

## **Statement by the International Federation of Library Associations & Institutions**

### **WIPO GA/64, July 11, 2023 – SCCR agenda item**

Thank you for giving me the floor, Madame Chair. My name is Sara Benson and I represent the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA). I speak today on behalf of libraries from around the world. We would like to thank the chairs of the committee as well as the Secretariat for leading the committee so ably to this date.

First, IFLA joins the entire General Assembly in celebrating the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Marrakesh Treaty—a very important occasion for libraries, which play a vital and material role in providing access to books and other materials for the visually disabled and other persons with disabilities—not to mention all library patrons. Although there is cause for celebration, there is also cause for some concern, as although many countries have joined the treaty, not all of the signatory nations have enacted enabling legislation. We look forward to further work towards realizing the treaty’s potential in supporting necessary and legally guaranteed rights to user access.

We thank the Secretariat for the Preservation Toolkit, which will help member states to implement legislation to protect their cultural heritage in an era where climate change, war, natural disasters, fire, and rapidly changing technologies threatens their preservation. Just last month, for instance, the International Council on Archives noted with concern the fire damage to the Institute of the Industrial Research, a United Nations Industrial Development Organization affiliate which held rare collections of research materials and reports in Sudan due to wartime conflict. We heard earlier from a colleague from the Ukraine who noted the damage to cultural heritage due to wartime conflict as well.

The toolkit is among many means to help nations to prevent these sadly frequent tragedies, where unique collections are lost forever. IFLA further generally supports limitations & exceptions in copyright law that provide libraries the tools and flexibility to protect their collections and ensure they will be available for future generations.

We anticipate with appreciation the promised new toolkit that will address access to preserved works for library patrons who use rare and culturally significant works for research and education.

Thank you and we look forward to the next SCCR meeting in November.

*Delivered by Sara Benson, Chair of the Copyright & Other Legal Matters committee (CLM) and Head of the Delegation for IFLA.*