

Issue 6: January/February 2007

# IFEX Advocacy Action News

*A bulletin for IFEX members to promote campaigns and share advocacy information*

## IN THIS ISSUE:

### IFEX CAMPAIGNS AND ADVOCACY SUPPORT PROGRAMME

page 1-2

- New Campaigns Website Launched
- IFEX Advocacy Action News continues bi-monthly with member support!
- Member Advocacy Highlights

### 'ROAR' Rapid and Organised Action Response

page 2

- Turkey: IPA/WiPC Internal Appeal on Article 301 in Memory of Hrant Dink
- Sri Lanka: International Press Freedom Mission Joint Statement
- Egypt: HRInfo and EOHR Joint Actions
- Tunisia: IFEX-TMG Joint Action

### MEMBER ADVOCACY FOCUS

page 3

- International PEN calls for Collaboration: China, the Olympics and Free Expression Advocacy

### TOPICS AND TOOLS

page 4

- RSF Issues 2007 Annual Press Freedom Report
- How Does ROAR Work?
- Crafting an IFEX Internal Appeal for Joint Action

## IFEX CAMPAIGNS and ADVOCACY SUPPORT PROGRAMME

### **New IFEX Campaigns and Advocacy Support Programme Website launched**

On 7 February 2007 IFEX launched a new section of the IFEX website dedicated to campaigning and advocacy among IFEX members that raises visibility of member activities in the international community. Check out the site for: current IFEX member campaigns and advocacy efforts, opportunities to participate in joint actions, an archive of IFEX Advocacy Action News, and more! Go to: <http://campaigns.ifex.org/en/index.html>

### **IFEX Advocacy Action News moves to bi-monthly production**

Many thanks for the positive response from IFEX members who filled out the IFEX Advocacy Action News bulletin evaluation survey. Based on your input, the bulletin will continue as a bi-monthly publication and will be sent to members during the first week of every second month in 2007. We hope to provide forthcoming bulletins in all three IFEX official languages, and to incorporate as many suggestions offered by members as possible! The January/February issue is released in the first week of February. Watch for the next issue in the first week of April 2007.

### **Member Advocacy Highlights:**

**International press freedom mission to Pakistan:** In response to the deteriorating press freedom situation in Pakistan, the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) is sending an urgent international mission to Pakistan from 21 to 25 February 2007 to draw attention to the increasing number of attacks on journalists. The mission will be comprised of international and local delegates, including IFJ, the UK-based National Union of Journalists (NUJ), Free Media Movement (FMM), Reporters Without Borders (RSF) and the editor of the New Delhi-based "Telegraph". Organised in collaboration with the Pakistan Federal Union of Journalists (PFUJ),

the mission will meet with key government figures to address the situation and discuss a resolution. Contact [ifjsouthasia@hotmail.com](mailto:ifjsouthasia@hotmail.com) for more information.

**CJFE, PEN and RSF Canada act to promote human rights in Burma:** In collaboration with other non-governmental organizations, Canadian Journalists for Free Expression (CJFE), PEN Canada and Reporters Without Borders' Canada office sent a letter urging the Canadian government to provide political and financial support to the democratic institutions of Burma, to impose tougher economic measures against Burma's military regime, and to work towards a binding resolution on Burma at the UN Security Council. Free expression continues to be a critical issue in Burma. For more information on censorship in Burma, visit: <http://www.ifex.org/en/content/view/full/145/>

## RAPID AND ORGANISED ACTION RESPONSE (ROAR)

Rapid and Organised Action Response (ROAR) is part of the IFEX Campaigns Programme strategy to support rapid, short-term follow-up actions on free expression violations. Write to [campaigns@ifex.org](mailto:campaigns@ifex.org) if your organisation would like more information.

