



**International
Federation of
Library
Associations and Institutions**

18 July 2022

WIPO General Assembly, Geneva

Statement on SCCR/42 report to the GA

Thank you to the Chair and all who have helped facilitate this session.

I represent the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions. Strong limitations and exceptions to copyright enable libraries to serve patrons and facilitate research, and support the public, students and researchers to access and work with information. These underlie other rights to culture, education, and research and in turn support IP innovation in multiple sectors, including for the benefit of society, as well as the preservation of records that tell the story of how we got to now.

We want to recognize the initiative taken by the African Group and its plan's supporters – including South Africa, Iran, Malawi, Brasil, Uganda and others who have spoken today - and express our gratitude to the member states who have helped move forward initiatives on the cross-border preservation toolkit, limitations & exceptions, and other items. At the same time, we fear there is overall limited urgency from the group as a whole to support limitations & exceptions and facilitate international collaboration, cross border factors which cannot be addressed by any nation alone, and which WIPO is equipped to address.

We cannot wait – as the pandemic and climate change have demonstrated, overly-restrictive IP policies create confusion around whether libraires can offer digital access to material when crises force temporary physical closures of facilities, and natural disasters risk regrettably destroying facilities permanently – and with them, potentially, the only copies of materials if clear exceptions do not allow backups to be made and made accessible.

Crises will happen. Innovations happens because people can work with IP. We need to mitigate challenges and seize opportunities with a robust copyright system that ensures that researchers and the public are not stalled by overly-restrictive licenses and laws such that when buildings temporarily close, we cannot access digital content, or when a flood or fire destroys an archive, that material is lost forever because there is no backup. If these happen, the IP affected can benefit no one.

You have the power to make an impact. Please use it. Thank you!

Delivered by Matt Voigts, Copyright & Open Access Policy Officer