



Conseil International du Cinéma, de la Télévision et de la  
Communication Audiovisuelle (CICT)

International Council for Film, Television and Audiovisual  
Communication (ICFT)

partenaire officiel de l'UNESCO  
official partner of UNESCO

## FINAL DECLARATION

### XXVI EUROMEDITERRANEAN CONFERENCE ON CINEMA

*“Mobile cinema: a new koiné for young Euromediterraneans to foster peace and tolerance”*

6th September 2024, La Villa, Venezia Lido

81st International Venice Film Festival

The participants to the **26th Euromediterranean Conference on Cinema** *“Mobile cinema: a new koiné for young Euromediterraneans to foster peace and tolerance”*, held on 6th September 2024 at La Villa, Venice Lido during the 81st International Venice Film Festival,

**H.E. Alberto Barachini**, *Undersecretary of State, Presidency of the Council of Ministers, Italy;* **Magdalena Landry**, *Director, Regional Bureau for Science and Culture in Europe with special focus on South-East Europe and the Mediterranean basin UNESCO, Venice, Poland;* **Niccolò Rinaldi**, *Head of Unit Asia, Australia and New Zealand, European Parliament;* **Toussaint Tiendrebeogo**, *Secretary of the 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, UNESCO, France;* **Hossam Badrawi**, *Chairman, Nile Badrawi, Foundation for Education & Development, Egypt;* **Brando Benifei**, *Member, European Parliament, Italy;* **Giacomo Mazzone**, *Secretary General, EUROVISIONI, Italy;* **Elisabetta Noli**, *Administrative Director, Global Campus of Human Rights, Italy;* **Kujtim Çashku**, *Director, Akademia e Filmit dhe Multimedias Marubi, Albania;* **Paola Parri**, *Deputy Secretary-General, COPEAM, Italy;* **Ana Opacic**, *Director, Ohrid Beach Film Festival, North Macedonia;* **Serge Michel**, *Vice-President, CICT-ICFT at UNESCO, UNICA, France;* **Orr Sigoli**, *Artistic Director, Jerusalem Film Festival, Israel;* **Ahmed Bedjaoui**, *Artistic Director, International Film Festival of Algiers, Algeria;* **Alessandro Mandelli**, *Founder & CEO, Serially, Italy;* **Rizwan Ahmad**, *Director, Instructional Media Centre, MANUU, India;* **Jasmina Bojic**, *Founder and President, UNAFF Travelling Film Festival, Stanford University, USA;* **Ahmet Boyacioglu**, *Artistic Director, Festival on Wheels, Chairman, Ankara Cinema Association, Turkey.*

#### *Thanking*

The *Conseil International du Cinéma, de la Télévision et de la Communication Audiovisuelle* for the continuous implementation of the mission entrusted in 1928 by the League of Nations to its precursor, the *Institute of Educational Cinema*, then re-confirmed in 1956 as an Umbrella Organization at UNESCO that has organized the Conference since 1995;

*and*

*OCCAM – Observatory for Cultural and Audiovisual Communication in the Mediterranean and in the World*, created by UNESCO in 1995 and in Consultative Status with the UN Economic and Social Council since 2005 for the support provided for the organization of the Conference and its realization.

convene on the following

## VENICE DECLARATION 2024

*to revitalize the Mediterranean cultural cooperation on the eve of the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Barcelona Process.*

