Memorandum of Understanding

setting out the modalities of establishing

the Northern Dimension Partnership on Culture

The European Commission, Ministries responsible for culture of the Kingdom of Norway, the Russian Federation, the Kingdom of Denmark, the Republic of Estonia, the Republic of Finland, the Federal Republic of Germany, the Republic of Iceland, the Republic of Latvia, the Republic of Lithuania, the Republic of Poland and the Kingdom of Sweden

hereinafter jointly referred to as the "Partners of the Partnership" or "Partners",

REPRESENTED by the Ministers responsible for culture, and a representative of the European Commission

RECALLING the decision by the Northern Dimension Senior Officials at their meeting in Stockholm on 12 November 2009 to establish a Northern Dimension Partnership on Culture,

FOLLOWING the provisions of the Northern Dimension Policy Framework Document, effective as of 1 January 2007,

STRESSING the usefulness of a focal point for exchange of information and best practices in the field of culture and for facilitating a dialogue between cultural actors and the business community,

RECOGNISING that the present document is an expression of political intent, not amounting to legally binding obligations on the part of the Partners,

SIGN the following Memorandum of Understanding setting out the intended modalities of establishing the Northern Dimension Partnership on Culture.

1. AIMS

1. The overall objective of the Partnership is to serve as a focal point for networks, projects and other cultural activities in the Northern Dimension area. This includes i.a.,

- Providing a platform for exchange of best practices, dialogue and meetings with stakeholders representing government (national, regional, local) and the private sector as well as different sectors of cultural life (state and non-state);

- Facilitating a dialogue between cultural actors and the business community in order to seek areas of mutually beneficial cooperation and the development of the creative economy;

- Promoting cooperation in the field of culture between The Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS), the Barents Euro-Arctic Council (BEAC), the Arctic Council (AC) and the Nordic Council of Ministers (NCM) with a view to fostering synergies and avoiding overlap;

- Providing a point of information allowing relevant actors to keep each other continuously informed of their plans and activities.

2. With the aim of promoting interaction between cultural actors and the business community, the Partnership will strive to facilitate i.a.,:

- Presentations of Northern Dimension cultural products and services to international audiences at festivals, exhibitions and other cultural events;

- Presentations of Northern Dimension cultural events for internal and global markets;

- Efforts to develop tailor-made cultural tourism in the Northern Dimension region, including targeted market studies;

- Cultural activities with a focus on people-to-people contacts;

- Initiatives to strengthen capacity-building in the field of marketing and entrepreneurship for artists, cultural institutions and operators.

3. A specific aim of the Partnership is to facilitate assessment of the financial viability of projects and access to sources of financing, including public-private funding for collaborating projects.

2. ACTION PLAN

To meet the aims, as set in Point 1, the Steering Committee should develop an Action Plan to be approved by the High Level Meeting, covering (1) measures to support the role of the Partnership as a focal point, (2) a limited

number of priority projects focusing on activities promoting cooperation between cultural actors and the cultural and creative industries and (3) measures to underpin the capacity of the Partnership to facilitate access to project financing.

3. EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION

The Partners will endeavour to make the information relevant to the successful operation of the Partnership available to each other on an ongoing basis including *i.a.* information on

- government programmes and strategies on culture and cultural and creative industries;
- regional and local programmes and strategies on culture and cultural and creative industries, when available and relevant;
- major cultural and creative industry events;
- sources of funding which could potentially be used to contribute to the financing of activities in line with the aims of the Partnership as set out in this Memorandum of Understanding;
- sources of funding for the development of cultural and creative industries.

4. COOPERATION FRAMEWORK

1. To meet the aims set out in Point 1, the Partners will envisage a structure comprising a three level institutional set-up:

- High Level Meetings to take strategic decisions in the framework of the Partnership, and to give political impetus, strategic orientation and direction to the Partnership. The High Level Meetings may take place at the level of Ministers responsible for Culture when necessary and/or when useful deliverables can be put on the table. The Chair of the High Level Meetings will rotate among the Partners in an order and for a period to be agreed.

- A Steering Committee to co-ordinate the joint work under this Memorandum of Understanding, and to follow and monitor the implementation of the Action Plan, and review the general functioning of the Partnership and the Memorandum of Understanding. The Steering Committee will decide on its rules of procedure and may decide to set up ad hoc working groups.

- A small Secretariat may be established upon a decision of the High Level Meeting.

2. Pending decisions on arrangements of a more permanent nature, the Partners envisage that the budget of the Secretariat may be covered by voluntary contributions.

3. Concerning the strategic direction the Partners of the Partnership should be guided by the principles of the Northern Dimension, as set out in the Northern Dimension Political Declaration, which are "good neighbourliness, equal partnership, common responsibility and transparency".

4. Decisions in the Partnership should be taken on the basis of consensus.

5. ROLE OF FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

1. Taking into account the role of the International Financial Institutions in contributing to the implementation of projects and measures, the Nordic Investment Bank, the European Investment Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the World Bank, as well as other relevant Financial Institutions, may be invited to take part in the meetings of the Partnership as Observers on an *ad hoc* basis.

2. The aim of the participation of the Financial Institutions is in particular to facilitate access to funding through *i.a.*:

- exchange of information on specific projects with a view to their financing,
- dissemination of criteria for assessing the viability of projects, and
- clarification, establishment and dissemination of best practice on project preparation and financing, including also PPPs, to ensure bankability.

6. COOPERATION WITH REGIONAL BODIES

1. Underlining the importance of the four Regional Councils as Participants of the Northern Dimension policy and welcoming the actions already undertaken by them, the Partnership will encourage a dialogue and contacts with them and other bodies active in the Northern Dimension area to foster synergies and to avoid overlap of activities.

2. The Regional Councils and other regional organisations may be invited to take part in the meetings of the Partnership as Observers on an *ad hoc* basis.

7. EXTENSION OF THE PARTNERSHIP

Upon a request of a third country, the High Level Meeting may accept that country as an Observer or as Partner of the Partnership.

8. GENERAL PROVISIONS

1. Co-operation in the context of this Memorandum of Understanding is based on a voluntary commitment and should continue in principle until the objectives of the initiative have been achieved. Where any of the Partners so requests, this Memorandum of Understanding can be reviewed and may be amended on the basis of a proposal submitted to the High Level Meeting by the Steering Committee.

2. This Memorandum of Understanding is intended to run for a period of five years, which may be extended by common understanding.

3. This Memorandum of Understanding does not contain, and is not intended to contain, legal obligations.

4. This Memorandum of Understanding will come into operation on the date of its signature.

Done at Saint Petersburg, on 20th day of May 2010 in one copy in the English language.

For the European Commission

For the Ministry of Culture of the Kingdom of Norway

For the Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation

For the Ministry Culture of the Kingdom of Denmark

For the Ministry Culture of the Republic of Estonia

For the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Finland

For the Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media of the Federal Republic of Germany

For the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture of the Republic of Iceland

For the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Latvia

For the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Lithuania

For the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage of the Republic of Poland

For the Ministry of Culture of the Kingdom of Sweden