

## **Celebrities in the music, book and film industry request the German chancellor's support in the protection of intellectual property**

**Berlin, 25 April 2008** – On the occasion of World Intellectual Property Day, some 200 composers and musicians, writers and publishers, and actors and filmmakers issued an open letter asking the German chancellor to make the protection of cultural works in the digital world a “top priority”. “On the Internet in particular, millions of music tracks, films and audiobooks are illegally shared and downloaded without the creative minds behind these products getting fair compensation,” reads the letter, which was signed among others by Herbert Grönemeyer, Tokio Hotel, Thomas Quasthoff, Amelie Fried, Julia Frank, Andreas Langenscheidt, Til Schweiger, Bernd Eichinger and Stefan Arndt. While established artists can still live off past successes, young, up-and-coming talent is especially hard-hit by Internet piracy. “In the long term, this will reduce the cultural diversity in our country and we will gamble away one of our most important resources for the future,” the letter continues.

To solve the problem, the signatories point to initiatives in France and England, where government pressure has resulted in Internet providers being held responsible to a greater extent in the fight against Internet piracy from now on. After several “warnings” by their Internet provider, subscribers can expect their contract to be cancelled if they refuse to discontinue their illegal doings. According to estimates, the use of – usually illegal – file-sharing sites accounts for a full 70 percent of all Internet traffic in Germany. “While the telecommunications industry makes billions and benefits massively from the use of illegal content, it refuses to accept any responsibility for protecting intellectual property,” write the creatives.

The open letter was written upon the suggestion of artists and was coordinated by various organizations and lobbies of the creative industry, including the Alliance of German Producers - Film & Television, the German Stationers' Company, the German Music Industry Association (BVMI), the GEMA, the Federation Against Copyright Theft (GVU) and the Association of Independent Labels (vut). “As one of the most important growth industries, the cultural and creative sector needs dependable parameters. Internet piracy is a topic that concerns the creative industry, the telecommunications industry and consumer and privacy protectionists alike, so it can only be solved in a cross-departmental approach,” said Dieter Gorny, Chairman of the German Music Industry Association, speaking on behalf of the affected branches of industry.

Video statements by individual signatories can be viewed at [www.musikindustrie.de](http://www.musikindustrie.de).

The signatories to the letter in alphabetical order:

2raumwohnung, Daniel Acht, Fatih Akin, Götz Alsmann, Stefan Arndt, Bob Arnz, Uli Aselmann, Andreas Auth, Lutz Bandte, Wolf Bauer, Claudia Baumhöver, BAP, Dr. h. c. Wolfgang Beck, Christian Becker, Oliver Berben, Christoph Biemann, Julia Boehme, Claus Boje, Ranja Bonalana, Dr. Jörg Bong, Prof. Dr. Heinrich Breloer, Silke Brix, Till Brönner, Burkhard Brozat, Prof. Christian Bruhn, Francesco Bruletti, Anni Brunner, Detlev Buck, Sven Burgemeister, Leander Carell, Yvonne Catterfeld, Roger Cicero, Culcha Candela, Jakob Claussen, Caroline Daube, Samy Deluxe, Renan

