

Press statement: 12:00 Tuesday 18 May 2004

EUROPEAN FILM AGENCIES

COMMON DECLARATION FOR SUPPORT FOR AUDIOVISUAL AT A EUROPEAN-WIDE LEVEL

CANNES - 18 May 2004. The directors of the national European Film Agencies have issued the following statement.

"The national film agencies of the European Union countries are dedicated to supporting and strengthening Europe's audiovisual industries and through them the richness and diversity of European cultures. We would, therefore, view with concern any proposal which would diminish commitment and resource at a European level that supports policies aimed at a competitive and diverse audiovisual sector in Europe.

"The European Film Agency directors are unanimous in their request for the inclusion in the new European budget from 2007, for a budget line for audiovisual. The budget line must recognise both the economic and cultural imperatives of audiovisual policy: these are inextricable. The European Union, through the MEDIA Programme, has a particular contribution to make to the building of the audiovisual industries and cultures of the ten new member states and the funding resource must be sufficient to discharge this responsibility. We see such a budget line and the programmes it supports as vital to the achievement of the policy objectives of member states. This assumes, of course, that these programmes are complementary and synchronised with national initiatives to support audiovisual creation and culture.

"We call on Europe's cultural ministers who are meeting in Cannes today, to ensure that the commitment to support audiovisual is recognised by the negotiators of the European budget and by the Commission as they prepare their budget proposals for the European Council in June."

The European Film Agency directors network comprises:

Osterreichisches Filminstitut (Austria)
Centre de Cinema et de l'Audiovisuel (Belgium)
Vlaams Audiovisueel Fonds (Belgium)
Czech Film Chamber
Danish Film Institute
Estonian Film Foundation
Finnish Film Foundation
Centre Nationale de la Cinematographie (France)
Filmforderungsansalt (Germany)
Greek Film Centre

Irish Film Board
Ministero per i beni culturale - Direzione generale per il cinema (Italy)
Maltese Film Commission
National Film Centre (Latvia)
Film Fund Luxembourg
Nederlands Fonds vd Film (Netherlands)
Instituto do Cinema Audiovisual e Multimedia (Portugal)
Slovenian Film Fund
Instituto de la Cinematografia y de las Artes Audiovisuales (Spain)
Swedish Film Institute
UK Film Council

and national representatives for film in Cyprus, Hungary, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia.