



International Federation of
Library Associations and Institutions

7th of May, 2020

Dear Director-General, Your Excellencies,

The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions represents the interests of libraries of all types and their users globally, with members in 153 countries worldwide.

We would like to thank the current Director General, Dr Gurry for his excellent work, in particular regarding the success of the Marrakesh Treaty. This Treaty, WIPO's fastest moving in terms of new accessions and ratifications, reflects the importance and the urgent need for exceptions to copyright as a vital element of balance in the copyright system. It has underlined the potential of WIPO to find solutions to failures in the IP system, and to contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

We wish you the best for the future and hope to have the opportunity to continue our collaboration.

IFLA would also like to congratulate Mr. Daren Tang on his nomination as Director General of the World Intellectual Property Organization. You take on this role at an important time, with the limits of current copyright law in many countries becoming increasingly clear in a digital environment. In too many WIPO member states, public interest activities are complicated or made impossible by outdated laws – or their absence – despite the fact that they would do no harm to markets.

The situation we face today with the COVID-19 pandemic has only underlined the need for such laws in order to ensure that the essential functions of libraries can continue on the basis of legal certainty, and not just the goodwill of rightholders.

Even when the pandemic is over, the need for the sort of long-term solutions that action at WIPO alone can provide remains. In particular, as we highlighted on World IP Day, this absence of international legal provisions stands in the way of efforts to preserve our heritage faced with the threat of climate change. More than 350 organisations, institutions and professionals in over 90 countries called for action to address this. We trust that WIPO will hear these calls.

You bring valuable experience to the role. We note your strong track record in Singapore, and in particular the planned copyright reforms which provide an excellent example of the use of solid legal and economic evidence, and which have led to a result which balances interests users and rights holders.

We have also appreciated your contributions during your term as Chair of the SCCR, including the clear indication of the need to find digital-ready, cross-border solutions for cultural heritage, education and other uses during your introductory speech to the regional workshop held in Singapore in April 2019.

In becoming Director General, we hope that you will be able to refresh and redouble efforts to realise the potential of WIPO as a catalyst and guide for evidence-based change, benefitting libraries and their billions of users worldwide.

We look forward to continuing to work with you.

Winston Tabb

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