



Dear Colleagues,

Thank you very much for this opportunity to discuss the very urgent matter of supporting Ukrainian culture at war. We are very fast approaching towards a year since the invasion started. Since the very beginning, the Support Center for Culture in Ukraine, established at the National Institute of Cultural Heritage, is the operational core of the team working for support to Ukrainian cultural sector. The center coordinates both domestic and foreign initiatives to save Ukraine's cultural resources, carries out educational activities and information campaigns about Ukrainian cultural heritage, especially about its losses caused by war atrocities. We cooperate with national cultural institutions, museums, state archives and libraries. We also support all kinds of cultural institutions.

As early as 10 March, the first shipment of protective materials from the National Museum in Poznań arrived in Lviv. The Center was officially established on 1 st April, 2022. Since then, the Center - in cooperation with cultural institutions from all over the country and government agencies, as well as foreign partners - has delivered more than 800 pallets of aid containing materials for the preservation of archives, monuments, and museum collections, to more than 111 Ukrainian cultural institutions. The Center has so far effectively delivered transports to 8 cities: Kharkiv, Chernihiv, Dniepro, Kamieniec Podolski, Kiev, Kotelwa, Lviv, Olbia and Vinnitsa. In cooperation with local partners, the aid was effectively distributed to local institutions. These deliveries included, among others: generators, crates, fire blankets, mineral wool, OSB boards, polyester pipes, fire extinguishers, and sandbags. On site, the National Institute of Polish Cultural Heritage Abroad POLONIKA has secured 230 historical sites and scanned dozens more, including the Wooden Tserkvas on the UNESCO World Heritage List.

So far, the value of material support sent to cultural institutions in Ukraine has amounted to over **one million euros. Another million earmarked for heritage**

**digitizing projects.** Those funds are provided by the Minister of Culture and National Heritage of the Republic of Poland.

Our Support Center operates within the National Institute of Cultural Heritage and to our knowledge, it is the only formalized entity providing systemic and permanent help to Ukrainian institutions. I would like to thank you for giving us the opportunity to share with you this part of our activity, as it has been one of the most important challenges we have been facing in recent years. Based on our historic experiences, we have expert knowledge on emergency safeguarding, reconstruction, or restitution. We support our Ukrainian colleagues with this knowledge, especially on the basis of the Warsaw Recommendation (24 November 2022, online workshop, cooperation with World Heritage Centre UNESCO). However, the scale of current destruction in Ukraine is appalling and we believe it requires attention from heritage experts worldwide. We support Ukrainian colleagues on the international arena. Recent decision of the World Heritage Committee to inscribe the Historic Centre of Odesa (Ukraine) on the World Heritage List is a proof that protection of the outstanding universal value of the site is the duty of all humanity. We also recall the inscription of the culture of Ukrainian borscht cooking on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding in summer of 2022. Sadly, the war is still ongoing. The continuity of Ukraine's culture depends on us and on our refusal to become indifferent.

In the past 10 months, we have engaged in numerous activities. Most recently, in cooperation with UNESCO, we organized dedicated training for various type of public security services, to prevent the risk of illicit trafficking of cultural goods through Polish-Ukrainian border (January 2023). In August, the Polish Support Center for Culture in Ukraine organized an expert training session on 3D scanning of architectural objects entitled "Modern Technologies for the Inventory of Architectural Monuments. A coherent system of collecting, processing and presenting digital data as a basis for conservation activities in war-threatened areas". We understand also that heritage preservation is not limited to technologies and material substance. Safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage, which is a prime carrier of the

nation's identity and traditions, is an important part of activities supporting our neighbouring country.

Poland overnight became a host country for an estimated 3.4 million refugees. In June, we published a Special report on intangible cultural heritage of displaced Ukrainian communities – the perspective of Poland. The report was created at lightning speed - the research was conducted in May, while the outcomes were published already in the first week of June. We were faced with enormous challenge and thanks to the effective cooperation of state and self-government institutions, NGOs and the civil society, we have been capable of assessing the situation in Poland through dialogue with the communities on their cultural practice and existing needs. The report allowed us to provide adequate assistance and conditions for continued practice of intangible cultural heritage in many identified cases. Furthermore, together with the Polish Committee for UNESCO, the Center has organized support for refugee children from Ukraine. Inciting curiosity and openness through sharing of both cultures was a clear objective to the experts of intangible cultural heritage who united their forces with specialists in education. Even before the end of the school year lesson scenarios and accompanying materials were provided to Polish students in order to familiarize them with Ukrainian culture. In the scenarios the role of intangible heritage has been emphasised, including the knowledge on items entered onto the Representative List.

For some time now, in cooperation with the Ministry of Culture and Information Policy of Ukraine, we have been implementing a project to inventory the war damages to the immovable and archaeological heritage in Ukraine.

This type of Inventory of cultural losses has two important objectives: to document them as diligently as possible for the sake of future reconstruction and recovery, as well as to collect appropriate evidence allowing prosecutors to bring the perpetrators to justice in front of the appropriate tribunals in the future

Last but not least, in the past months we worked hard on a dedicated report on the impact of the war on Ukraine's culture as well as on a movie on the intentional destruction of Ukrainian identity. We will soon send out this report in a pdf version

and while we are awaiting the English-language version of the movie, we are very much open to cooperation from our international partners to raise awareness and strengthen our solidarity with fighting Ukrainians. Thank you very much for your attention.