### **Recent Joint actions supported by IFEX members:**

**Turkey:** Following the assassination of journalist and editor Hrant Dink outside the offices of his newspaper "Agos" in Istanbul on 19 January 2007, more than **20** IFEX members, led by the International Publishers Association (IPA) and International PEN's Writers in Prison Committee (WiPC) urged the Turkish Authorities to repeal Article 301 of the Turkish Penal Code. This provision makes it a crime to "insult Turkishness" and under it, scores of writers, journalists, publishers and intellectuals, including Hrant Dink, have been sued for what they have written and published. Link to joint action: <http://www.ifex.org/en/content/view/full/256/>

**Sri Lanka:** The International Press Freedom and Freedom of Expression Mission to Sri Lanka, which includes 7 IFEX members, has urged the President of Sri Lanka to address the negative impact that new emergency regulations, and a de-facto circulation ban on newspapers, are having on press freedom. The mission also urged the government to pay attention to UN Security Council Resolution 1738, which underscores the State's obligations under international law to end impunity, and urged respect for the professional independence and rights of media practitioners. A mission report was prepared by members of the mission and released in January 2007 called "Press Freedom and Freedom of Expression in Sri Lanka: The Struggle for Survival". Link to the joint action: <http://www.ifex.org/en/content/view/full/80734/>

**Egypt:** 22 IFEX members, led by the Egyptian Organization for Human Rights (EOHR) and the Arabic Network for Human Rights Information (HRinfo), called on Egyptian President Mohamed Hosni Mubarak to enact his promise in 2004 to abolish imprisonment of journalists in publication cases, particularly with relation to "insult laws". Link to the joint action: <http://www.ifex.org/en/content/view/full/80252/>

**Egypt:** HRinfo, CIHRS and other Egyptian human rights organisations called on the Supreme Council of Press (SCP) to comply with Egyptian law and not hinder the publication of the newspaper "Al-Badiel". The groups said the newspaper has met all the legal requirements for publication. Link to the joint action: <http://www.ifex.org/en/content/view/full/80858/>

**Tunisia:** The 16 members of the IFEX Tunisia Monitoring Group (TMG) expressed concern that Tunisian authorities arbitrarily ordered the publisher Dar Assabah not to issue its new weekly magazine, "L'Expression", and banned the French magazine "Historia Thématique". Link to the joint action: <http://www.ifex.org/en/content/view/full/80607/>

## **WATCH FOR INTERNAL APPEALS FOR JOINT ACTION – YOUR SIGNATURE IS NEEDED!!**

### **MEMBER ADVOCACY FOCUS**

#### **International PEN calls for Collaboration: China, the Olympics and Free Expression Advocacy**

In the lead-up to the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing, several IFEX members have launched campaigns to monitor, mobilise and advocate for free expression in China, where authorities have jailed and restricted journalists, political essayists and bloggers. There has been shared concern by various IFEX members that Chinese citizens working for domestic and foreign news agencies, and foreign correspondents, will be at risk when covering the event and reporting on politically sensitive stories around the Games.

In order to ensure that freedom of expression is upheld around this high-profile international event and to draw attention to ongoing human rights abuses carried out by the host government, IFEX members have dedicated resources to campaigning around these issues. Opportunities for support and collaboration across the network exist to realize various campaigning goals, as demonstrated by the examples highlighted below.

In this MEMBER ADVOCACY FOCUS, Carl Morten Iversen, a member of International PEN's campaign steering group, explains the organisation's campaign strategy and makes a call to seek further collaboration with other IFEX members to maximise impact.

*By Carl Morten Iversen*

International PEN, like several other international human rights NGOs, is currently planning a comprehensive campaign focusing on human rights and freedom of expression infringements in connection with the August 2008 Beijing Olympic Games.

The kind of leverage that the Olympic Games represent for the international free expression community towards Chinese authorities cannot be ignored. Already at the bi-annual PEN Writers in Prison conference in Istanbul in March 2006, ideas for a China campaign were launched. The plans were later confirmed at the International PEN World Congress in Berlin in May and an international steering group has now been established.

The idea is to focus on freedom of expression infringements in China from March through December 2008 in order to monitor any changes regarding Chinese authorities' stifling of dissident voices. The campaign will run both on an international and local level. International PEN's Writers in Prison Committee (WiPC) is planning a number of activities, including a campaign website and a possible mission in September-October 2007. Within their fields of expertise and local capacity, PEN centres around the world will follow up with letter campaigns and information specially targeted at journalists and athletes.