1. Acknowledging its relevance, the **UNESCO Mediterranean Programme** (that established numerous institutions and initiatives coordinating and merging cultural policies in the various artistic fields within the Mediterranean basin) **shall be renewed and relaunched in digital format**, empowered by AI applications to encompass and provide e-services supporting development and dialogue across regions and between generations to foster an integration process inspired by peace and tolerance.
2. Lamenting the European Union's shift in focus to the Eastern expansion after the Berlin Wall's fall, which led to the neglect of the Southern populations with now evident consequences, **hope is stored in the willingness of the new Commission to implement decisive support policies** to bridge the dramatic existing gap, which is a primary source of migration. This would provide equal opportunities and encourage the creation of more integrated, democratic, and prosperous societies. The announced creation of a specific portfolio for the Mediterranean Cooperation within the new European Commission would be an appropriate first step in this direction, and the CICT UNESCO will immediately contact the Commissioner-designate to bring to his attention the conclusions of this meeting.
3. **Trust is placed in the Italian Government's commitment to promote initiatives aimed at revitalizing a shared Mediterranean spirit in the Region and abroad** towards the development of coastal and underserved populations, highlighting culture and cinema as key drivers for renewing an interrupted dialogue that must necessarily be restored in synergy with UNESCO, with the various initiatives launched all along these years (many of which have their HQs in Italy) and with civil society. All instances born from the Barcelona process, that are currently operating in separate clusters – such as UpM, OCCAM, Anna Lindh Foundation, COPEAM, UNIMED, Three Cultures Foundation, Med network of cinema schools, and the Euromed Parliamentary Assembly among others – need to work together in a joint strategy to bring back Mediterranean cooperation at the core of the common political agenda.
4. Celebrating the advent of the mobile cinema or *m-cinema* – a by-product of the digital era that has revolutionized the industry all across the world – and its capacity to democratize the field by amplifying young professionals' creativity, **the creation of a digital platform "Multaq" is encouraged** as a meeting place where people can come together to share ideas, engage in cooperation dialogues and build a shared vision of peace and tolerance in view of an integration process of values and actions for a better future.
5. **Film Festivals are called upon unification to relaunch the International Council of Mediterranean Cinematic Manifestations (MCM)** with the inclusion of new actors, talents, expressions, and instances also created by m-cinema, as does La Biennale through the promotion of Collateral Awards during the Festival, whose inclusion of the *Enrico Fulchignoni Award* promoted by CICT ICFT with the conferral of the *Fellini Medal* we appreciate. A virtual *Med Festival*, derived from the selection of the winners of various international events, could represent a good start towards the ambitious digital platform to foster intergenerational dialogue and collaboration across the Mediterranean, shaping a peaceful and tolerant future for the region.

## **The participants appeal to**

- **UNESCO**, represented by the *Director of Regional Bureau for Science and Culture in Europe with special focus on South-East Europe and the Mediterranean basin* **Magdalena Landry**, and the *Secretary of the 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions* **Toussaint Tiendrebeogo**, to relaunch the UNESCO Mediterranean Programme in digital format to gather existing and new institutions and players to join forces toward convergent actions and a comprehensive policy framework. This could be one of the qualifying points for the future UNESCO strategy to be discussed at the next General Conference 2025 and could be relaunched on the occasion of the MONDIALCULT 2025 conference in Barcelona next year. CICT ICFT is ready to work with UNESCO's Cultural Sector towards this end.
- The **European Parliament** and its members, represented by MEP **Brando Benifei**, and the *Head of Unit* **Niccolò Rinaldi**, to relaunch the Barcelona Agreement as well as operative reflections with adequate institutional, political, and financial support to create *ad hoc* programs adopting a new holistic approach capable of overcoming the dramatic existing situation encompassing migration, global welfare and support to underserved regions. The rapid approval at the EP of the new statute of the artists, in order to guarantee real freedom of circulation across the shores of the Mediterranean Basin, would be a primary goal.  
A first step in this direction could be the implementation of funding for the South/North pluriennial cooperation in the cultural field, and the revitalization of projects such as the common EU-Med television channel and the establishment of EU Universities in the Southern Mediterranean countries, following the successful examples of the United States universities established in Lebanon, Egypt and elsewhere. North-South university networks need also to be supported and improved, building on successful examples such as the Global Campus on Human Rights established in Venice.
- The **Italian Government**, represented by *H.E. Undersecretary of State* **Alberto Barachini**, and the Mediterranean governments, to promote and support the suggestions emerged at the European level and at UNESCO, assuming the leadership of a coral and convergent action involving all interested parties. In this context, CICT ICFT supports its proposal "Italian Cinema as Expression of Human Values", aimed at promoting high-quality Italian and international cinematography of high cultural value within the UN system, and welcomes the idea of an Erasmus programme dedicated to journalists from both sides of the Mediterranean, as a tool for exchanging knowledge and overcoming prejudices and misunderstandings.
- All **stakeholders**, represented by NGOs, foundations and companies, to build a Mediterranean digital platform to gather film festivals, professionals and representatives, towards a convergence of activities for the Mediterranean and the global community.
- **Public and private institutions** to join in these efforts and generously support these actions.

