

## The Charter of International PEN

(1) Literature knows no frontiers and must remain common currency among people in spite of political or international upheavals.

(2) In all circumstances, and particularly in time of war, works of art, the patrimony of humanity at large, should be left untouched by national or political passion.

(3) Members of PEN should at all times use what influence they have in favour of good understanding and mutual respect between nations; they pledge themselves to do their utmost to dispel race, class and national hatreds and to champion the ideal of one humanity living in peace in one world.

(4) PEN stands for the principle of unhampered transmission of thought within each nation and between all nations, and members pledge themselves to oppose any form of suppression of freedom of expression in the country and community to which they belong. PEN declares for a free press and opposes arbitrary censorship in time of peace. It believes that the necessary advance of the world towards a more highly organized political and economic order renders a free criticism of governments, administrations and institutions imperative. And since freedom implies voluntary restraint, members pledge of themselves to oppose such evils of a free press as mendacious publication, deliberate falsehood and distortion of facts for political and personal ends.

Membership of PEN is open to all qualified writers, editors and translators who subscribe to these aims, without regard to nationality, language, race, colour or religion.

So far an excerpt from the Charter of International PEN Though its wording may have taken on a little patina, in substance, it has lost none of its timeliness.

The defense of harassed and persecuted writers and journalists, wherever and by whatever means possible, counts among the most important tasks the PEN organization has set for itself. In the words of Gerhard Schoenberner, Writers in Prison Committee chair of West German PEN from 1991 to 1995, "To come to the assistance of those men and women who as writers or journalists, as editors, translators, or publishers are being exposed to threats and persecution, because they pursue their profession and exercise their human and civil rights, continues to be International PEN's highest obligation.

We have to lend our support to those in prison that they are not being tortured; to those who stand accused that they receive a fair trial; to those who have been sentenced that they are held under humane prison conditions and, if possible, are released ahead of time; and to those who disappeared or were abducted that they are not murdered.

Via diplomatic channels, through public protests, by publicizing their cases, by offering material and moral assistance to the victims and their families, we have to try to do all in our power. All the while knowing that whatever we can do is little compared to what should be done. Still, we do need donations, and we need people willing to take on a personal sponsorship for a persecuted colleague."

The funds donated by the "Circle of Friends and Patrons of German PEN" do help ourCenter to fulfill its obligations. Your donation is truly appreciated.

My/our membership in the "Circle of Friends and Patrons of German PEN" includes an annual donation to PEN of Euro \_\_\_\_\_ to be exclusively used in line with PEN's charitable status. The donation is tax-deductible. Membership in the "Circle of Friends and Patrons of German PEN may be revoked at the end of each year.

---

Adress, Date

Signature