

Athens declaration of the European Cultural Parliament

Pnyka, September 2010

The 9th assembly of the European Cultural Parliament, that was inaugurated on the 16th of September 2010 by the Speaker of the Hellenic Parliament, Philippos Petsalnikos, and the Mayor of Athens, Nikitas Kaklamanis, declares that

Culture and the arts potentially constitute a bridge within and between European countries inside and outside the European Union. In Europe's creative diversity of peoples they inspire a basis of common values.

In a period of crisis of finances and values culture and the arts actively shape new thinking that contributes to new solutions. They should inspire new futures built on the basis of Greek and European historic legacy.

The strength of its culture and arts may distinguish Europe from other important actors in the world.

Given the importance of young people for Europe's future, culture and the arts should be given stronger emphasis in education and in cultural projects and networks for the young.

European capitals of culture (ECoC) must be appreciated for their creation of cultural richness and the networking of cultural actors. The European Cultural Parliament offers its expertise for the improvement of ECoC, one of the most effective cultural projects of the European Union, born in Athens 25 years ago.

The creative sector and the arts are a strong economic factor, create inspiration in education and contribute quality of life to society. Therefore culture and the arts should be protected especially in times of financial hardship.

We thus appeal to the decision makers in Europe to assign equal importance to the cultural agenda as to other political agendas like the environment and sustainable development.