



**WIPO STANDING COMMITTEE ON COPYRIGHT AND RELATED RIGHTS**

**23rd Session: Geneva, November 2011**

**EIFL: Electronic Information for Libraries**

**Agenda item 6: Limitations and exceptions**

Thank you, Mr Chairman. I am speaking on behalf of Electronic Information for Libraries. I am speaking on limitations and exceptions for people with print disabilities.

Libraries are one of the key distributors of material serving print disabled persons and in developing countries, libraries are likely to be the mechanisms by which material is delivered.

We commend the Committee for the progress that has been made on this important and urgent issue. We believe that a binding instrument – a treaty – is necessary to achieve the objectives set out in the Preamble of the proposal prepared by the Chair (SCCR/22/16) that recognizes the continuing shortage of available works for print disabled people. A two-step approach will result in a costly delay that will likely cause the effort to ultimately fail.

Mr. Chairman, this is a human rights issue. As stated by the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Freedom of Opinion and Expression, **this** Committee at **this** meeting has an opportunity and a responsibility to help to solve the problem. EIFL, on behalf of library consortia in developing countries, where 90% of blind and visually impaired people live, urges the Committee to agree on a binding treaty that would help to maximise use by reading disabled people of the rich collections in libraries for education, leisure and personal development. Everyone in society will benefit as a result.

Mr. Chairman, this week the Committee will discuss a draft treaty for the protection of broadcasting organizations, and preparation for a diplomatic conference on the protection of audio-visual performances. We urge the Committee to give equal weight to the needs of blind and visually impaired people and to agree on a treaty instrument.

Thank you for your attention.

Contacts:

Teresa Hackett [teresa.hackett@eifl.net](mailto:teresa.hackett@eifl.net)

Barbara Szczepańska [Barbara.Szczepanska@hoganlovells.com](mailto:Barbara.Szczepanska@hoganlovells.com)

Awa Diouf Cissé [cisseawa@yahoo.fr](mailto:cisseawa@yahoo.fr)