Demirkan, Joy Denalane, Helmut Dietl, Die Labbese, DJ Ötzi, Klaus Doldinger, Bernd Eichinger, EL\*KE, Peter Eötvös, Jörg Evers, Dieter Falk, Dr. Wolfgang Ferchl, Axel Fischer, Helene Fischer, Uschi Flacke, Julia Franck, Egon L. Frauenberger, Amelie Fried, Molly von Fürstenberg, Joseline Gassen-Hesse, Hans W. Geißendörfer, Bijan Ghawami, Dr. Peter Gönitz, Ulrich Granseyer, Herbert Grönemeyer, Ludwig Güttler, Till Hagen, Martin Hagemann, Kirsten Hager, Klaus Hanslbauer, Titus Häussermann, Peter Heppner, Max Herre, Gerd Hesse, Sabine Hirler, Mischa Hofmann, Dr. G.-Jürgen Hogrefe, Höhner, Dr. Gottfried Honnefelder, Klaus Humann, Viola Jäger, Christoph John, Juli, Udo Jürgens, Dr. Joachim Kaps, Ewa Karlstroem, Andreas Langenscheidt, Toni Kater, Joachim Kaufmann, Georg Kessler, Dietrich zu Klampen, Klaus & Klaus, Alexander Klaws, Patrick Knippel, Astrid Kollex, René Kollo, Meike Kordes, Harald Kügler, Mickie Krause, Joachim Król, Michael Krüger, Dieter Thomas Kuhn, Peter Lackner, LaFee, Prof. Ulrich Limmer, Udo Lindenberg, Peter Lohmann, Annett Louisan, Peter Maffay, Manfred Mai, Martin May, Helge Malchow, Marquess, Marc Marshall, Jens Meurer, Reinhard Mey, Kari Meyer, MIA., Michael Mittermeier, Monrose, Martin Moszkowicz, Christoph Müller, Nobelpenner, Oomph!, Margit Osterwold, Erich Öxler, Wolfgang Pampel, Stefan Peters, Dr. Joerg Pfuhl, Uli Putz, Thomas Quasthoff, Rabaue, Karl-Klaus Rabe, Frank Ramond, Reamonn, Uschi Reich, Aribert Reimann, Steffen Reuter, Revolverheld, Dr. Andreas Richter, Prof. Dr. h. c. Wolfgang Rihm, Rosanna Rocci, Hilke Rosenboom, Ursula Rosengart, Rosenstolz, Jennifer Rostock, Dr. Christian Rotta, Sasha, Prof. Dr. Enjott Schneider, Philipp Schepmann, Schiller, Monika Schlitzer, Jörn Schlönvoigt, Bernhard Schmid, Kim Oliver Schmidt, Dr. Patricia Scholten, Walter Scholz, Barbara Schöneberger, Atze Schröder, Hermann Schulz, Dr. Susanne Schüssler, Jan Schütte, Til Schweiger, Scooter, Seeed, Mark von Seydlitz, Rodion Shchedrin, Ralph Siegel, Söhne Mannheims, Martin Spencker, Tom Spieß, Dagmar Stehle, Dr. Jörg D. Stiebner, Ulrich Stiehm, Dr. Henning Stumpp, Alexander Thies, Tokio Hotel, Imre Török, Judy Tossell, Matthias Ulmer, Andreas Ulmke-Smeaton, Ulla Unseld-Berkéwicz, Philip Voges, Prof. Lothar Voigtländer, Neele Vollmar, Dr. Ralf Weigand, Stefan Wagnershausen, Peter Wackel, Wagner Love, Joachim Weidler, Jan Weiler, Max Wiedemann, Ursula Woerner, Johanna Wokalek, Sönke Wortmann, Peter Zenk, Tom Zickler

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**About the German Music Industry Association:**

The **Bundesverband Musikindustrie** (German Music Industry Association) represents more than 350 labels and companies in the music industry, equal to about 90% of the German music market. In the **interests of its members**, the association addresses issues relating to the music industry in the context of German and European politics. By means of **communication** the association profiles the industry inwards and outwards. The industry-related **services** offered, such as legal advice and PhonoNet, help to support the day-to-day work of its members. In addition, the German Phono Academy functions as a cultural institute to the German music industry with various projects including SchoolTour, providing a significant contribution to basic music training in Germany. [www.musikindustrie.de](http://www.musikindustrie.de), [www.school-tour.de](http://www.school-tour.de), [www.echopop.de](http://www.echopop.de), [www.echoklassik.de](http://www.echoklassik.de), [www.pro-musicorg.de](http://www.pro-musicorg.de), [www.phononet.de](http://www.phononet.de), [www.musicline.de](http://www.musicline.de)