

We are building today the cultural diversity of tomorrow

Press release

17/06/2013

**EXCLUSION OF THE AUDIOVISUAL FROM THE TRANSATLANTIC NEGOTIATING MANDATE
THE EUROPEAN COALITIONS FOR CULTURAL DIVERSITY WELCOME THIS SUCCESS
AND URGE THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION TO RESPECT THE STATES' DECISION**

The European Coalitions for cultural diversity congratulate EU Member States for their decision on June 14th to exclude audiovisual services from the negotiating mandate of the Free Trade Agreement between Europe and the United States.

The Coalitions would like to express their thanks to governments and Heads of States, to national parliaments and to the European Parliament who have, with great determination, endeavoured to win this victory for cultural diversity and sovereignty. They are grateful to all personalities, **creators** and artists who have mobilized themselves all over the continent to say NO to a Europe which would no longer support its culture and would abandon its identity and values to pure commercial interests only.

In this context, the Coalitions are shocked to hear Commissioner De Gucht when he declares that he is ready and willing to open discussions on audiovisual matters with the Americans if they wish to do so. They strongly encourage him to fully respect the mandate that the Member States, which have complete democratic legitimacy, have given him and which formally exclude audiovisual matters from the mandate. Should he wish to still discuss this, he will have to come back again in front of the European Council of ministers to obtain their authorization. Which is precisely what they denied him on June 14th.

Moreover, the Coalitions are scandalized by the President of the European Commission, José Manuel Barroso's statement this morning, calling those who support cultural diversity "reactionaries" and people "who do not understand the benefits globalization of exchanges represent". They invite him to fully respect European democracy, of which Member States and the European Parliament are repositories, even when these institutions do not share his ideas. A great political leader should never depart from such fundamental constitutional obligations.

Such a statement, coupled with declarations from Commissioner De Gucht, are totally without precedent, from an unelected EU Commission, effectively repudiating their mandate to abide by the vote of the Council of Ministers and to have due regard and respect for an overwhelmingly vote of the European Parliament.

After this victory for cultural diversity, the European Coalitions urge the European Commission not to try and circumvent this democratic decision and to fully commit to it. This will mean to put an end to any suspicion that they are constantly bringing about EU cultural policies adopted by EU Member States.

Press contact France:

Agnès Mazet – 01 40 23 45 11 – agnes.mazet@sacd.fr

Press contact International :

Audrey Boisseau - +33 (0) 1 40 23 47 92 – audrey.boisseau@sacd.fr
www.coalitionfrancaise.org