



**Declaration of the European Ministers responsible for Culture, Audiovisual and Media,
meeting in Angers on 7 and 8 March 2022**

Recalling the conclusions of the European Council of 24 February 2022, which *'condemns in the strongest possible terms the Russian Federation's unprovoked and unjustified military aggression against Ukraine', 'demands that Russia immediately ceases its military actions' and 'reiterates its unwavering support for the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognised borders'*;

Recalling the rules of international law applicable and the principles of the UN Charter in the event of armed conflict, which guarantee the protection of the lives and physical integrity of civilians, including that of journalists;

Stressing that democratic values, including freedom of creation, cultural diversity, freedom of expression, freedom to impart and receive information, media freedom and pluralism, the movement of artists and cultural professionals as well as the protection of cultural heritage, are universal values;

Recalling the Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the event of Armed Conflict which was adopted in 1954 under the auspices of UNESCO;

Expressing their attachment to the rich cultural heritage of Ukraine and underlining, as done by the United Nations Security Council in its Resolution 2347(2017), *'that unlawful destruction of cultural heritage, and the looting and smuggling of cultural property in the event of armed conflicts (...) and the attempt to deny historical roots and cultural diversity in this context can fuel and exacerbate conflict and hamper post-conflict national reconciliation'* and that *'attacks against sites and buildings dedicated to religion, education, art, science or charitable purposes, or historic monuments may constitute, under certain circumstances and pursuant to international law a war crime and that the perpetrators of such attacks must be brought to justice'*, and recalling their decision to refer the situation in Ukraine to the International Criminal Court under Article 14(1) of the Rome Statute with a view to expediting an investigation by the ICC Prosecutor;

Recalling the importance of art, culture and cultural cooperation for promoting peace, dialogue, respect, tolerance and mutual understanding among peoples, fostering cultural diversity, upholding human rights and respecting fundamental freedoms;

The European Ministers responsible of Culture, Audiovisual and Media meeting in Angers on 7 and 8 March:

Expressed their solidarity with Ukraine and its people, and their fight for freedom, sovereignty and independence;

Highlighted their support for Ukrainian artists, journalists, and cultural and media professionals, and expressed their readiness to assist them together with their international partners;

Committed themselves in particular to exchanging, combining their efforts and sharing best practices in order to stand in solidarity with and welcome Ukrainian artists, journalists and cultural and media professionals, and assess ways forward regarding cultural cooperation;

Expressed their commitment to supporting institutions willing to host Ukrainian artists, journalists and cultural and media professionals, in order to allow them to continue their activity and thus preserve their freedom of creation and expression;

Expressed their support for all media and journalists who are striving to cover the ongoing military aggression against Ukraine in an independent and impartial manner, and stressed the need for guaranteeing their physical protection;

Reaffirmed their commitment to freedom of expression and information, media freedom and pluralism and denounced the ongoing information manipulation and disinformation campaigns that citizens affected by this military aggression should be protected from;

Expressed their strong concerns regarding Ukraine's cultural heritage, the dangers and damages it faces and affirmed their willingness to support its preservation, in collaboration with the relevant international organisations and partners;

Reaffirmed their support for the use of any available European programme and framework relevant in the fields of culture, audiovisual and media, and in particular Creative Europe, for artists, journalists, and cultural and media professionals that are affected by the military aggression against Ukraine and its consequences.