**and give a mandate to the *Conseil International du Cinéma et de la Télévision* CICT ICFT to establish an *ad hoc* working group to implement the emerging tasks and encourage a transition inspired by peace and tolerance.**

*These proposals reflect the remarks expressed during the event:*

**Magdalena Landry**, *Director, Regional Bureau for Science and Culture in Europe with special focus on South-East Europe and the Mediterranean basin UNESCO, Venice, Poland*

confirming how culture is central to the UNESCO Mandate as a tool to foster intercultural dialogue, reconciliation, and sustainable development, with a particular focus on South-East Europe and the Mediterranean. Cinema is also regarded as advancing peace, tolerance, and creativity, particularly through digital innovation. However, warnings are presented concerning the vulnerability of culture to misuse, making UNESCO's efforts to safeguard it crucial for a secure, equitable future.

**H.E. Alberto Barachini**, *Undersecretary of State, Presidency of the Council of Ministers, Italy*, emphasizing the role of cinema as a cultural bridge, fostering shared understanding and cooperation, particularly within the Euromediterranean region. It highlights the challenges the region faces, such as security, migration, and environmental issues, it being a stretch of water that continues to be a critical crossing point for commercial, digital flows, and energy supplies, and stresses the need for a united, forward-looking strategy to address them. Greater cultural exchanges (i.e. of students, journalists, and professionals) shall be encouraged through cinema and education programs as key tools for promoting empathy, collaboration, and positive societal change, particularly between Europe and Africa.

**Toussaint Tiendrebeogo**, *Chief of the Diversity of Expressions Entity, UNESCO Culture Sector, France* reiterating how peace requires persistent efforts from every part of our societies, including cinema which is a crucial tool in fostering peace, tolerance, and mutual understanding while also bridging digital divides in a rapidly changing and interconnected world. Digital technologies and AI offer relevant opportunities for cultural exchange but nevertheless pose challenges to cultural diversity that call for UNESCO to ensure a fair and global dialogue on culture as a public good. The upcoming MONDIALCULT 2025 conference is a concrete example.

**Hossam Badrawi**, *Chairman, Nile Badrawi Foundation for Education & Development, Egypt* affirming how the Mediterranean constitutes a meeting place of knowledge, civilizations, and cultures, uniquely gathered by a controversial duality between conflict and collaboration. Current challenges require the creativity and innovation of youth to create a new language and a common cultural and linguistic framework that transcends national boundaries. The proposal to gather all these instances in a virtual digital platform, "Multaq", to foster intergenerational dialogue and collaboration across the Mediterranean, shaping a peaceful and tolerant future for the region, emerged.

**Niccolò Rinaldi**, *Head of Unit Asia, Australia and New Zealand, European Parliament* also by comparing the relations between Europe and Asia and the ones with the Southern Mediterranean countries, highlighting the challenges that still persist between the two shores of the Mediterranean with respect to the movement of people, trade, cultural and professional exchanges, infrastructure, and academic collaboration due also to stringent institutional barriers. However, there is hope in the emerging younger generation and digital platforms that can foster stronger connections across the Mediterranean if supported by adequate investments across fields.

**Brando Benifei**, *Member, European Parliament, Italy* acknowledging the urgency of a holistic approach encompassing institutional, economic, political, and social efforts for culture to become the vehicle of understanding, solidarity, and unity. The European Union must prioritize cultural exchanges in its financial framework, playing its role as a soft power and building bridges across the Mediterranean. In the coming years, it's crucial to push for more cooperation, focus on education and creativity, and involve international organizations like the UN and OECD.

**Giacomo Mazzone**, *Secretary General, EUROVISIONI, Italy*

presenting the missed opportunity of viewing migration as a *process of dialogue* in a context of collaboration and cooperation rather than what it is now, namely a contentious issue, reflecting broader failures in collaboration and cultural exchange. Following the Barcelona Agreements, although past efforts like the Anna Lindh Foundation and the Union pour la Méditerranée laid important groundwork, political shifts and neglect have stymied progress. It is now necessary to redefine and unite the institutional and cultural framework at the European Union and global level to better support collaborative solutions and access between countries.

