



FERA

PRESS RELEASE

EU FILM DIRECTORS VOICE CONCERNS OVER TRADE TALKS

FERA, the Federation of European Film Directors, welcomes EC Culture Commissioner Androulla Vassiliou's stance on the framework for forthcoming EU-US trade talks, and in particular her assurances that **"Trade liberalization will not weaken those policies and measures at EU level, or in the Member States, which safeguard and promote cultural diversity, notably in terms of film and television programming"** (23/2/2013).

However, since the cultural exception is not, apparently, going to be applied in the talks, which is most regrettable, FERA calls on **Trade Commissioner Karel de Gucht** and **Internal Market Commissioner Michel Barnier**, to explicitly confirm the assurances offered by Commissioner Vassiliou.

Given the well known US hostility to European support schemes for film, FERA further asks the Commissioners to confirm now that their negotiating position will adhere to the **2005 UNESCO Convention on the Diversity of Cultural Expression**, formally adopted by the EU, a legally binding international agreement that supports the right of Member States to exclude cultural goods and services from international trade agreements.

We further ask the Commissioners to undertake, when negotiations start, to stand firmly by the **Lisbon Treaty**, which enshrines cultural diversity at the heart of all European cultural policy. As culture in the EU operates under the principle of Subsidiarity it would presumably not be legal to make concessions that prejudice cultural aid schemes in the audiovisual sector.

Signed on behalf of European film and television directors by

Sir Alan Parker President of FERA

And Members of FERA Creative Council

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FERA - Founded in 1980, the **Federation of European Film Directors** contains 37 directors' associations from 29 countries. It speaks for approximately 20,000 European screen directors, representing their cultural, creative and economic interests at the national and European level.
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