

Open letter on World Intellectual Property Day

Dear Mrs. Chancellor,

Tomorrow is World Intellectual Property Day. As composers and musicians, writers and publishers, as actors and filmmakers we very much welcome the fact that this day is designed to build awareness for the value of intellectual property. Unfortunately, we witness on a daily basis how the right to appropriate protection of our works is simply disregarded. **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.** Last year alone, more than 300 million pieces of music were illegally downloaded from the Internet in Germany. Ten times the number that were sold legally. Several million people regularly help themselves to internet file-sharing forums and other illegal online sources. And although this hurts not only those directly affected, but also the general public – via taxes and jobs lost – the government is practically standing on the sidelines without getting involved. **In China, your efforts to protect the interests of German industry from product piracy are exemplary. Please do the same in Germany to build respect for intellectual property protection.** To date, the only way for artists, creative minds and the industries involved to defend themselves is to take the distributors of illegal products to court. But intellectual property is – as Mark Getty, head of the self-named image empire, once put it – the oil of the 21st century. **The underlying insight is that the cultural and creative industry is already and more importantly will continue to be the engine driving growth and prosperity.** Without music and audiobooks we wouldn't need iPods, without films no flat-screen TVs, and without broadband content high-speed Internet access would be superfluous. At this point, the use of – unfortunately usually illegal – file-sharing sites

accounts for a full 70 percent of all Internet traffic in Germany. **But while the telecommunications industry, for instance, makes billions and benefits massively from the use of illegal content, it refuses to accept any responsibility for protecting intellectual property.** On European level, more and more countries are realising that mass legal prosecution of individuals on the Internet can only be a stopgap, and that technological progress and intellectual property protection must not conflict with each other. France and England lead the way with exemplary initiatives. **In those countries, Internet providers and the music and film industry are called on to develop ways to achieve a fair balancing of the interests of everyone involved, under governmental supervision.**

Dear Mrs. Chancellor, we realise that there are many political and legal hurdles to be cleared on this path. **We therefore ask you to adopt this topic and make it a top priority.** Because while established artists can still live off past successes, Internet piracy hits young, up-and-coming talent especially hard. **In the long term, this will reduce the cultural and creative diversity in our country and we will gamble away one of our most important resources for the future.**

Hoping for your support, we remain
Yours sincerely,

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 Gölitz, 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, Monroe, 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, Seead, 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