

For the attention of the board of ICOM Nord

Paris, 22 April 2026

Subject: Response to your letter dated 2 February 2026

Dear Members of the Board of ICOM Nord,

On behalf of the Executive Board, I thank you for your letter and for the clarity with which you have expressed your concerns. We acknowledge and share your deep concerns regarding the ongoing war in Ukraine. I reiterate ICOM's longstanding commitment to supporting museum and cultural heritage professionals affected by the conflict, particularly our colleagues in Ukraine.

ICOM was founded in 1946 as a non-governmental organisation committed to the promotion of peace, international cooperation, and the protection of cultural heritage. In that regard, we would like to reiterate that one of ICOM's main roles is to foster dialogue and collaborations among its National and International Committees, Regional Alliances, and Affiliated Organisations.

We remain committed to safeguarding the organisation's independence and ensuring that it continues to serve as a space for neutrality, inclusion, and constructive exchange. When serious concerns arise, ICOM's internal mechanisms may be activated to assess whether breaches of the *ICOM Code of Ethics for Museums* have occurred, based on documented and verifiable evidence. However, it is important to highlight that ICOM does not replace judicial or governmental authorities, which alone hold the mandate to conduct investigations and impose legal sanctions. For this reason, ICOM cannot take action on the basis of national decrees or unilateral sanctions adopted by one party to a conflict against another, unless they are confirmed by a competent and neutral third party, such as international judicial or intergovernmental bodies.

Regarding your request for information on the participation of Russian members in ICOM's governance structures, eligibility for elected or appointed positions within ICOM is defined by its Statutes, Internal Rules, and related procedures. Membership and access to governance roles are individual and professional, and are not linked to nationality, which is neither a criterion nor a data category used by ICOM; accordingly, the organisation does not collect or publish nationality-based statistics. Information on office-holders remains publicly available through the ICOM Directory, including for Standing Committees, Regional Alliances, and Affiliated Organisations.

With regard to alleged breaches of the ICOM Code of Ethics for Museums, such matters are assessed only when substantiated and are examined through ICOM's established governance procedures. However, ICOM is a non-governmental organisation dedicated to the protection of cultural heritage and does not act as a judicial or enforcement authority, nor does it have a mandate to implement national or international sanctions.

I would also like to mention the [ICOM statement](#) published on 17 April 2026, in which our organisation reaffirms its strong commitment to the protection of cultural heritage in situations of armed conflict. In this statement, ICOM expresses its deep concern over the ongoing destruction of cultural sites and reiterates its call for all parties to respect their obligations under international law, including the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection

of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict. It also highlights its continued engagement with the international community, including partners such as UNESCO, and its support to museum professionals working to safeguard collections and uphold the role of museums as spaces for dialogue, understanding, and peace.

The Executive Board appreciates ICOM Nord's engagement with these complex issues and takes note of your interest in further discussion. Such reflections contribute to the ongoing strengthening of ICOM's governance and institutional resilience, particularly in a challenging international context.

Please be assured that ICOM remains committed to upholding its ethical standards, safeguarding its credibility as an international professional organisation, and fostering dialogue and cooperation among its members worldwide.

Yours sincerely,



Antonio Rodríguez
ICOM President