

IFLA-IFRRO-IPA-EWC-WIPO CONFERENCE

on

ENHANCING THE CULTURE OF READING AND BOOKS IN THE DIGITAL AGE

Frankfurt Book Fair, October 13th

Good morning.

First of all I'd like to thank the Frankfurt Book Fair for holding this Seminar.

We have been talking about this conference for years and now finally we are here seated altogether : RH, RROs and librarians. I think this is really important. Authors are at the beginning of the book chain and libraries come at the end of that chain. We are all part of the same world and we need to communicate and look for solutions to offer as many opportunities as possible to enhance reading and make books and content available in the digital world.

Technology offers many opportunities to do just that but we also need to bear in mind the need to respect the work of authors and publishers when making books and content available.

This year IFRRO turns 25. It was created in 1984 in Oslo as a Forum to exchange information among the few existing RROs. May I say that IFRRO is now an international association recognized by institutions such as WIPO, UNESCO or the European Union and by Copyright world in general. IFRRO is made up of 117 member organisations, 56 RROs and 61 Associations of authors, visual creators or publishers.

RROs are non-profit organisations made up of authors (including visual creators) and publishers. These organisations administer rights efficiently with low administrative costs. RROs are set up in such a way that publishers and creators are the ones who determine the direction of policies.

The obvious starting point for any copyright licensing activity is the exclusive right that rightholders possesses to reproduce or authorise the reproduction of their works. In a one-to-one relation, i.e. when the user wishes to reproduce several works from one publisher or creator only, a direct licensing agreement between the rightholder and the user is generally the most efficient way to authorise the use of the work. It is also the publisher's preferred solution.

But this is different when the relation is many to many, i.e. one or several users request the authorisation to copy several works involving different rightholders. In these cases, collective management is the solution.

RROs can assist authors and publishers in their endeavours by facilitating user access to their works including acting as trusted intermediaries. Copyright and RROs are essential contributors to the establishment of an economic basis for culture, knowledge and education.

IFRRO works to increase, on an international basis, the lawful use of text and image based copyright works having the representation of both sort of rightholders: Authors and Publishers and the facilitation of cooperation among them and their organisations.

IFRRO will, when appropriate and in the interest of RROs and rightholders, continue its involvement in initiatives which aim at improved user access to copyright content.

Practical solutions for acces to content can and should be found in existing frameworks rather than developing new internationally binding legal instruments.

IFRRO therefore ventures to contribute to every initiative that strengthens links among users and RH. An example of this is our participation in the WIPO facilitated platform on access to copyright works by VIP. We also collaborate constructively in digital libraries initiatives, in the EC levy working groups and in relevant new initiatives that aim at bringing stakeholders together for solution-oriented dialogues. And finally we were looking forward to contribute to this seminar with IFLA and WIPO on the development of a book and reading culture.

It is my hope that this conference can illustrate new and differing aspects of facing challenges and that this could be the starting point of a new process. I hope this Seminar concludes with the reaching of an agreement so that we can all work together for the benefit of users.