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## **Day for Cultural Diversity: EU Commission, “at the heart of the challenges we face”. Making culture accessible to all**

“Europe is unthinkable without its cultural richness, and our societies are all the more vibrant because of it”. The High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Josep Borrell, and Commissioners Mariya Gabriel and Jutta Urpilainen said this in a joint statement issued today on the eve of the World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development (21 May). In it, they emphasised that the EU “is committed to preserving and promoting culture, and making it accessible to all”, and that it also strives to “promote mutual understanding among cultures, including as part of reconciliation and integration efforts, and to ensure that fundamental freedoms and human rights are upheld”. While we celebrate the International Year of the Creative Economy for Sustainable Development, we are mindful that artists and the creative economy have been among those hit hardest by the pandemic and thus “deserve special attention and our support”. “Culture is at the heart of the challenges we face globally”, even with regard to the transition towards a green and digital economy, in that we need “cultural changes” and openness to these changes. Many European initiatives may contribute to this end: “Team Europe”, Creative Europe, Erasmus+, the European Capitals of Culture, investments in cultural and creative industries, and the initiative for a New European Bauhaus. “As we open up our societies”, the statement ends, “we look forward to experiencing once again the full cultural heritage that Europe, and the world, have to offer”.

Valentina Bombelli