



UNION INTERNATIONALE DES EDITEURS  
INTERNATIONALE VERLEGER - UNION

INTERNATIONAL PUBLISHERS ASSOCIATION  
UNION INTERNACIONAL DE EDITORES



INTERNATIONAL BOOKSELLERS FEDERATION

## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Turkey jeopardizes Freedom of Expression Publishers and Booksellers call out to Romano Prodi to put an end to the Turkish compulsory banderole system**

On 30 March 2004, the International Publishers' Association (IPA) and the International Booksellers Federation (IBF) sent a letter to the President of the EU Commission, Mr. Romano Prodi, seeking his assistance in calling upon the Turkish Authorities to abandon the compulsory banderole system, a system jeopardizing freedom of expression and freedom to publish.

Both organizations expressed concern about the regulation laying an obligation to affix a "banderole/hologram" on each copy of books published in Turkey. IPA and IBF view the Turkish banderole system as a potential tool for censorship.

Says Eric Hardin, President of IBF: "IBF, which will celebrate its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2005, has constantly been fighting, over the years, in order to guarantee the freedom of expression. Booksellers are aware that it is their duty to take part in this battle for democracy".

Says Lars Grahn, Chairman of IPA's Freedom to Publish Committee: "We deem this obligation to inhibit the unrestricted flow of information and it may serve as a form of censorship".

The requirement to affix a banderole on each book published in Turkey is part of the copyright law amendments initiated in 1995. This move was designed to combat piracy. It has proved to threaten freedom to publish in Turkey, without succeeding in curtailing book piracy.

Says Pere Vicens, President of IPA: "Book piracy has increased in Turkey in recent years. Over 50 % of all published materials purchased in Turkey seems to be pirated".

The IPA, like many other national or international organizations (Index on Censorship, European Writers Congress or International PEN), has already raised this issue twice with the Turkish authorities, this far without success. This time, and because Turkey wishes to join the European Union, the IPA and IBF hope that their call will be more successful in leading the Turkish authorities to abandon the compulsory banderole system, a system which limits the exercise of freedom of expression.

**For further information or to receive a copy of the joint IPA/IBF Letter:**

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**MORE ABOUT IPA:**

The International Publisher Association was founded in 1896 and represents the publishing industry worldwide through 78 national, regional and specialized publishers associations in 66 countries. IPA was founded to promote the lifeblood of publishing: Copyright protection and freedom to publish, internationally. IPA is an accredited Non-Governmental Organization enjoying a consultative status to the United Nations.

**MORE ABOUT IBF:**

Founded in 1955, the International Booksellers Federation is an international, non-governmental organization of booksellers associations and booksellers from around the world. Its purpose is to enable booksellers associations and individual booksellers to connect, meet, interact and co-operate, by exchanging information and experiences, and by developing ideas.