



2011 IPA Freedom to Publish Prize Recipient Bui Chat Set Free on Conditions

Geneva – 3 May 2011

Bui Chat, recipient of the 2011 IPA Freedom to Publish Prize was temporarily released on 2 May after having been arrested by authorities, but remains under surveillance and subject to continuing interrogation by the authorities in Vietnam.

Bui Chat was arrested on 30 April on his return to Vietnam from Buenos Aires, where he was honoured with the Freedom to Publish award. The Award and Prize certificate were confiscated. He was compelled to return to the police for interrogation on 3 May. A series of interrogations is reportedly planned. While welcoming his release, the IPA remains gravely concerned that Bui Chat remains subject to continued interrogation and re-arrest, and calls on the authorities for his final and permanent release, the return of his Award and Prize certificate, and the assurance that no criminal charges will be pressed against him.

According to reports received by the IPA, Bui Chat was taken to his home on 1 May following his return from receiving the award in Buenos Aires. At that time the authorities searched throughout his home, then told Bui Chat to pack some clothes and proceeded with a preliminary detention order. The location of his detention had not been disclosed to his family. Bui Chat may face up to 12 months under Vietnamese criminal law before an official charge needs to be laid.

IPA has been liaising with the relevant authorities to facilitate Bui Chat's release. The IPA calls upon governments and advocates for human rights and the freedom of expression to join publishers in calling for Bui Chat's final and complete release, and for the assurance that no criminal charges will be pressed against him.

Bjorn Smith-Simonsen, Chair of IPA's Freedom to Publish Committee, declared: "IPA welcomes the temporarily release of Bui Chat, but remains worried as he is still being interrogated by police and Vietnamese law theoretically permits his detention for up to 12 months before charges are being pressed. We therefore keep urging the Vietnamese authorities to release him definitely and permanently. His prize and award certificate should also be returned to him".

More about Bui Chat:

The IPA Freedom to Publish Committee and the Board of the IPA have named Bui Chat, a courageous underground publisher in Vietnam, and the leader of Giay Vun Publishing House, as winner of the 2011 Freedom to Publish Award. Giay Vun is devoted to printing

and publishing of the works of Vietnam's "pavement poets" beyond the reach of censorship authorities. Under Bui Chat's leadership, Giay Vun has directly assisted in the establishment in Vietnam of other publishing houses that operate independently and freely, publishing the works of banned authors and historians.

More about the IPA Freedom to Publish Prize:

IPA President YoungSuk "Y.S" Chi formally presented this year's award in a ceremony hosted by the 37th Buenos Aires International Book Fair as part of the Buenos Aires 2011 World Book Capital programme on 25 April 2011. In 2005 IPA created the IPA Freedom to Publish Prize, a prize designed to honour each year a person or an organisation that has made an important contribution to the defence and promotion of freedom to publish anywhere in the world. While the 2006 IPA Freedom to Publish Prize was awarded to Iranian publisher Shalah Lahiji during the Göteborg Book Fair, the 2007 Prize was awarded to Zimbabwean publisher Trevor N'cube at the Cape Town Book Fair. Special Prizes were also given posthumously to Anna Politkovskaya (Russia) and Hrant Dink (Turkey/Armenia). The 2008 IPA Freedom to Publish Prize was awarded to Turkish publisher Ragıp Zarakolu during the opening ceremony of an international seminar on neo-censorship co-organised in Amsterdam by IPA and Amsterdam 2008 World Book Capital. The 2009 IPA Freedom to Publish Prize was awarded to Sihem Bensedrine, Neziha Rjiba and Mohamed Talbi, founders of the Observatory for the Freedom of the Press, Publishing and Creation in Tunisia (OLPEC), as part of the Global Forum on Freedom of Expression program, a Forum IPA was partner of. In 2010 the IPA Freedom to Publish Prize was awarded to Israpil Shovkhalov, Editor-in-Chief, and Viktor Kogan-Yasny, publisher of the Dosh Magazine on the occasion of the Istanbul Book Fair. Prize-winners receive the sum of 5000 CHF.

More about IPA:

The International Publishers Association (IPA) is an international industry federation representing all aspects of book and journal publishing. Established in 1896, IPA's mission is to promote and protect publishing and to raise awareness for publishing as a force for economic, cultural and political development. Around the world IPA actively fights against censorship and promotes copyright, literacy and freedom to publish. IPA is a trade association with a human rights mandate.

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