

**ITI ACTION COMMITTEE FOR ARTISTS RIGHTS**

www.artistsrights.iti-germany.de

**REPORT OF ACTIVITIES 2014–2016****Office Bearers**Working group:

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Cheikh Okbaoui (Algeria), Ambroise Mbia (Cameroon), Alexandra Rice (Belgium), Fanyia Williams (United Kingdom), Hamadou Mandé (Burkina Faso), Gad Kaynar (Israel), Tatjana Ažman (Slovenia).

**ACTIVITIES****2014**

- October-December: Implementation of new Word-Press based website and implementation of a professional mailing system for the newsletter (12 ACAR members, 42 subscribers, plus forwarding by members and the General secretariat). Website and mailing system are maintained by the German centre. 2 newsletters with the recent entries of the ACAR news, calls for action and cases from the website were produced and mailed: 10 November and 4 December.

**2015**

- January, Brussels (Belgium): Ann Mari Engel and Thomas Engel attended the „Winter Camp“ of the Artists Rights Justice (ARJ) international working group. ACAR became a member of ARJ. ARJ has presently 20 international member organizations, 3 allies and 5 individual members. ARJ is an independent cross-sector working group (arts and human rights) set up in 2012 under the framework of the European civil society dialogue platform, “Access to Culture” (see <http://cultureactioneurope.org/milestone/arj-arts-rights-justice>)

For our committee ARJ became a valuable source for information exchange on violation of artist rights and for exchange of experiences in the field.

- May, Cairo (Egypt) ACAR was invited for a conference on Theatre and Censorship in Cairo (Egypt). Thomas Engel attended and gave a lecture on the work of international networks for freedom of expression: “Attacks and Defenses: The Public Space of Theatre”

- September, Brussels (Belgium). Members meeting of ARJ. Ann Marie Engel and Thomas attended and added an ACAR board meeting.
- October, Berlin (Germany): Thomas Engel introduced to members of the German Parliament the growing problems in worldwide artists mobility and the unsatisfying visa issuing practice in Europe as a failure in fulfilling Article 16 of the UNESCO Convention on Cultural Diversity.
- 5 newsletters were produced and mailed: 6 January, 16 February, 3 March, 24 November, 21 December

## 2016

February, Dibba (Fujairah, UAE): Ann Mari Engel and Thomas Engel attended the ITI Joint Committee Meeting.

April: Ann Mari Engel compiled the March- April 2016 ARJ Internal Newsfeed with information and cases

7 September. Berlin (Germany): Thomas Engel represented ACAR at the first consultation with the German Foreign Office on Visa questions and artists mobility with the cultural sector. The consultation was initiated by the German UNESCO commission.

6 -9 October, Beirut (Lebanon): Thomas Engel represented ACAR at the ietm Satellite Meeting on "Freedom of Expression" and was guest speaker at the opening panel.

5 November, Valencia (Spain): Bettina Sluzalek, board member of ITI Germany, attended the ARJ meeting at the ietm summit.

- 6 newsletters were produced and sent out: 5 February, 11 March, 15 May, 4 July, 23 September, 20 December.

An improved RSS newsfeed has been implemented to the website.

Every new ACAR post is displayed automatically at the website of the German centre.

## 2017

January: ACAR has sent out a call to all European ITI centres for submission of cases of artists rights violations in Europe with an emphasis on Poland, the Netherlands and Spain for the United Nations Special Rapporteur and UN Committee on economic, social and cultural rights.

February: ACAR has sent a letter to the Turkish government expressing ITI's deep concern about the dismissals of colleagues – professors of the theatre department of the Ankara University as well as all the many Turkish artists and intellectuals being suspected and threatened within the past months.

1 newsletter has been sent out on 17 March.

## ACAR reported and was engaged for 8 personal cases:

- **Tania Bruguera** (visual artist and performer, Cuba), arrested on December 30, 2014 for staging *Tatlin's Whisper #6*. Letter of support
- **Miha Turšič** (director and co-founder of the Cultural Centre of European Space Technologies (KSEVT) in Vitanje, Slovenia), went on hunger strike on 1st of October 2015 for better financing of culture. Report.
- **Mariam Diarra** (dancer and choreographer, Mali), was refused on 18 December 2015 an entry visa on the French territory for a concert and a masterclass at the Africolor festival (Seine-Saint-Denis). Report.
- **Mohammed Abu Sakha** (Palestine), performer and trainer was arrested by Israeli military and sentenced by a military court to administrative detention, without any charges. (Report, petition, follow up until 2017).
- **Jelili Atiku** (performer from Lagos, Nigeria) was arrested on Monday 18 January 2016 and arraigned on criminal charges of "constituting public disturbance, and inciting the public with his performance". (Report)
- **Alfonso Lázaro an Raúl García** from the group *Titeres desde Abajo* (Puppets from Below), Granada (Spain), have been imprisoned for a street theatre show on February 6<sup>th</sup>, 2016. Both have been released from jail on February 10. but are still under indictment. (Report, petition).
- **Pyotr Pavlensky**, performance artist from Russia, was charged in Moscow with vandalism for setting fire to the main doors of the headquarters of the Federal Security Service on 9 November 2015. On 26 January 2016 he was detained in a psychiatric hospital in Moscow and is being denied access to his lawyer and the outside world. Pavlensky was released on June 8, 2016 (report)
- **Silvanos Mudzvova**, theatre actor and producer from Zimbabwe, was arrested in Harare on April 13, 2016 for staging his new one man play "Missing Diamonds, I Need My Share" in front of the Parliament building. Before, on on 13 September 2015 he already was abducted by from his home and tortured. (Report)

Cases and information on violation of artist's rights have been reported partly by ACAR members, partly ARJ and by other information sources. All published information has been double checked for available original sources.

Report submitted by: Thomas ENGEL, Germany (Coordinator)