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Vladimir Putin's Russia should not be allowed to the Venice Biennale

Written declaration No. 835

This written declaration does not reflect the position of the Assembly; only of those members that have signed it. It will not be considered further by the Assembly.

We, the undersigned, declare the following:

We strongly condemn the decision by the Fondazione La Biennale di Venezia to allow Russia to reopen its national pavilion at the 61st International Art Exhibition in 2026.

The Council of Europe was founded on the values of democracy, human rights, and the rule of law. Culture must serve these values – not provide legitimacy to a State conducting an illegal war of aggression against Ukraine.

We note that this decision has been framed as a defence of artistic freedom. We reject that framing. If genuine support for Russian artistic expression were the goal, the Biennale would give voice to the hundreds of Russian artists, filmmakers, and writers currently imprisoned by the Russian State for opposing this war. They represent the authentic culture of a free Russia.

Unlike the European Union, the Council of Europe does not hold financial leverage over the Biennale Foundation. But we speak with clear moral authority: this decision is incompatible with the democratic values that cultural institutions of international standing are obligated to uphold. We call on the Fondazione Biennale to reverse this decision.

Signed (see overleaf)



Signed¹:

BULAI Iulian, Romania, ALDE
AHEDO Nerea, Spain, ALDE
ALCOBÉ Meritxell, Andorra, ALDE
ARPA Claudia, Austria, SOC
BALDURSDÓTTIR Kolbrún Áslaugar, Iceland, SOC
BATENKO Taras, Ukraine, ECPA
BILOZIR Larysa, Ukraine, ALDE
BINDER-KELLER Marianne, Switzerland, EPP/CD
BODNAR Adam, Poland, EPP/CD
BONNEAU François, France, ALDE
BRICO Christophe, Monaco, EPP/CD
CAMAJ Nikolla, Montenegro, ALDE
CARVALHO Ricardo, Portugal, EPP/CD
CEPURĪTIS Edmunds, Latvia, SOC
COFFEY Thérèse, United Kingdom, ECPA
COMA Bernadeta, Andorra, ALDE
DALLE Benjamin, Belgium, EPP/CD
DAVIDOVICI Natalia, Republic of Moldova, EPP/CD
FERČIKOVÁ KONEČNÁ Irena, Czechia, SOC
FRESKO-ROLFO Béatrice, Monaco, ALDE
FRYSZTAK Konrad, Poland, EPP/CD
GALLES Paul, Luxembourg, EPP/CD
GEDVILAS Martynas, Lithuania, SOC
GETHINS Stephen, United Kingdom
GONCHARENKO Oleksii, Ukraine, ECPA
GÖTHBERG Gustaf, Sweden, EPP/CD
GRYFFROY Andries, Belgium, ALDE
HEINRICH Gabriela, Germany, SOC
HORGA Maria-Gabriela, Romania, EPP/CD
JABŁOŃSKI Paweł, Poland, ECPA
JASKULSKI Patryk, Poland, EPP/CD
JENSEN Mogens, Denmark, SOC
KALCHENKO Serhii, Ukraine, ECPA
KALNIŅA-LUKAŠEVICA Zanda, Latvia, EPP/CD
KAMELCHUK Yuriy, Ukraine, EPP/CD
KEARNS Alicia, United Kingdom, ECPA
KERN Claude, France, ALDE
KHOMENKO Olena, Ukraine, ECPA
KJOKU Bekim, North Macedonia, SOC
KONSTANKEVYCH Iryna, Ukraine, ECPA
KOSTADINOVSKA-STOJCHEVSKA Bisera, North Macedonia, SOC
KRAVCHUK Yevheniia, Ukraine, ALDE
KROSS Eerik-Niiles, Estonia, ALDE
LEYTE Carmen, Spain, EPP/CD
LUCKS Max, Germany, SOC
MacCLEARY James, United Kingdom, ALDE
MEREZHKO Oleksandr, Ukraine, ALDE
MEZENTSEVA-FEDORENKO Mariia, Ukraine, EPP/CD
MOONEN Carla, Netherlands, ALDE
MOREL Louise, France, ALDE
MOSHENETS Olena, Ukraine, ALDE
MURARIU Oana, Romania, ALDE
NICULESCU-ȚĂGĂRLAȘ Cristian-Augustin, Romania, EPP/CD
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1. ALDE: Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
ECPA: European Conservatives, Patriots and Affiliates
EPP/CD: Group of the European People's Party
SOC: Socialists, Democrats and Greens Group

PAVIĆ Marko, Croatia, EPP/CD
PLAVÁKOVÁ Lucia, Slovak Republic, ALDE
POMASKA Agnieszka, Poland, EPP/CD
PULJAK Marijana, Croatia, ALDE
ROBLES Gonzalo, Spain, EPP/CD
SOBOLIEV Serhii, Ukraine, EPP/CD
SPĂTARU Elena-Simona, Romania, ALDE
STAMATIS Georgios, Greece, EPP/CD
TALI Kadri, Estonia, ALDE
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VOKSHI Albana, Albania, EPP/CD
WIECHEL Markus, Sweden, ECPA
YASKO Yelyzaveta, Ukraine, EPP/CD
ZABURANNA Lesia, Ukraine, ALDE

Total = 72