Minister
of Canadian Heritage

Ministre
du Patrimoine canadien

Ottawa, Canada K1A 0M5

November 25, 2022

Subject: Activities involving the participation of Russian or Belarusian state organizations or their official representatives

To recipients of grants and contributions funding:

On February 24, 2022, Russian armed forces launched an unprovoked and unjustifiable invasion of Ukraine. This was done with the support of the Belarusian regime.

In response to Russia's egregious actions, the Government of Canada has implemented sweeping sanctions in coordination with like-minded partners and is examining all of its activities and holdings. These actions reflect the broad international support for the people of Ukraine.

In this context, the Department of Canadian Heritage is undertaking a review to identify activities involving the governments of Russia and Belarus, their state organizations, and officials, as part of the Government's ongoing response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

We urge you to do the same, and to suspend all activity involving the participation of Russian or Belarusian state organizations or their official representatives. This includes program partnerships, direct and indirect financing of tours, co-productions, participation in festivals or other events involving the Russian or Belarusian governments.

As you are a current recipient of the Department's grants and contributions funding, we ask that you please review and assess your current programming and engagement with Russian and Belarusian state partners. If there are activities involving the governments of these two countries or their officials, please suspend them until further notice. You should contact your program officer to discuss if you have questions or concerns.

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Canadian organizations that are found to be working with the Russian or Belarusian state organizations, officials, or partners, will not receive funding from the Department. Moreover, funded recipients who want to work with Russian or Belarussian artists would have to ensure that the artists in question are not affiliated with the Russian or Belarusian state.

Canadian citizens and permanent residents of Canada, including those of Russian and Belarusian heritage, continue to be eligible for Canadian Heritage's grants and contributions programs. This is not about unfairly targeting law-abiding and peace-loving citizens and permanent residents, nor is it about attacking Russian or Belarusian culture or artists, creators and performers. Collaboration with partners unaffiliated with the governments of Russia and Belarus, their state organizations, and officials can however continue.

The Government of Canada is committed to working with our international partners to support the brave and resilient people of Ukraine in every way possible.

We thank you for your attention to this most important matter.

Please accept my best wishes.

Sincerely,

The Honourable Pablo Rodriguez, P.C., M.P.