



**Presentation of the “2010 IPA Freedom to Publish Prize” to Editor-in-Chief Israpil Shovkhalov and Publisher Viktor Kogan-Yasny of the DOSH Magazine
Tuesday, 2 November 2010 - Istanbul Book Fair – Istanbul**

Speech by Herman P. Spruijt, President of the International Publishers Association (IPA)

We are gathered here today to pay tribute to those courageous men and women fighting for freedom to publish worldwide sometimes at the risk of their own life like late Ana Politkovskya, or as one knows very well in this venerable city, late Hrant Dink. Since 1998, the IPA Freedom to Publish Prize honours 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.

The Board of the International Publishers Association (IPA) meeting in Frankfurt, Germany, on 6 October 2010, selected Israpil Shovkhalov, Editor-in-Chief, and Viktor Kogan-Yasny, publisher of the Dosh Magazine as Prize-winners from among many highly commendable candidates.

The Award Ceremonies for the IPA Freedom to Publish Prize have rotated since its inception in 2006: Goteborg (2006), Cape Town (2007), Amsterdam (2008), Oslo (2009). This year, for the first time, IPA is delighted to award its Freedom to Publish Prize here in Istanbul. As you may know, Turkey has been a focus country for IPA since the 1990s. Since then, Turkey has come a long way freedom of expression and freedom to publish wise. Today, one is quite far from the bleak situation that prevailed in the 1990s with dozens and dozens of publishers and writers in prison. Of course, not everything is solved, far from it, as the special award to Sel Publishing shows, but giving the IPA Freedom to Publish Prize in Turkey this year is a tribute to the progress by Turkey in this field since the 1990s and to our Turkish member, the Turkish publishers association, which is by far, the publishers association fighting the most for freedom to publish at global level.

We are also giving our freedom to publish prize this year, not only in Istanbul, but at the Istanbul book fair. In the 35 years that I have been in this publishing industry, I have travelled the world, visiting many book fairs. But -as I said last year- I am always pleasantly surprised by what I see at a book fair. Even if you have never been at a specific book fair (this is my second visit to the Istanbul Book Fair), there is that familiar smell, sound and sight which immediately makes you feel ‘at home’... So, thank you for giving us the opportunity to give the IPA Freedom to Publish Prize in this growing and year after year more and more successful book fair. I do hope this fair will join the IPA Book Fair partnership soon!

I would also like to take this opportunity to particularly thank the Chair of the Turkish Publishers Association (TPA), Mr Tüzüner, the Secretary General, Metin Celal, the chairman of TPA's Freedom to Publish Committee, Ragıp Zarakolu, as well as Tüyap, in particular Ms Cemran Öder, for all they have done to ensure this event meets success. My gratitude also goes to the keynote speaker: Ragıp Zarakolu.

Dosh means «Word» in Chechen. It was founded in 2003 by "The Regular Civic Initiative –

The Right to Live and Human Dignity Public Organisation”, which is still publishing it. It is issued on paper four times a year, with a circulation of 5000 copies sold and spread over a wide area: Russia, Caucasus, and Europe. Its Internet-version is constantly updated with news and commentaries.

The aim of the magazine is to bring news, commentaries, analysis and reports from the Caucasus, especially from the Chechen Republic, a republic with a tragic history as we all know. The magazine is one of the very few press-institutions that reports and brings stories from both sides of the on-going, tragic conflict. It prints close-up reports of how the war affects the concrete lives of people, as well as analyses. It is obvious from the articles that the magazine centres its focus on single human beings and their dignity. It has, for example, brought the situation of children war-victims into the spotlight. Dosh receives and prints letters from people being imprisoned in Russia without trial. Thus, it concentrates its campaign for democracy, justice and an open society on the most practical and concrete starting-point: the single human being, its dignity, self-recognition and its recognition from others.

The magazine views the conflicts in the Caucasus in a broad perspective which includes the need for Russia, its politicians, leaders and society, to reconsider their view of the past. I would like to take that opportunity to underline that apart from DOSH, among the three short-listed candidates to the IPA Freedom to Publish Prize this year, there was a Russian publisher, Rosspen, which dares to publish a series on Stalin and Stalinism in an overall context where Stalin and Stalinism are being rehabilitated in Russia...

We use this opportunity here to also remind the Russian authorities to further search the death of Ana Politkovskya. If those who committed her murder will not be put in jail, it would be an encouragement to others: as we saw with the murder of another journalist last year, Natalya Estemirova.

Dosh is widely read and receives a lot of letters praising the work of its editors and journalists, but at the same time they are met with increasing hostility from the authorities and large parts of society. A serious incident as recent as March 2010 underlines the threats. Editor-in-Chief Israpil Shovkhalov, a man with long journalistic and human rights experience, and executive editor Abdulla Duduev were on their way to make an interview with the President of the Republic of Ingushetia when they were abducted by unknown assailants who thankfully ended up releasing them after a while.

Because of its fearless journalism, open commitment to human rights and understanding between the conflicting parties in the Caucasus, the editors, reporters and freelance journalists of the Dosh magazine are being threatened from all sides, and sometimes even harassed and intimidated in an increasingly hostile environment.

The importance of such a magazine and the fact that it has been regularly published over a relatively long period (almost eight years) should not be underestimated. It has become an institution, an island of human dignity and a product of real news in a time when Russians as well as members of the ethnic minorities in the Russian Federation in a growing degree suffer from the power play among the authorities and ignorance from the main media outlets. The fact that Dosh is read by both Russians and Caucasian people in and outside Russia, as well as the perspective of its articles give in itself a hope for the future of an open society in Russia. The loss of Dosh could mean that a more brutal and inhuman Russian society is coming closer.

In giving Dosh Magazine, in particular, its editor in chief and publisher, the 2010 IPA Freedom to Publish Prize, we rise to honour the exemplary integrity, the humanity, the determination, and the courage that they and the rest of the staff of DOSH so marvellously demonstrate.

Thank you, Israpil Shovkhalov, Viktor Kogan-Yasny, Abdullah Duduev and all the staff of Dosh. You are an inspiration to many of us: the pressure on writers and publishers in the world should be stopped!