



Mr Federico Sboarina
Mayor of Verona

Sent by email: sindacovr@comune.verona.it

7 July 2017

Dear Mr Sboarina,

As the president of the International Publishers Association (IPA), the world's leading organization representing the interests of publishers, I write to express my profound concern about your manifesto pledge to remove various books and publications from libraries and schools in your jurisdiction.

To be absolutely clear, whatever ideological compulsion lies behind your desire to censor and suppress the range of published works that the citizens of Verona can access is entirely irrelevant. I wish only to impress upon you that, in a democratic country such as Italy, it is under no circumstances acceptable to censor legally sound publications.

As you know, modern Italy, a key member of the European Union, is built on upholding internationally enshrined principles of human rights, pluralism and personal freedoms: freedom of speech and expression; freedom to write and publish; freedom for libraries to choose the titles in their collections; freedom to teach these aforementioned principles in schools.

As a steward of humanity's cultural, educational and informational domains, the IPA and its Freedom to Publish Committee denounce and reject in the strongest terms the censorship of books that you intend to impose.

I hope that you will reconsider the censorial aspects of your manifesto, and opt instead to increase the diversity of opinions and ideas available on Verona's bookshelves. This will empower and enable citizens of your magnificent city to make up their own minds about what does and does not constitute acceptable reading.

The IPA and our members stand ready, willing and able to help you achieve this preferable outcome.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Michiel Kolman, President IPA