



ICORN international cities of refuge network

## The ICORN Charter

3<sup>rd</sup> June 2010

**I** ICORN is an independent international organisation of member cities and regions, offering safe havens for persecuted writers; advancing freedom of expression, defending democratic values and promoting international solidarity.

**II** The ICORN Charter builds on historic and collective assertions regarding human rights and freedom of expression, as written into the charter of International PEN and in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Its Article 19 is foundational to ICORN, its writers and its members:

*Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive, and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.*

**III** Any persecuted writer can apply to become an ICORN guest writer. The applicant is either:

- a) At risk as a direct consequence of his/her writing – whether in danger of being killed, abducted, physically attacked or “disappeared”.
- b) Sentenced to (or at risk of being sentenced to) a prison term by the authorities in his/her country as a direct consequence of his/her writing.
- c) Unable to express him/herself freely through his/her writing for fear of persecution due to actual or probable actions of the government or non-government entities of the country where he/she resides.

**IV** ICORN is a dynamic, flexible and participatory organisation. Any city can become an ICORN member. The ICORN member cities provide protection for persecuted writers, inviting, hosting and integrating them with their local communities. The ICORN member cities and their guest writers connect in a global network of solidarity, creativity and mutual interaction.