

Speech Delivered at the Fourth Ministerial Forum on Cultural Cooperation between PR China and Central and Eastern European Countries

Montenegro

Dear Minister Shugang,

And Ministers of Central and East European countries, directors general and state secretaries,

Colleagues and delegates,

It is with great pleasure and gratitude to our hosts from the Republic of Northern Macedonia that today we attend the Forth Culture Cooperation Forum between the People's Republic of China and Central and East European countries.

I take this opportunity to emphasize the importance of the cooperation between Montenegro and People's Republic of China that has been preserved for years in various fields such as economy, tourism and culture.

In terms of conserving traditional values, culture and identity, the experiences of contemporary Chinese cultural politics is a valuable example of a balanced and interactive binding between heritage and modernity. In this regard, as a separate segment of the strategy of preserving identity and cultural authenticity, there are challenges to finding balanced practices in the interaction of global and local tasks of the modern world. It goes without saying that such experiences of contemporary development of the People's Republic of China can mean to Montenegro nowadays.

The People's Republic of China and Montenegro have been developing a high-quality bilateral cooperation since 2008 when the Agreement of Cooperation in the cultural field between the two states has been signed. Within this document, two Programmes of cooperation were signed, out of which the latter, from April 2016, refers to the period 2017-2020.

Strengthening of good bilateral relations between the two countries is made, to a great extent, through the initiative of the People's Republic of China with the aim of making this cultural cooperation and exchange with the 17 countries of Central and Eastern Europe more successful. Activities recognized and included in this process of cultural cooperation, and expressed and supported on the previous Forums of ministries of cultural cooperation, held in Beijing in May

2013, in Sofia in November 2015, and in Hangzhou in September 2017, resulted in advanced mutual understanding, encouraged mutual learning and work, exchange of experiences and best practices in preserving and developing traditional cultural values and their use in modern context.

Thanks to the programmes of “Silk Road” and “Belt”, launched within the mechanism “17+1”, a great number of representatives of our institutions and organizations, experts from all cultural fields and artists of diverse profiles had the chance to visit People’s Republic of China and obtain valuable experience which contributed to strengthening their expert knowledge and capabilities.

Also, in the previous period, we hosted numerous Chinese delegations who had opportunity to become acquainted with Montenegrin potential in all areas of cultural and artistic creativity, and arrange specific forms of collaboration with local artists at all levels.

The Skopje Declaration on Cultural cooperation, which predicts joint activities in audiovisual field, creative industries, music, libraries and the protection of cultural heritage, will provide an opportunity for professionals and artists in the indicated areas to improve their work and professional competences.

Only through the exchange of experiences, we get the opportunity to contribute to increasing our own capacities and the quality of our countries cultural offer. In this context, we see a special improvement chance for those segments in culture, which are not sufficiently developed in Montenegro at the moment, such as opera, puppet theater, professional dance and creative industries. In that sense, the Chinese experience, together with the experience of all the countries participating in the 17 + 1 mechanism, are of great value and importance to Montenegro.

According to the mentioned, The Skopje Declaration on cooperation in the cultural field and Cultural cooperation plan for 2020 and 2021, provide a chance to Montenegrin participants to present their artistic and creative practices and also to simultaneously enrich their experience about new discoveries and achievements, which will be further applied to professional and institutional development.

At the end, I would like to express my deepest respect to all colleagues and delegations from other countries hoping that the documents we adopt today will have a positive effect on cultural creation and heritage, cultural tourism and overall cultural offer of our countries.