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FIA CELEBRATES HISTORIC WIPO AUDIOVISUAL TREATY

Audiovisual Performers around the world recognized as having moral and economic rights

Beijing, China – Today, the International Federation of Actors (FIA) applauds the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) for achieving an international treaty to protect performers in film, TV as well as online and digital media. The Beijing Treaty will create a global standard, giving performers in audiovisual productions new moral and economic rights in the use of their work.

“The conclusion of this Treaty marks the end of 15 years of hard work for FIA and our member unions around the globe,” said FIA President Agnete Haaland. “The Beijing Treaty will make a clear difference in the lives of performers by helping us to get paid for use of our work, and giving us more control over our image and performance.”

The recognition that audiovisual performers have an ongoing interest in their work will be a tremendous boost for performers, particularly in countries that do not presently recognize these rights despite performers’ valuable contribution to the diversity of content, and to the success of many national audiovisual industries. The Treaty also brings the rights of audiovisual artists in line with those of recording artists. The 1996 WIPO Performances and Phonograms Treaty granted economic and moral rights to recording artists, but negotiations for audiovisual performers’ work had been stalled since 2000.

“The time is now. We encourage all member states to ratify the Treaty as soon as possible,” said FIA General Secretary Dominick Luquer. “New methods of digital distribution are completely reshaping the industries in which our members make a living. This Treaty will give performers critical rights that will help them control the legitimate exploitation of their work and benefit financially from the new digital reality.”

FIA had 23 delegates in Beijing, representing performers’ unions in Australia, Canada, Colombia, Denmark, France, Hungary, Japan, Norway, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States, to encourage the WIPO member States to finalize this landmark treaty.

Headquartered in Brussels, FIA is an international non-governmental organisation representing almost 100 performers’ trade unions, guilds and associations from more than 70 countries. It voices the professional concerns and interests of actors (in film, television, radio, theatre and live performance), broadcast professionals, dancers, singers, variety and circus artists, among others.

Beijing, June 26, 2012