

**Message from UNESCO on the occasion of the press conference
for the designation of Krakow and Katowice
as the Host Cities of the 2018 UCCN Annual Meeting**

On behalf of UNESCO, I would like to congratulate the cities of Krakow and Katowice on their designation as the Host Cities of the 2018 Annual Meeting of the UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN).

Krakow and Katowice, UNESCO Creative Cities of Literature and of Music respectively, stood out from the other candidate cities not only due to the quality of their joint bid, but also because of the strength of their partnership. Indeed, this will be the first time that a UCCN Annual Meeting will be co-hosted by two member cities. In this way, the cities demonstrate their commitment to UNESCO values and priorities and their conviction that cooperation leads to new possibilities, greater potential and innovation.

Since its designation in 2013, Krakow has been an active and valuable member of the Network, particularly in its role as Coordinator of the Creative Cities of Literature and Steering Committee member. Meanwhile, Katowice, which joined the Network in 2015, has been committed to investing in culture and creativity as a means to revitalize and regenerate the city, particularly through music.

The UCCN Annual Meeting gathers a large number of participants, such as mayors, city policymakers, experts, academics, professionals, artists and stakeholders from the private sector and civil society, representing member cities from all around the world. The Annual Meeting is an excellent opportunity to exchange ideas and experiences on ways to utilize culture and creativity to make cities better, more vibrant and more inclusive places. It is also an opportunity to review the role of the Network within UNESCO's overall strategy, notably in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the New Urban Agenda. Moreover, the Annual Meeting allows members to collectively reflect on the new opportunities that the Network offers, stimulating cooperation and partnerships among member cities.

In closing, allow me to express my best wishes for the successful preparation of the 2018 UCCN Annual Meeting in Krakow and Katowice.

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