

# International Theatre Institute

## World Organization for the Performing Arts



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Office of the Director-General of ITI: **Tobias Biancone**

To

- The Government of South Africa
- The Department of Sports, Arts and Culture
- The National Arts Council of South Africa

UNESCO, Paris/France, 7 April 2021

### **Call for an Enabling Environment for the Arts & Culture Sector in South Africa**

Distinguished Members of the Government, of the Department of Sports, Arts and Culture, and of the National Arts Council of South Africa,

I am writing to you on behalf of the International Theatre Institute ITI, the world's largest organization for the performing arts, founded by UNESCO and based at UNESCO in Paris.

The International Theatre Institute ITI is deeply concerned about the current situation in South Africa. It firmly stands in solidarity with South African Artists and creative practitioners who are demanding accountability and transparency regarding relief funding for the arts.

We call on the South African government, the Department of Sports, Arts and Culture, and the National Arts Council of South Africa to create an enabling environment for the arts and culture sector in South Africa during this time of global crisis and to provide much-needed relief to the artists and creative and cultural practitioners who have been dealt a double blow, by Covid-19 and then by the organizations that were designed to support the sector.

ITI is urging you to follow the principle that culture and the arts have a crucial position in developing a nation. Leading nations of the world have realized that the artists and creative and cultural practitioners are the key people for sustainable development in a city, region and country and started to support them during the pandemic with a fair and transparent procedure.

South Africa is extremely rich in cultural diversity. Cultural practitioners and artists from all over the world highly esteem the creative output of your country. Covid-19 and its aftermath in the culture sector should **not** destroy what has been built up for many decades.

That is why the International Theatre Institute ITI is urging the leaders and members of your authorities to make sure that you distribute your support with accountability and transparency so that culture and the arts of South Africa are getting out of these difficult times of the pandemic. It is an important and most needed act for empowering the people of South Africa through the use of the culture and the arts.

Yours sincerely,



Tobias Biancone, Director-General