**Pierpaolo Saporito**, *President a.I., Conseil International du Cinéma et de la Télévision CICT ICFT*

highlighting how the Barcelona Agreements by the European Union and the Mediterranean Programme by UNESCO revitalized all communities, giving rise to countless initiatives and stimulating a climate of dialogue and peace, laments that the subsequent abandonment caused a serious fracture, with coexistence breaking down and people suffering. Now, younger generations with new shared communication systems (e.g., *m-cinema*), could rebuild a new '*koine*', reforming cultures into a global community, but only if international institutions reactivate effective programs to counter the tragedy of floating immigration.

**Noli Elisabetta**, *Administrative and Human Resources Director, Global Campus of Human Rights*

showcasing the efforts carried out by the network of academic institutions at a global level to stress the importance of education and training programs on human rights and democracy.

**Kujtim Çashku**, *Director, Akademia e Filmit dhe Multimedias Marubi, Albania*

highlighting how our perception of reality and communication are changing at breakneck speed, influenced by fleeting moments and constant digital stimuli. The cinema, although a powerful tool for changing perceptions, struggles to keep balance with these changes. The magic darkness of movie theaters must be preserved and protected as a heritage of art humanity and as an asset with reflective cultural values. For this to happen, it is crucial to adopt larger scales of extensive policies, that take into consideration the reality of the dynamics of digital communication. We need to use the systems of education and diversification to the new forms of communication, focusing on the younger generations.

**Paola Parri**, *Deputy Secretary-General, COPEAM, Italy*

urging the relaunch of the UNESCO Mediterranean Programme with joint initiatives that could inspire a vibrant cultural community in the Region and abroad despite the challenges lying ahead. Through support to cross-national media projects, original content and new young professionals and talents shall be recognized and validated towards the protection of original and authentic content and heritage, the promotion of media literacy and collaborations among public and private sectors.

**Ana Opacic**, *Director, Ohrid Beach Film Festival, North Macedonia*

celebrating the unique stories of young talents while also forging connections across generations in places where history and creativity intertwine, even where cinemas and theaters do not exist. In this context, educational, mentoring and training programs for the youngest generations are therefore pivotal to transferring knowledge on diversity, accessibility, regional and international cultures and traditions.

**Serge Michel**, *Vice-President, CICT ICFT at UNESCO, UNICA, France*

supporting the role of new forms of communication in uniting people and missions. While challenges persist, especially between Northern and Southern Mediterranean countries, ongoing initiatives and festivals aim to strengthen these connections with the support of digital innovations towards improved dialogue and cooperation.

**Orr Sigoli**, *Artistic Director, Jerusalem Film Festival, Israel*

calling for cross-border collaborations within the Mediterranean basin, fostering new pathways also promoted by Film Festivals to strengthen mutual partnerships and enhance inter-regional connections.

**Ahmed Bedjaoui**, *Artistic Director, International Film Festival of Algiers, Algeria*

stating how the gap between the Mediterranean shores has widened, thus making a united and active framework of policies for co-production and distribution pivotal harnessing the immense talent and innovation on the southern shore to bring artists and audiences closer together.

**Alessandro Mandelli**, *Founder & CEO, Serially, Italy*

pointing to how accessibility is a crucial requirement to bridge the digital divide and unite people while also promoting peace and tolerance through the diffusion of culture and the overcoming of language barriers. Also, as content lengths shrink and younger audiences emerge, investing in short films can help transfer knowledge and foster global communication.

**Jasmina Bojic**, *Founder and President, UNAFF Travelling Film Festival, Stanford University, USA*

underscoring her commitment to peace and human rights, inspiring new generations through education programs and training toward the adoption of policies that encompass shared humanity as a key source of enrichment and knowledge.

**Rizwan Ahmad**, *Director, Instructional Media Centre, MANUU, India*

attesting to the *democratization of cinema* through the emergence of mobile cinema making it easier for professionals to share their work globally through online platforms and OTT services. Mobile cinema is reshaping film aesthetics and expanding opportunities for young filmmakers worldwide, while also validating original content and preserving local cultural heritage.

**Ahmet Boyacioglu**, *Artistic Director, Festival on Wheels; Chairman, Ankara Cinema Association, Turkey*

outlining how visibility of young talents and their works remain a challenge in the industry. A potential solution would be to bypass traditional distribution hurdles and connect directly with filmmakers, thus broadening cultural exchanges, and offering audiences across the Mediterranean a chance to experience stories that might otherwise remain unseen. An online UNESCO Mediterranean Film Festival could gather such efforts and present to the world worthy instances.