



ADELAIDE
PEN

International PEN Charter

The International PEN Charter is the historic statement of vision and aspiration which unites the membership of International PEN world wide. It was developed in the 1930s, long before modern human rights declarations and remains an expression of the ethics and principles which inspired International PEN's creation. The charter may be summarised as follows:

PEN affirms that;

- 1 **LITERATURE**, national though it be in origin, knows no frontiers, and should remain common currency among nations in spite of political or international upheavals.
- 2 **IN ALL CIRCUMSTANCES**, and particularly in time of war, works of art and libraries, the heritage 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 favor of good understanding and mutual respect among 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 the world.
- 4 **PEN STANDS FOR** the principle of unhampered transmission of thought within each nation and among 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, as well as throughout the world wherever this is possible.
- 5 **PEN DECLARES** for a free press and opposes arbitrary censorship in time of peace. It believes that the necessary advance of the world toward a more highly organized political and economic order renders free criticism of governments, administrations, and institutions imperative. And since freedom implies voluntary restraint, members pledge themselves to oppose such evils of a free press as mendacious publication, deliberate falsehood, and distortion of facts for political and personal ends.