



THE NEW ZEALAND
SOCIETY OF AUTHORS
(PEN NEW ZEALAND INC) TE PUNI KATUHI O AOTEAROA

75 years of working for writers

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Friday, 21 August

Society of Authors calls for NZ Government action on the Google Settlement

The New Zealand Society of Authors (PEN NZ Inc.) is demanding action from the Government on the Google Book Settlement as the deadline of 4 September for rights holders to 'opt out' looms. The Society is concerned that authors may take action that they could later regret because they don't feel they have the support of the Government in what is a complex international legal battle.

The Society asks the NZ Government to conduct an enquiry into how an out-of-court settlement between private parties in the US seems to over-ride the laws of this country with an agreement that sweeps away the intellectual property rights of copyright holders contrary to our law and without the knowledge or consent of our rightsholders. The Berne Convention, one of the oldest international copyright treaties, is intended to protect copyright, not give it away and we believe that the situation requires the NZ Government's intervention at the highest level.

Under Article 8 of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights everyone has the right to an effective remedy by the competent national tribunals for acts violating the fundamental rights granted by the constitution or by law. It is the responsibility of our Government to protect our copyright and our national identity.

The New Zealand Society of Authors (PEN NZ Inc.) has contacted MPs and opposition party representatives and we are disappointed at the lack of response. We believe this to be one of the most important issues involving our authors in our history, and on behalf of our members we call for the support they deserve.

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