

Rome, September 19 2017

Attn Madam **Elisabeth Guigou**
President **Anna Lindh Foundation**
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Dear President Guigou,

As Chairwoman and founder of the Italian non-profit association *Music Theater International* (M.Th.I.) and longtime member of the *Anna Lindh Foundation* (ALF), I felt the need to draw your kind attention on a number of issues and considerations, with the prayer to share my letter with the members of the other 42 ALF National Networks.

This is in connection with the historical decision by our Foreign Ministry to assign the role of Italian Head of Network to the newly established *Italian Network for the Euro-Mediterranean Dialogue - RIDE-APS* - of which I have the honor to be a member, in cooperation with the Municipality of Bologna.

This change is truly historical, marking a deep and innovative methodological turning point, much longed and waited for by whoever in the civil society is sincerely working for the improvement of the Euro-Mediterranean Dialogue in Italy and abroad. This significant development opens a new era of our ALF Italian network, whose results I would like you to present to all the members of the ALF Networks as a remarkable *best practice* of the civil society *democratic process* and respect of the *rule of law*, a true enlightening model for Euro-Mediterranean activities.

As a result, prestigious public and private institutions every week are now joining RIDE-APS, not only newcomers but also many past members of the ALF Italian Network, renewing their formerly suspended participation, including my association, always interested over the years in contributing to the precious work of the *Anna Lindh Foundation*, of which we are all devoted children.

In this positive and innovative spirit, as informally anticipated to you in Rome last week by the RIDE-APS new governing body, I have the honor to offer you the most important product of the annual endeavor of my M.Th.I. team, and that is to dedicate the 2018 edition of our *Cerialia* International Festival project (<http://www.cerialialudi.org>) to the *Anna Lindh Foundation*. I sincerely hope that my proposal may encourage other networks, starting from Malta (invited as guest country 2018), to organize simultaneous initiatives on the occasion of our June 8-12, 2018 events planned in Italy, and I am ready to share any further detail you may request.

Cerialia Festival project is indeed based on the RIDE-APS new strategy of maximum evaluation and respect for the different collective identities. This implies an authentically participative process requiring, as a *condicio sine qua non*, absolute transparency, good faith, authentic fairness, inclusive attitude, meticulous respect of clearly verifiable shared rules open to external independent checks, as opposed to the autocratic - top down - attitude of our recent past in the ALF Italian Network.

Such an attitude explains why M.Th.I. could not but join an umbrella organization called **Con.Me.** (*Contemporaneo.MEditerraneo*) set up in Rome in 2013 with more than 28 ALF members from different parts

of Italy. **Con.Me.** allowed us to face and denounce *anti-democratic and illegitimate ways of conducting for the past 13 years the HofN role in Italy*, unfortunately with no results.

For reasons of space, I mentioned here only briefly the hardship and difficulties that many Italian ALF members have suffered over a long time, but of course I am ready to provide you with the necessary evidence that is already at the disposal of the Italian Authorities.

The new RIDE leadership, committed to the universally shared goal of getting rid of the past deficiencies and obstacles on the path to an authentic free debate, decided to accept all previous **Con.Me.** requests. Hence, the new promoting group set up the current RIDE-APS, with its democratic and legitimate constitutive act recognized by the *Italian Revenue Agency* on August 4, 2017.

In light of the above, I am asking all ALF members to join their energies in encouraging and facilitating the mission of the RIDE-APS towards this radical change, which I believe may benefit the whole ALF Network of Networks.

Sincerely,

Paola Sarcina
President *Music Theatre International*
Artistic director and project manager *Cerealia Festival*
Treasurer *Con.Me.* – *COntemporaneo.MEditerraneo*



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