Campaign strategy was also one of the themes at a regional Asia-Pacific PEN conference in Hong Kong, held from 2 to 5 February 2007. At a special session attended by several Chinese writers and representatives from Chinese PEN centres, the plans for the campaign received unanimous support. The Chinese participants stressed the importance of sending an International PEN delegation as soon as possible and that this delegation should try to meet with Chinese dissidents and imprisoned writers as well as with Chinese authorities. The importance of providing comprehensive information about the campaign to a number of recipients, including international media, embassies in Beijing and their human rights officers, schools and universities focusing on Chinese relations, etc. and also openness about this information campaign, was also underlined by the Chinese writers.

The campaign steering group is also seeking information from other groups planning similar campaigns, with a particular view to possible cooperation.

Details for the whole campaign will be presented later this year.

For more information please contact:

Carl Morten Iversen, Member of campaign steering group, International PEN and Secretary General, Norwegian PEN

See: <http://www.internationalpen.org.uk/> <http://www.norskpen.no>

Tel: + 47 22479220, (mobile): + 47 926 88 023, fax: + 47 22479201, e-mail: [pen@norskpen.no](mailto:pen@norskpen.no)

See other IFEX member's campaigns for freedom of expression around the 2008 Olympic Games in China:

Reporters sans frontières "Boycott Beijing" campaign:

[http://www.rsf.org/rubrique.php3?id\\_rubrique=174](http://www.rsf.org/rubrique.php3?id_rubrique=174)

Human Rights Watch "Beijing 2008" campaign:

<http://www.hrw.org/campaigns/china/beijing08/>

Committee to Protect Journalists November 2006 visit to the International Olympic Committee:

<http://www.cpj.org/news/2006/asia/china15nov06na.html>

## Topics and Tools

### **Articles and Sites of Interest:**

#### **RSF issues 2007 Annual Press Freedom Report**

The survey, published on 1 February 2007, reports on press freedom in 98 countries and includes the main violations of journalists' rights in 2006 and regional aspects of media and Internet freedom. The report (in English, French, Spanish and Arabic) can be read at <http://www.rsf.org> and downloaded in its entirety or by region.

### **Advocacy Tools:**

#### **How does ROAR work at IFEX?**

ROAR is the *Rapid and Organised Action Response* mechanism at the IFEX Clearing House that involves staff members of the Alerts, Outreach, Communiqué and Campaigns teams who jointly respond to calls and alerts from IFEX members about free expression violations, with the aim of supporting broader, organized advocacy among IFEX members. This may include support to the development of internal appeals for joint action, wider letter-writing campaigns, highlighting advocacy efforts in the IFEX Communiqué and IFEX Advocacy Action News, or developing short term campaigns with members. For further information see:

<http://campaigns.ifex.org/en/about.html> or contact [campaigns@ifex.org](mailto:campaigns@ifex.org)

#### **Preparing an IFEX Internal Appeal for Joint Action**

Internal appeals for joint action are a fast and effective way to rally support among the IFEX membership for effective action in the face of urgent free expression violations. The response rate of IFEX members to an appeal is typically high. Joint actions are of little or no cost to members, other than the time spent drafting the appeal and distributing the final product. Producing a joint action helps build collaborative relationships among IFEX members and can lead to future joint campaigns, while significantly improving international visibility of specific violations cases. It also allows IFEX members to take part in, or support, a campaign without having to travel, spend needed funds or depend on external experts to orient advocacy work. For

tips on preparing an IFEX Internal Appeal for Joint action see:  
<http://www.ifex.org/download/en/IFEXCampaignHandbook.pdf>.

For recent examples of completed joint actions by IFEX members, see:  
<http://www.ifex.org/en/content/view/full/77070/>.

For help developing an internal appeal or to receive a draft template, please contact:  
[campaigns@ifex.org](mailto:campaigns@ifex.org).

***Call to IFEX members:***

- ~ Want to start a campaign? Need advice or support?**
  - ~ Tell us about your organisation's campaigns and advocacy efforts**
  - ~ Share articles, websites and campaigns tools**
- Contact the IFEX Campaigns Coordinator at [campaigns@ifex.org](mailto:campaigns@ifex.org)**