



Speech by Ingrid Parent, IFLA President

IFLA Reception at WIPO

22 November 2011, Geneva

Director General, Mr. Gurry, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen,
on behalf of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions I
would like to welcome you to our reception here this evening.

Let me first of all thank our hosts here at WIPO for all of their help in arranging this
event, and extend my gratitude to the Swiss Library Association who have kindly
provided financial support for the wonderful food and drinks.

As I look around me I can see some familiar faces from the library world, including
international library experts, the Director of the Swiss National Library and
colleagues from many of the UN libraries here in Geneva. In this important week for
libraries, I think it is somehow appropriate to be talking to you in front of the
wonderful new library here at WIPO, a service which has been placed right at the
heart of this fantastic new building.

For me, being here at SCCR for the first time, it is a great pleasure to hear all the
encouraging remarks that have been said by many delegations about the important
role of libraries supporting society in general and the cultural and scientific sectors in
particular.

We would like to thank all of you for your interest in the work of libraries. We are
very happy you have given us an opportunity to discuss copyright limitations and
exceptions for libraries which are so important to our work and to library users around
the world. Furthermore, we are extremely grateful for all of the member states that
have worked with us to achieve this opportunity, particularly the members of the
African group who have put forward a proposal in favour of libraries and archives,

and to Brazil, Ecuador, Uruguay, Pakistan, India and the United States for their active and concrete contributions to this session of the SCCR.

Ladies and gentlemen,

What libraries mean to a nation, to a society, is fairly obvious.

Libraries have been enriching the lives of individuals and societies for over a thousand years. They are the memory institutions of our countries; they support education, creativity and innovation, and they underpin the idea of society itself.

Every day, libraries in all parts of the world help hundreds of millions of people meet their work, study, research and leisure needs. Every day, more than 750.000 librarians support education and research, help people with disabilities to exercise their right to access content and preserve our cultural heritage.

Ladies and gentlemen,

We all know that without libraries, we cannot have educated people who will be the political and economic leaders of tomorrow.

We all know that without libraries, we cannot have authors and creators who will be able to create new works, innovate and expand local and global knowledge.

And, we all know that without libraries, we cannot carry on enhancing human, social and economic development for the benefit of all members of society.

It is clear that to realise their full potential libraries must provide inclusive and transformative services which foster the sharing of ideas and knowledge, while stimulating and enabling creativity and innovation around the world. To do this we need recognition and safeguarding of the role of libraries and archives that operate in the public interest. We need all of you to be the ‘friends of knowledge’.

Distinguished Guests,

I am proud to be here on behalf of IFLA, which represents the interests of libraries and their users worldwide in over 150 countries.

I am so pleased to see the progress that has been made in the first two days of this important meeting. We look forward to working with all of you on ways to enhance human, social and economic development.

I want to thank you for coming this evening and look forward to talking with many of you over the next hour or so.

In conclusion, may I propose a toast,

To the good collaborative relationship between IFLA and WIPO,

To all libraries for fostering the sharing of ideas and knowledge.

To all you for supporting creativity and innovation.

Thank you very much!