

EWC President at WIPO on Limitations & Exceptions

As the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) held the 39th session of its Standing Committee on Copyright and Related Rights (SCCR), EWC President Nina George spoke on behalf of the European Writers' Council to give professional writers' view on Limitations and Exceptions for Libraries, Archives and Museums after the floor was open for observers and NGO.

Oktober 21, 2019

Intervention from EWC, Monday 21th October, 39th SCCR Meeting

by Nina George, EWC President

I thank you, Chair, and as well WIPO, Sylvie Forbin, and the secretariat for conducting the debates on these delicate issues so profoundly.

I am delighted to be allowed to make a comment as President of the European Writers' Council, which represents 150,000 writers from the book sector from 41 writers' unions in Europe. I have been a professional writer and novelist for 27 years, so you are all debating about my work and my future, my scope of free decision, while you try to find a fair and sustainable answer for the needs of libraries, the needs of society on diverse and free literature, as well as for fulfilling the mandate of education and culture – but most important are the answers for the sources, the authors, on which all these values depend.

Authors, Publishers, Booksellers, Libraries, Archives and Museums are all part of a sensitive ecosystem, and although we exist in different national frameworks, authors are also the global source and the heartbeat of this ecosystem.

The two bases for supporting authors: (1) be very, very cautious with further restrictions of authors' rights, and (2) promote and protect sustainable systems of remuneration for every exploitation of our works. As we already see in several States, such support is not routine. For example, without any installed PLR system for printed books, authors and publishers are in fact already paying for the libraries' education and culture mandates. This is not the ideal we should be aiming for.

On behalf the European Writers' Council, we recommend that the SCCR explore existing licensing solutions and best practices within national frameworks, which also already fulfill the needs of libraries and their users. And the same in the digital environment.

The European Writers' Council supported the Marrakesh Treaty. The EWC does not recommend further exceptions and limitations in the form of a legally binding international approaches like a treaty, model law or soft law.

Thank you Mr Chair.