

Brussels, 30 July 2021

## **Statement issued by FIAF following the fire in one of the vaults of the Cinemateca Brasileira on 29 July 2021**

It is with great shock and upset that the International Federation of Film Archives (FIAF) and its 172 Members and Associates around the world heard reports of a fire in one of the warehouses of the Cinemateca Brasileira in São Paulo on 29 July 2021. While we do not know yet the full extent of the damage, it is likely that this latest catastrophe will have once again caused the loss of significant quantities of films and other key cultural artefacts preserved by the Cinemateca Brasileira, one of the oldest and most respected members of our global network and an essential custodian of Brazil's rich film heritage.

It is impossible not to link the various disasters that have caused serious damage to the premises and collections of the Cinemateca Brasileira in the last few years to the glaring lack of financial and institutional support which the Cinemateca has experienced from the Brazilian government in the same period.

Last September, the entire staff at the Cinemateca, after not being paid for their work for several months, were all dismissed, and the Cinemateca's premises are currently closed. FIAF publicly expressed its deep concern at the time, and called on the Brazilian government to help resolve this shocking situation. Unfortunately, very little progress seems to have been made since. The future of the Cinemateca Brasileira remains more uncertain than ever, and each passing day puts its unique collections – already in a shameful state of neglect – increasingly at risk.

We once again stand strongly with our colleagues in São Paulo, and urge Brazil's government to intervene at once to ensure that the Cinemateca Brasileira can start operating again and carrying out its essential cultural missions, as it did so brilliantly for 70 years, before it is too late.

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