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International Actors Org Adopts SAG-AFTRA Declaration On Sexual Harassment

By David Robb on Oct 26, 2017 12:49 pm



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SAG-AFTRA has authored a declaration urging the entertainment industry around the world to work with unions and performers' organizations "to develop a long-term strategy to achieve a discrimination, harassment, and retaliation-free work environment." The declaration was approved unanimously by the executive committee of the International Federation of Actors, of which SAG-AFTRA is one of 87 member organizations.

"We are very proud to author and sponsor this declaration," said SAG-AFTRA president Gabrielle Carteris. "Sexual harassment and abuse is pervasive across nations and we are committed to working with our fellow [FIA](#) members to develop and implement educational and informational materials and best practices in this area. Working together we can help curtail this abuse now."

Said FIA president Ferne Downey: "The scandal involving Harvey Weinstein revealed problems that were all too familiar to women — and men — in our industry. We know that sexism in our industry is real. We know that there are sexual harassers who use their power to intimidate. And we know that this needs to change. And as union

leaders we are taking a stand – we seek nothing less than a major cultural shift. We will develop a long term strategy towards a zero-tolerance and harassment-free work environment.”

The declaration was issued during the FIA executive committee meeting in Zagreb, Croatia on behalf of the federation’s affiliated unions and performer organizations representing hundreds of thousands of actors and performing artists in more than 60 countries worldwide.

The declaration states that FIA “applauds the courage and commitment of the many performers that have spoken out in recent days about their experiences of sexual harassment and discrimination in the entertainment and media industry, despite the real risks of confronting the perpetrator of that harassment or discrimination,” and “condemns in the strongest terms any individual that has chosen to carry out sexual harassment, discrimination or retaliation for the reporting of sexual harassment.”

FIA has also directed its Global Diversity Working Group “to take appropriate measures on behalf of the Federation to prevent and reduce harassment, discrimination and retaliation through education, information sharing, establishing best practices, and providing support to FIA affiliates, including but not limited to, creating and distributing tool kits, designed to empower FIA affiliates to take prompt, effective action within their own jurisdictions.”

In other work on the topic, the executive committee hosted an informational panel in Zagreb that was moderated by SAG-AFTRA national executive director David White – also a FIA vice president – that discussed efforts underway to support and lift up the voices of individuals who have experienced harassment and develop effective, union-driven strategies for dealing with the issue. Other members of the panel included Zoe Angus, national director of the Equity Section of the Media Entertainment and Arts Alliance of Australia; Christine Payne, FIA vice-president and General Secretary of Equity UK; and Arden Ryshpan, executive director of Canadian Actors Equity Association.

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