

# ***European Coalitions for Cultural Diversity***

*(Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Portugal, Spain, Slovakia, UK)*

## **Final declaration**

The representatives of the European Coalitions for Cultural Diversity from Belgium, France Germany, Hungary, Slovakia, Switzerland and United Kingdom, gathered on the 5<sup>th</sup> May in Paris, adopted the following final declaration:

Reiterating that the European Community and the 27 Member States, except Belgium, Netherlands and Czech Republic have ratified the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, which creates an autonomous forum for cultural cooperation and policies, outside of trade negotiations;

Reiterating the European Union's long-standing position of categorically excluding audiovisual goods and services from international trade agreements, which applies not only to multilateral trade negotiations in WTO but to bilateral trade negotiations as well;

The European Coalitions for Cultural Diversity expressed their strong opposition to the current European Commission' strategy to systematically incorporate into bilateral trade negotiations Cultural Cooperation Protocols which include market access measures for audiovisual co-produced works.

This unilateral strategy of the European Commission, which confiscates Member States' competency in the field of culture, takes culture back into trade negotiations. It gives EC trade negotiators an additional sector to trade off in a global negotiation, without taking into account the specific requirements of the cultural and audiovisual sectors.

After the 2007 Cariforum Economic Partnership Agreement and the current negotiation of a Free Trade Agreement with Korea, the European Commission is now planning to incorporate a Cultural Cooperation Protocol into the Economic Agreement to be negotiated with Canada, whereas neither the EU nor Canada need such an agreement to enter into discussions on cultural cooperation, as they both benefit from a most favoured nation exemption for cultural cooperation in WTO.

The European Coalitions for Cultural Diversity urge the Commission to stop systematically incorporate Cultural Cooperation Protocols into international trade agreements and to launch a long-term strategic reflection on the EU international cultural cooperation policy in the frame of the implementation of the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, involving the Member States and the civil society.

Paris, May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2009

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