

PRESS RELEASE

UK Creators Demand Prime Minister Recognise Creators' Human Rights And Protect Copyright Now

As the Prime Minister prepares to meet President Trump during the US state visit, over 70 of the UK's leading creators and creative organisations have issued a powerful open letter demanding the Government explain its failure to protect the rights of UK copyright holders by upholding international human rights standards.

The letter, signed by creative organisations including the News Media Association, UK Music, Pan MacMillan and Getty Images, calls on the Prime Minister to justify the Government's "active ignoring" of UK copyright holders' rights. Also adding their voices are cultural icons including Robbie Williams, Moira Buffini, Sir Mick Jagger, Annie Lennox, Sir Paul McCartney, Sting, Kate Bush, Elton John, Neil Tennant and Becky Hill.

The signatories specifically demand that the Government set out its justification for failing to enforce the rights of UK copyright holders, as required by international and UK human rights law. They also ask why, during the passage of the Data (Use and Access) Act, the Government blocked the transparency and enforcement mechanisms demanded by rights holders, despite clear and ongoing breaches.

Calling on the Government to remember its obligations to the UK's 2.4 million creative workers, acclaimed singer-songwriter Elton John said:

"Administration of copyright must be transparent. And it must have an artist's full permission. These two principles are the bedrock of our industry and crucial for the survival of future generations of world-beating UK creatives. What is being waved through leaves the door wide open for an artist's life work to be stolen, skimmed and scraped by Big Tech AI companies. We will not accept this and we will not let the Government forget their election promises to support our creative industries."

Signatory Robert Smith, lead vocalist of The Cure, added:

"The UK Government should not be valuing corporate interests above the rights of its citizens. It should not be giving away our cultural heritage and our creative future to Silicon Valley. It should instead be standing up to the Big Tech AI companies that continue to ignore the many long-established laws of copyright. Artists and creators must retain control over their own work; any eroding of this basic right is simply wrong."

Rising star Nectar Woode, featured on BBC Radio 1's *Future Artists*, argued:

“Artists should have ownership over our work 100% of the time. We shouldn't have to live in fear that our creativity will be used against us one day.”

The letter makes clear that the Government's current position - refusing to take steps to make existing law enforceable - risks ceding control over the UK's creative economy and the rights of its citizens to overseas interests. The UK Government will look to finalise a tech trade agreement with the US during President Trump's visit, with Ministers keen that AI forms a key component of any deal struck.

During the passage of the Data (Use and Access) Act, the former Secretary of State for Science, Innovation and Technology Peter Kyle and former Creative Industries Minister Chris Bryant committed to creating a Parliamentary Working Group so that the Commons and Lords could have greater input into policy development. This Group has yet to be constituted, and both left their roles in the recent reshuffle. Initial meetings of Industry Working Groups – bringing together creative and tech stakeholders – have taken place, but reports have criticised the lack of UK AI representation, leading to fears that British tech companies are being ignored in favour of supporting larger US-based competitors.

Baroness Beeban Kidron, who tabled amendments during the passage of the Data (Use and Access) Act that would have allowed UK creatives to assert their rights, said:

“The Government have asked the creative sector to trust in their process, then they packed their Industry Working Groups with US interests, made multiple deals with AI companies who have stolen copyright material, and then Ministers left the building. Following the reshuffle, it is for the Prime Minister himself to reset the relationship between government and industry.

“If the Government cannot grasp the economic or cultural importance of this issue, perhaps this action – setting out the clear contravention of international and UK human rights law - will help clarify the seriousness of their position. It's deeply regrettable that it has come to this, but by prioritising the short-term optics of data centre announcements and trade deals, they are knowingly undermining the foundations of the UK's creative industries.”

-----ENDS-----

For media enquiries, call 07512024911 or email Sebastian.Cuttill@newsmediauk.org

You can find the letter from the UK's leading creators and creative organisations attached to the email containing this Press Release