its commitment to this position when, in 2005, like nearly all UNESCO Member States, it endorsed the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions.

The power of the United States' audiovisual industry worldwide makes of this sector one of that country's priorities in all trade negotiations. Subsequently, the European position to exclude audiovisual services from such negotiations must be clearly expressed from the outset, and shall not be limited to traditional broadcasting, but fully extended to the digital environment.

An entire policy of the European Union and its Member States would be compromised if the requested exclusion were not ensured. Indeed, the European Union has succeeded in developing a tremendous base of legislation over the last quarter century through the audiovisual media directive, the MEDIA programme and, soon, the Creative Europe programme. More generally, our very ability to define and enforce legislations and regulations coping with technological and economic developments is at stake.

We firmly believe that, given the enormous challenges facing Europe, the European Union needs to support and develop cultural creativity on its own territory. Giving up on ambitious, culture-promoting policies, particularly those pertaining to cinema and audiovisual media, would mean renouncing a part of Europe's cultural influence, depriving ourselves of a strong lever for

growth and employment, and turning a blind eye to this reality that is clearly shared by our citizens: culture is not just another commodity.

We thank you for your consideration and actions regarding this crucial issue.

Yours faithfully,

Monsieur Bernd NEUMANN,

Ministre adjoint auprès de la Chancelière de la République fédérale d'Allemagne et délégué du gouvernement à la culture et aux médias



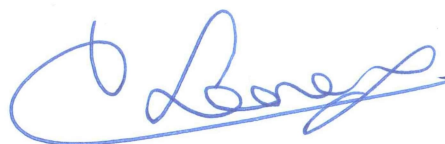
Madame Claudia SCHMIED,

Ministre de l'Enseignement, des Arts et de la Culture de la République d'Autriche



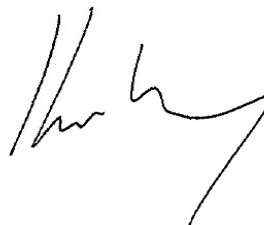
Madame Fadila LAANAN,

Ministre de la Culture, de l'Audiovisuel, de la Santé et de l'Égalité des Chances de la Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles de Belgique



Madame Ingrid LIETEN,

Ministre flamande de l'Innovation, des Investissements publics, des Médias et de la Lutte contre la Pauvreté



Madame Joke SCHAUVLIEGE,

Ministre flamande de l'Environnement, de la Nature et de la Culture



Madame Isabelle WEYKMANS,

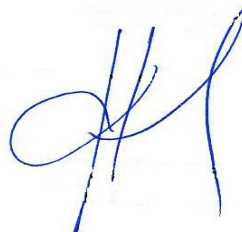
Ministre de la Culture, des Médias et du Tourisme de la Communauté germanophone de Belgique



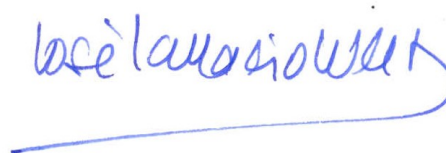
Monsieur Vladimir PENEV,  
Ministre de la culture de la République de  
Bulgarie



Monsieur Kyriakos KENEVEZOS,  
Ministre de l'Éducation et de la Culture de la  
République de Chypre



Monsieur José Ignacio WERT ORTEGA,  
Ministre de la Culture, de l'Éducation et du  
Sport du Royaume d'Espagne



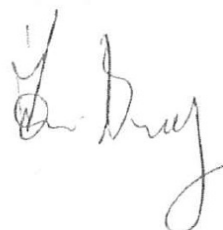
Madame Aurélie FILIPPETTI,  
Ministre de la Culture et de la  
Communication de la République française



Monsieur Zoltán BALOG,  
Ministre des Ressources humaines de Hongrie



Monsieur Massimo BRAY,  
Ministre des Biens et des activités culturels  
de la République d'Italie



Monsieur Bogdan ZDROJEWSKI

Ministre de la Culture et du Patrimoine  
national de la République de Pologne



Monsieur Jorge BARRETO XAVIER,

Secrétaire d'État à la Culture de la République  
du Portugal



Monsieur Daniel BARBU,

Ministre de la Culture et des Cultes de la  
République de Roumanie



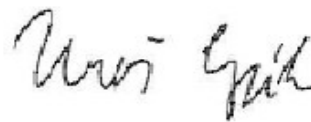
Monsieur Marek MAĎARIČ,

Ministre de la culture de la République de  
Slovaquie



Monsieur Uroš GRILC,

Ministre de la culture de la République de  
Slovénie



Copy :

Ms Neelie Kroes, Vice President of the European Commission responsible for the Digital Agenda for Europe

Ms Androulla Vassiliou, Commissioner for Education, Culture, Multilingualism and Youth, of the European Commission.

Mr Karel De Gucht, Commissioner for Trade at the European Commission.

Mrs. Doris Pack, Chairwoman of the Culture and Education Committee of the European Parliament.

Mr Vital Moreira, Chairman of the International Trade Committee of the European Parliament.