

Skopje, 19th December

Dear Colleagues,

I am writing this letter to the Macedonian, European and world public because after two decades of hard work in the field of cinema as a senior film professional, film heritage advisor at the Cultural Heritage Protection Office, expert at the EUREKA Secretariat and the European Audiovisual Observatory, director of the Cinematheque of Macedonia, director of the Film Agency, associate professor at the Faculty of Dramatic Arts, national representative to Eurimages, member of the European Film Academy, recipient of numerous awards at home and abroad, including Свечена грамота from the Minister of Culture of the Republic of Bulgaria and the title of Knight of the Order of Arts and Letters (Chevalier dans l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres), one of the four most prestigious awards of the French Republic, first Macedonian member of the Management Boards of the Association of European Film Archives and Cinematheques (Association des Cinémathèques Européennes – ACE) and the International Association of Film Archives (FIAF), and initiator and organizer of the 70th FIAF Congress in Skopje, the most important event in the world of film archives that was also valuable recognition of the Macedonian film heritage since the first recordings made by the Manaki Brothers to date, I have recently experienced an intellectual, psychological, social and political shock!

More specifically, all media outlets in the Republic of Macedonia have recently broadcast a news conference at which while portraying a series of crimes committed in various areas, Financial Police officials also mentioned my name thus inflicting irreparable damage to me as a dedicated and proven professional given that simultaneously with the announcement that criminal charges would be brought against me as former director of the Film Agency I was accused of illegal activities in connection with the Macedonia TV series project even though the project passed all legal filters in a crystal clear administrative procedure.

As far as this project is concerned, all the bodies comprising the Film Agency, namely the Critics, the Film Council, the Financial Advisor and the Management Board, of which members are distinguished professionals in various areas, were involved in the procedure of its evaluation. They jointly took the decision to back the project and were all together involved in the whole administrative procedure of seeing the project through.

Here I would like to stress that while I served as director of the Film Agency, all open competition procedures including those concerning the Macedonia TV series were always in compliance with the film industry legislation. These procedures rested upon the principles of transparency and impartiality with regard to who all can participate, how projects are assessed – in keeping with criteria and requirements identified in laws, bylaws and internal regulations – how decisions are taken and how funding is awarded. All decisions regarding the activities of the Film Agency are taken by the Management Board as the highest administrative body. In other words, the process of decision-making is collective.

In August 2017 without any explanation, I was dismissed as director of the Film Agency. As to what happened afterward, an explanation should be sought from the new acting director, Gorjan Tozija.

With this letter I wish to appeal to institutions in the Republic of Macedonia and to European and world institutions of which I am a member or with which I have cooperated to support my personal integrity which has recently been attacked fiercely and on no grounds whatsoever, in the process of which my individual human rights have been blatantly violated. I am also going to provide my letter to the Helsinki Committee for Human Rights because, with the telling of utter lies and manipulations about my work, I have been denied the presumption of innocence, a basic human right at the heart of the European justice system and democracy.

In anticipation of your response, taking into consideration my professional ardor and achievements over the years, I remain thankful and with unwavering faith that I will be able to continue contributing to the European path of reforms and integration into what the father of the European Union, Jean Monnet, had referred to as our **common European home**, not only of the Republic of Macedonia but also of all the countries in the region. That is my creed as an intellectual that has guided me over the past two decades of my career not only in the Republic of Macedonia but also in all the respectable European and world institutions for which I have worked and with which I have cooperated.

Sincerely Yours,

Mimi Gjorgoska Ilievska, MA

