



**EUROPEAN COMMISSION**

**MEMO**

Brussels, 17 September 2012

**President Barroso shares his views on culture and the future of Europe with European artists and intellectuals from the cultural world**

President Barroso shares his views on culture and the future of Europe with European artists and intellectuals from the cultural world. Three main concerns were discussed: the impact of the financial crisis on European citizenship and the notion of European identity, what artists can do for Europe, and what Europe can do for artists.

"My vision of culture is not culture as an instrument. As science, culture is a way for people's fulfillment," declared the President of the European Commission, José Manuel Barroso, during an exchange of views with a selected panel of highly renown artists and intellectuals from the cultural world as well as Commissioner for Education and Culture Androulla Vassiliou on 17 September 2012. Insisting on the need to create emotional connections with Europe and its citizens, the President suggested that the mutual benefits generated by the relation between culture, the arts and Europe should be better communicated to citizens.

This dialogue between the world of culture and politics sought to explore how culture contributes to the European project and how Europe can better support culture. With participants representing all artistic disciplines, from visual arts to cinema, literature, performing arts, classical and popular music or also science, the meeting provided an inspiring moment to address – through cultural lenses - global challenges such as the European crisis and the growing Euroscepticism of citizens, including among young people.

The roundtable provided a clear and concrete reaction to the recent call sent by President Barroso in his State of the Union 2012 address to cultural people in Europe to 'take part to the debate on the future of Europe'.

Artists and intellectuals present warmly welcomed the President's proposal to organize an Agora on Culture to continue in 2013 and beyond the debate with a higher visibility and a stronger emphasis on civil society.

President said at the end of the meeting "Let's do something formidable. Let's create platforms to communicate where women and men from culture debate Europe and where we all engage with citizens in a serious conversation about the future of Europe.

**List of participants - representatives from the cultural world:**

Jorge BARRETO XAVIER - Professor, Public Policies on Culture (PT)

Joana CARNEIRO - Conductor (PT)

Emmanuel DEMARCY-MOTA - Playwright, Director of the Théâtre de la Ville (FR)

Paul DUJARDIN - Artistic director of Bozar (BE)

Birgitta ENGLIN - Theatre Director (SE)

Jan FABRE - Visual artist, theatre artist, author (BE)

Rose FENTON - Arts producer, advisor (UK)

Bernard FOCCROULLE - Composer, organist, opera director (BE)

Rosie GOLDSMITH - Writer, reporter, TV presenter (UK)

Vasco GRAÇA MOURA - Writer, poet, President of Centro Cultural de Belém (PT)

Claudie HAIGNERÉ - President of Universcience (FR)

Péter INKEI - Director, The Budapest Observatory (HU)

György KONRÁD - Writer (HU)

Geert MAK - Writer, journalist, historian (NL)

Mary McCARTHY - Director of The National Sculpture Factory (IR)

Radu MIHAILEANU - Filmmaker, playwright (RO)

Michelangelo PISTOLETTO - Painter, action and object artist, art theorist (IT)

Pere PORTABELLA - Filmmaker, producer (ES)

Jordi SAVALL - Musician, conductor, composer (ES)

Luc TUYMANS - Painter (BE)

Bjorn ULVAEUS - Songwriter, composer, musician, writer, producer, singer (SE)

**For more information:**

[http://ec.europa.eu/bepa/expertise/meetings/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/bepa/expertise/meetings/index_en.htm)