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Freemuse report on Art Under Threat in 2016

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Freemuse has released its latest report **Art Under Threat in 2016** with annual statistics on censorship and attacks on artistic freedom in 2016, registering a continuing and 'worrying trend of artistic freedom increasingly coming under threat.'

Freemuse registered **1,028 attacks on artists** and violations of their rights in 2016 across **78 countries**, continuing a worrying trend of artistic freedom increasingly coming under threat. The number of cases registered in 2016 more than doubled the amount in 2015, increasing by 119%, rising from 469 attacks. Of those more than one thousand cases, Freemuse documented **188 total serious violations of artistic freedom and 840 acts of censorship**.

Freemuse divides attacks on artistic freedom into "serious violations" – which include killings, abductions, attacks, imprisonments, prosecutions and persecutions/threats – and acts of censorship. Acts of censorship are also serious concerns, but separating them from the rest helps to distinguish the nuanced global picture of the artistic freedom world, and the difference

between having an art work banned from the other categories which have even more severe consequences for an artist's life and family.

The increase in the case number can partially be explained by the fact that Freemuse, alongside its partners and expanding network, has continued to improve its documentation methods and increasingly receives more information through its strengthening network. Additionally, the issue of artistic freedom, especially in a year that is seeing a rise in populism and nationalistic views, continues to gain attention, resulting in more bodies and organisations reporting on incidents when artists are being silenced.

In the case of serious violations, **music continued to be the art form that suffered the most violations of artistic freedom** with 86 cases, or 46% of total serious violations. In 2015, Freemuse also registered 86 serious violations for music.

2016, however, saw a **rise in serious violations on theatre and visual arts**. Theatre ranked second, up from fourth place in 2015, for serious violations with 32 cases registered in 2016. Visual arts ranked third, up from fifth place in 2015, with 27 cases registered in 2016. Combined, music, theatre and visual arts, accounted for 77% of worst affected art forms for serious violations.

FREEMUSE – THE WORLD FORUM ON MUSIC AND CENSORSHIP is an independent international membership organisation advocating and defending freedom of expression for musicians and composers worldwide.

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