PEN upholds copyright protection for all writers in every part of the world and declares the following:

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4. Authors should have the right to trade freely in the copyright in their works.
5. It is a matter of choice for authors of works whether and what fee they charge for use of their works.
6. PEN International acknowledges that there are instances where governments may find it to be in the public interest to legislate exceptions to the exclusive rights of authors in the works they create. Any such exceptions must not unfairly prejudice the legitimate moral and economic interests of the author. For instance:
   • Where works are not commercially available in formats accessible to the print disabled, exceptions in domestic laws should allow for a reproduction to be made for or by a person with a print disability into an accessible format without a copyright infringement occurring. Any such copies made for the print disabled should only be made after a search for a commercial copy has been undertaken.
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8. Digital Rights Management systems applied to works should be supported by copyright legislation where necessary in order for copyright owners to exercise their copyright in works.
9. Digital reproductions of a work made on a significant scale, where no exception is in place and without the permission of the author of a work, constitute piracy. National legislation should contain appropriate punitive measures to deter piracy while ensuring that legitimate access to works is not impeded.
Going back to Britain’s Statute of Anne (the first copyright act) of 1710, humankind has recognized the need to enact laws to safeguard intellectual property. In 1886 the Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works was accepted, having been championed by Victor Hugo. It was then, and is now, an enlightened idea to acknowledge how individual creation and discovery elevates our collective humanity.

An author’s economic independence and autonomy is central to freedom of expression and encourages a diversity of voices, which in turn fosters democracy.

To deny authors the ability to earn monetary reward from their creative works is to deny the works’ value and their authors a livelihood. Using the intellectual property of an author without fair recompense, and in the absence of a legitimate legal exception to the author’s copyright, is theft.

PEN International believes that today, more than ever before, the rights of the individual creator are in peril from new technologies, policies and laws.