

**BELGRADE DECLARATION
OF THE MINISTERS IN CHARGE OF CULTURE OF THE MEMBER STATES
OF THE ORGANIZATION OF THE BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION**

Belgrade, 23 November 2018

We, the Ministers in charge of Culture and Heads of Delegations of the Member States of the *Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation* (BSEC), having met in Belgrade, on 23 November 2018,

Recalling all the Statements and Declarations adopted up to now by the Ministers in charge of Culture of the BSEC Member States, and **taking note** of the activities of the BSEC Working Group on Culture carried out since its inception,

Reaffirming the commitment of the Member States of the BSEC to strengthen the cultural cooperation among themselves and continue to promote a model of cultural cooperation, based on mutual understanding and respect,

Acknowledging cultural diplomacy as an important soft power tool that builds bridges among peoples and cultural exchanges as an instrument for addressing challenges of globalization, promoting respect for cultural diversity and fostering mutual understanding,

Underlining the importance of following new trends in international culture relations which pave new ways for new partnerships and strengthen the cooperation and develop synergies with the BSEC Related Bodies, *inter alia*, the International Centre for Black Sea Studies (ICBSS), international, including regional organizations and initiatives as well as with non-governmental organizations and private sector which offer additional value to the cooperation,

Recognizing cultural heritage as an important resource of the region and taking note of multi-country nominations and inscriptions for the safeguarding of tangible and intangible cultural heritage through UNESCO and the Council of Europe normative tools and programmes, such as the Cultural Routes initiative,

Stressing the importance of joint projects in the field of culture in the BSEC Region,

Taking into consideration that inter-sectorial culture related activities and projects can play an important role in promoting mutual respect and global values in general,

Keeping in mind the importance of promotion of linguistic diversity, literature and books for mutual understanding, and encouraging translations of writers and participation in international book fairs of the BSEC Member States,

Encouraging creativity through the support of the mobility of artists and professionals in the field of cultural and creative industries and taking into account the importance of innovations and digital technologies for boosting local and national economies,

Have agreed to:

Instruct the BSEC Working Group on Culture to implement the provisions of this Declaration and translate them into action in line with its Action Plans.

We express our gratitude to the Ministry of Culture and Media of the Republic of Serbia for the coordination of the BSEC Working Group on Culture and for the organization of this Meeting.