



IPA Congress Resolutions Highlight Industry Challenges

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On 14 June 2012 the 29th Congress of the International Publishers Association (IPA) ended with a celebration of freedom of expression by the 2012 IPA Freedom to Publish Prize winner Jonathan Shapiro. Congress resolutions, the traditional formal summary demands, concluded the event.

The resolutions focus on key issues for publishers: Copyright, freedom to publish, e-books and industry issues such as VAT. A new emphasis was put on publishing in indigenous languages, publishers as enablers of social change, the threat of state publishing, the need to avoid monopolies, or dominant positions in digital distribution, the call on public figures to accept a higher level of criticism than the ordinary citizens, and to reject the abuse of broad definitions of terms such as state security, state secrecy or terrorism as dangerous inroads for censorship.

The 29th IPA Congress took place in Cape Town, South Africa, on 12-14 June 2012, under the general theme “Publishing for a New Era”. For the first time, the IPA Congress took place on the African continent, attracting 300 delegates from more than 30 countries. The Publishers Association of South Africa (PASA) proved to be a professional and warm host. With the opportunities and challenges of digital publishing, the slow recovery from the current economic recession, threats of state publishing and raging debates on copyright law and intellectual property rights, delegates had much to talk about and share information on.

During the 2.5 working days, 20 working sessions, featuring around 70 speakers from all continents, were held. Highlights included the incisive comments by the Director General of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) Francis Gurry on the future of copyright, the impassioned words of novelist and theorist Ngugi wa Thiong’o for more authorship and publishing in indigenous languages and the tour de force presentation of this year’s Freedom to Publish Prize winner Jonathan Shapiro.

Congress presentations will be available from IPA. The Congress resolutions, while focusing on key traditional issues for publishers - the promotion of copyright as an engine for freedom to publish, the need to apply a 0 % VAT rate on books and e-books in particular -, also emphasize new issues, such as:

- * A call on public authorities to provide a framework permitting sustainable publishing in indigenous languages,
- * An assertion of the role of publishers as enablers of social change,

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- * A condemnation of state publishing as a threat to the quality of education, a democratic culture and the future of the knowledge economy,
- * The need to avoid monopolies, or dominant positions in digital distribution,
- * A call on public figures to accept a higher level of criticism than the ordinary citizens
- * A call on public authorities to reject the abuse of broad definitions of terms such as state security, state secrecy or terrorism as dangerous inroads for censorship.

The Congress Resolutions and Specific Demands highlighting specific issues can be found at:

www.internationalpublishers.org/images/stories/CAPETOWN/capetown%20ipa%20publishers%20congress%20resolutions.pdf

The concluding remarks of IPA President's YoungSuk "Y.S." Chi are available here:

<http://www.internationalpublishers.org/images/stories/CAPETOWN/ysc%20ipa%20congress%20summary%20vf.pdf>

Notes for Editors:

Starting in 2012-14, IPA organizes an International Publishers Congress every two years in cooperation with one of its member associations. The 30th Congress will be held in Bangkok in late March 2014 when Bangkok is World Book Capital (23 April 2013 – 22 April 2014).

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.

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