



International Federation of
Library Associations and Institutions

WIPO General Assembly 2018 – Item 5 – General Statements

25 September 2018

Dear Chair, Director General, ministers, ambassadors, delegates.

I am speaking on behalf of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions, with over 1300 members in around 140 countries, representing 2.3 million libraries globally.

I firstly wish to share our condolences to the people of Vietnam and in particular the family of president Tran Dai Quang.

The importance of IP today, as highlighted by the Director General, underlines the contribution of knowledge to growth and sustainability.

Yet as the importance of knowledge grows, so too does the importance of access.

Because without it, we risk deepening, not bridging, the development divide. If we create new rights without considering access, we risk doing more harm than good.

Across the Sustainable Development Goals, nearly 20 targets refer to the importance of being able to access and use information.

Tomorrow, on the anniversary of the agreement of the SDGs, we'll be sharing examples of how libraries are trying to do this doing this. But they cannot succeed without the right laws.

As the Ugandan minister underlined, we need an integral approach to IP and development.

WIPO has started down this path, through your work around the SDGs, through your pioneering decision to make its own publications open access.

And the Marrakesh Treaty speaks for itself as a political, and practical success. As the Universal Declaration of Human Rights turns 70, we should also remember that it is a human rights success.

Limitations and exceptions are not a zero-sum game. They are at the heart of the most high-performing IP systems, and essential for libraries to do their jobs.

We look forward to working with Member States to make meaningful progress in this direction.