



**ITEM 24 – Marrakesh Assembly**

**Statement by the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA)**

**5 October 2016**

[CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY]

The Treaty of Marrakesh will always hold a particular place in the history of international law.

It is evidence that the international copyright system can work in the public interest.

It makes a vital connection between IP law, and human rights.

And it has entered into force faster than any other WIPO copyright instrument in the last forty years.

This is testament to the strength of what you, the Member States, achieved in Marrakesh in 2013. It is also testament to the work of the World Blind Union, of KEI, of David Hammerstein, of libraries, and other individuals and organisations to achieve agreement, both here and in capitals.

The authorised entities included in the Treaty – libraries amongst them – now stand ready to turn the new possibilities into realities.

It is now up to WIPO's remaining 167 member states to complete ratification. Many members have confirmed their intention to do so shortly, which we welcome.

Universal implementation of Marrakesh will put an end to the legal barriers that created the book famine. We will go from barely 230 potential book-exchange partnerships between countries today to nearly 18 000.

Nonetheless, good implementation relies on good law.

The original Treaty left some space for signatories to maintain pre-existing mechanisms in order to facilitate agreement.

This flexibility should be interpreted in line with the overall objective of the Treaty – to broaden access – rather than exploited as a loophole. There should be no new barriers, either financial or in terms of time and resources sacrificed to unnecessary paperwork. We should not forget that it was market failure and legal complexities that made Marrakesh necessary.

We are confident that the same sense of ambition and desire to do the right thing in 2013 lives on in 2016. Those who have ratified have shown the way, others are moving in the right direction.

Libraries, on behalf of their users, look forwards to seeing the Treaty of Marrakesh realise its potential.

Thank you.