

Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine

12/2 Hrushevsky Str.,
01008, Kyiv
UKRAINE

Brussels, 21 June 2023

Dear Sirs and Madams,

We are writing as the Executive Committee of the International Federation of Film Archives (FIAF). It has been brought to our attention that the Ukrainian Government is currently examining a 'Strategy of cinema development' conceived by the Ukrainian State Film Agency, and we are concerned that this document, which seems to have been elaborated without consultation with expert professionals, national or international institutions, is likely to have a very negative impact on the Oleksandr Dovzhenko National Centre, its missions and collections.

The Dovzhenko Centre – Ukraine's de facto national film archive – has been an active and highly-respected member of our global network since 2003. As the true and internationally recognized custodian of Ukraine's rich film heritage, it has gone a long way towards preserving this unique heritage in the best possible conditions, and giving it the visibility it deserves. Since the invasion of Ukraine by Russia in February 2022, the Dovzhenko Centre has received significant moral and financial support from FIAF and many of its 173 affiliated archives around the world, all recognizing the great fragility of this eminent institution and its collections in this dramatic context.

Any attack on the integrity of the Dovzhenko Centre's collections and activities seriously threatens Ukraine's unique moving image heritage, may deprive future generations of Ukrainians of connecting with their artistic and cultural past, and will also diminish Ukraine's cultural influence on the international stage. At a time when Ukraine is fighting perhaps more than ever for its own identity, the probable impact of this strategy on Oleksandr Dovzhenko Centre can only undermine the country's national interests.

Like all other film archives of our global network, the Oleksandr Dovzhenko National Centre can only fulfil its core missions of collecting, safeguarding, and making accessible its country's film heritage to the highest international standards if it is allowed to operate in a stable and supportive environment – even more so in times of war.

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We therefore call upon the Government and the various relevant official bodies to provide full support for the Oleksandr Dovzhenko National Centre and challenge any measures that could jeopardize its existence, as the Centre plays an essential role in safeguarding and promoting Ukraine's film heritage, which is an integral part of the world's cultural heritage.

Meanwhile, we (FIAF) pledge to continue to support the Oleksandr Dovzhenko National Centre in every way we can at this most difficult time for our Ukrainian colleagues, and to help guarantee the safety of the rich national moving image collections in its care, by lending some of the great expertise available in our international network.

Yours faithfully,

FIAF's Executive Committee

