



WIPO Standing Committee on Copyright and Related Rights by IFLA (2010)

21st Session: Geneva, 8-12 November 2010

Agenda item 7: Limitations and exceptions

Intervention by IFLA: International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions

Thank you, Mr Chairman, for inviting us to intervene.

IFLA, The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions, representing libraries from more than 150 nations, appreciates the focus of the SCCR on exceptions and limitations for the visually impaired, libraries and archives and education. We are particularly pleased by the widespread support expressed earlier this week by so many member states from all over the globe for substantive discussion on the needs of libraries and archives in relation to exceptions and limitations. As the distinguished delegate from Australia said yesterday, libraries and archives have the unique and critical responsibility for the preservation and accessibility of our cultural heritage. Yet our ability to fulfil this mission is impeded - in both developed and developing countries - by the lack of adequate exceptions for basic library and archive activities such as preservation; and by barriers, such as contracts and technological protection measures, that make it impossible to use the exceptions some countries' copyright laws already allow in support of the print-disabled, students, educators and the many other users our libraries exist to serve.

Like many others, we were disappointed by the stalemate at the end of the last SCCR meeting. IFLA therefore urges Member States now to support a work plan that enables the treaty for visually impaired and other reading disabled people to move ahead without delay, while also providing a clear timetable for a phased introduction of the other issues, namely exceptions and limitations for libraries and archives, and for education, which have been raised by the African Group and many other delegations. The work plan should provide for each issue to be considered on its own merit and according to its state of maturity. Indeed, at SCCR/20 we welcomed the African Group's initial proposals with regard to the library and archives issues and anticipate that substantive consideration of these issues will soon be ready for this Committee to undertake.

In our view, the book famine that visually impaired people around the world are experiencing is intolerable and must be dealt with without further delay. We in the library profession know this, since it is libraries that are the main agents for delivering reading materials and access to information services for visually impaired and other reading disabled people. The proposed treaty for the visually impaired is extremely well advanced in its development and must not be held back in any way.

Thank you for your attention.