

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

15th September 2011



PEN International Assembly approves the Girona Manifesto and calls for protection and promotion of linguistic diversity.

Today at PEN International's 77th annual Congress the PEN General Assembly approved the Girona Manifesto which calls for the protection and promotion of linguistic diversity. This Manifesto developed by PEN's Translation and Linguistic Rights Committee is a significant step toward protecting and promoting all world languages, including those in danger of disappearing.

John Ralston Saul, International President of PEN said, "Many languages are in danger. Many are actually disappearing. The loss of one's language, and through that loss much of one's culture, can be seen as the ultimate removal of freedom of expression".

The Girona Manifesto is a ten point document designed to be translated and disseminated widely as a tool to defend linguistic diversity around the world.

Josep Maria Terricabras, Chair of the Translations and Linguistic Rights Committee of PEN International said, "Language defines us. To lose one's language is to lose one's voice, identity and spirit. Languages are the homes we live in"

Notes to editors:

PEN International celebrates literature and promotes freedom of expression. Founded in 1921, our global community of writers now comprises 144 Centres spanning more than 100 countries. Our programmes, campaigns, events and publications connect writers and readers for global solidarity and cooperation. PEN International is a non-political organization and holds consultative status at the United Nations and UNESCO.

Please view the attached documents to see the Girona Manifesto.

For more information and to request interviews please contact our press office:

penoffice@pen-international.org | press@pen-international.org | + 44 (0) 20 7405 0338.

Or contact our Executive Director Laura McVeigh: +44 (0)7824640527 www.pen-international.org