



ITEM 26 – Marrakesh Treaty – IFLA Statement

27 September 2018

I am speaking on behalf of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions, representing the 2.3 million libraries around the world.

As the DG underlined, Marrakesh is the fastest moving treaty of the World Intellectual Property Organisation. It was also the quickest WIPO copyright instrument to enter into force in 40 years.

It is extraordinary that on Sunday, just two years on from when Marrakesh became law, we can feasibly talk about universal coverage.

And each ratification is making a difference. It's a sign of what multilateralism can do, dealing with market failures, delivering equitable development, ensuring fulfilment of human rights.

But of course, ratification needs to be followed up. It is a part – an essential part – of delivering equitable access.

Because we also need implementing legislation that maximises possibilities for beneficiaries and authorised entities. They should be able to focus their time, and resources, on providing services.

To this end, we would welcome analysis of the impact of the reservations permitted in Articles 4(4) and 4(5) of the Treaty.

There needs to be investment of course, support for beneficiaries and the institutions that serve them.

And finally we need as many institutions – libraries in particular – as possible to be able to offer access.

To this end, IFLA has worked with the World Blind Union to develop a guide aimed at building confidence and understanding among libraries.

We must also therefore reject, as the Treaty does, obligations on authorised entities to register formally.

And we need initiatives such as the ABC Books Service, and efforts to promote born-accessible publishing, such as the Australian Inclusive Publishing Initiative.

So as we move towards a situation where there is universal legal coverage, we encourage all to ensure that this also means universal impact.