

Assemblies of the Member States of WIPO: Fifty-Sixth Series of Meetings

October 3 to 11, 2016 (Geneva, Switzerland)

AGENDA ITEM 5

GENERAL STATEMENTS

INTERNATIONAL NGO:

EIFL.NET

I am speaking on behalf of Electronic Information for Libraries (EIFL), that partners with libraries in 60 developing and transition countries in Africa, Asia, and Europe.

Mr. Chairman, we believe in the multilateral system.

That is why we are engaged in the work programme of the Standing Committee on Copyright and Related Rights on limitations and exceptions, where we seek an international instrument to protect the public service mission of libraries and archives.

There are two reasons. First, only multilateral action can set a basic standard for copyright laws across all jurisdictions, especially for digital activities.

Second, only multilateral action can enable seamless, cross-border exchange of information to support the work of today's scientists and scholars who work collaboratively across disciplines and borders. For example, 'big data', mentioned yesterday by the delegate from South Korea, is driving international research and discovery.

We are grateful to the African Group, Brazil, Ecuador, India, Uruguay, and the United States for proposals on libraries and archives.

We have valued the opportunity, based on a non-paper prepared by the Chair, to discuss the text-based proposals contained in document SCCR/29/4 and to present our evidence of how copyright law is failing libraries and their users today.

We thank the Secretariat for the excellent updated study on limitations and exceptions for libraries and archives prepared by Prof. Kenneth Crews.

To move ahead, we seek constructive engagement from all member states, especially those that are reforming their own copyright laws.

In a digital world that offers new opportunities to expand access to knowledge, copyright laws in every country must be fit for purpose, and must enable lawful access across borders.

On the Marrakesh Treaty, we congratulate member states on its entry into force. We were especially delighted when Mongolia became the tenth country to join as our partner, the Mongolian Libraries Consortium and the local blind community engaged in successful cooperation to support the ratification process. EIFL urges every country to join the treaty and we encourage you to engage with libraries to support national implementation.

Finally, advancement of flexibilities, such as limitations and exceptions exemplified in the Marrakesh Treaty, supports implementation of the Development Agenda upon which EIFL, through our work in developing countries, places great value.

We wish you a very successful Assembly.