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322A/01-06 11.11.2024

Letter of support for nomination to the *Europa Nostra Awards* 2025

11th November 2024

I would thereby like to warmly recommend Varvara Buzilă, doctor in Philology, Associate Professor in Visual Arts, in the history of culture and civilisation, and Head of the Ethnography Department of the National Museum of Ethnography and Natural History, the Republic of Moldova, for the *Europa Nostra Awards,* Heritage Champions category.

I have known Dr Buzilă's prodigious activity for over four decades, in the field of protecting the cultural heritage of the Republic of Moldova. Thanks to her service for the National Museum of Ethnography and Natural History, which spans more than forty years, this institution has become a very important cultural and scientific centre. In addition to the regular public and foreign visitors, young people, school children and students are participating in master classes and other activities of significant social impact. She has enriched the museum's heritage with valuable objects, including donations from citizens, by organizing together with Moldova 1 TV station two campaigns to raise social awareness for the protection of cultural heritage: "Enter history by donating an object to the museum" (2004-2005) and "Museum of Popular Architecture – The hearth of all villages" (2006-2008).

I however have known her best while I was a Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Education, Culture and Research (2009-2017), and Head of the Minister's Cabinet (2017-2019), which was a foundational period for the legislative framework of cultural heritage in the Republic of Moldova. She has led the National Commission for Safeguarding the Immaterial Cultural Heritage of the Republic of Moldova (2009-2019), participating in the drafting of the Law of the Republic of Moldova on the Protection of Mobile Cultural Heritage (no 280, 27.12.2011) and the Law of the Republic of Moldova on the Protection of Immaterial Cultural Heritage (no 58, 29.03.2012). She coordinated the group of researchers and specialists in the field of cultural heritage, editing the *National Register of the immaterial cultural heritage of the Republic of Moldova, through which the state took under protection over 500 components of this heritage (2012).*

I have witnessed how, since 2006, when the Republic of Moldova ratified the UNESCO Convention on the Safeguarding of the Immaterial Cultural Heritage (Paris, 17.10.2003), she assumed responsibility for this category of heritage, mobilized the representatives of the local heritage owning communities, the operatives in the field of culture, and researchers, in order to ensure the protection and transmission of heritage values to young people. Gradually, the National Museum of Ethnography and Natural History assumed the role of the main institution in the application of cultural policies in the field of immaterial and mobile cultural heritage. In order to maintain communication with the *Bearers of the Living Human Treasure* and those responsible for the protection of cultural heritage, she organized, together with her colleagues at the museum, four editions of the Cultural Heritage Forum (2014-2017 and 2023) As a result, the number of friends of the cultural heritage has increased and collaborative relationships have been established with heritage bearing communities.

Within the group of researchers, who prepared the application of the *Cultural Landscape of Orheiul Vechi* to be included on the UNESCO World Heritage List, Dr Buzilă evaluated the ethnographic heritage of this *Natural Cultural Reserve*.

I have always admired the professionalism and responsibility with which she generates and implements ideas. She has an encyclopaedic knowledge in the field of cultural heritage and delivers captivating lectures for BA, MA and PhD students, as well as for cultural and scientific events held at museums. Thanks to her books and articles on heritage, a wide circle of readers has access to these values. The books signed by her are sought out even in the most remote places both in the Republic of Moldova and in Romania, also by representatives of the diaspora, contributing thus to the knowledge and owing of cultural identity in society.

I commend the initiative of submitting this application for the *Europa Nostra Awards* 2025 and I wholeheartedly recommend my long-term collaborator, Dr Varvara Buzilă, for this honourable recognition. She would receive it not only personally, but as a representative of all those for whom the cultural heritage of the Republic of Moldova is important, as a part of the European cultural heritage.

Professor Gheorghe Postică, Honorary Member of the Romanian Academy,
Head of the Archaeology Department of the National History Museum of Moldova

