07/02/2013 Events

The Diplomatic Conference in Marrakesh, convened by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and which brought together over 600 delegates from 186 Member States of WIPO, including the Republic of Moldova has concluded its work on 28 June this year, with the adoption of a historic treaty.

The Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons who are Blind, Visually Impaired or otherwise Print Disabled, approved after more than a week of intense debate is the result of a long work, which was intended to create a framework which would facilitate access to works protected by copyright, books and other written materials, in accessible format such as *Braille* or large print and digital audio format for persons with visual impairments.

WIPO Director General Francis GURRY qualifies adoption of this treaty as a victory for visually impaired persons or print disabled persons. “By adopting this treaty, the international community has demonstrated its ability to address specific problems and find common ground in this respect. This is a balanced treaty and is a good arbitration for parties involved. It is a historic treaty that will bring real benefits to people with visual impairments”, declared Francis GURRY.

According to the Marrakesh Treaty, signatory countries are obliged to adopt laws allowing the reproduction and distribution of published works in accessible formats. The document also stipulates that organizations that serve people with visual impairments can share fiction, textbooks and other teaching or entertainment materials in accessible format and beyond.

The Treaty also provides authors and publishers guarantees that their works will be published and distributed only to persons with visual impairments.

According to the World Health Organization, worldwide there are 314 million visually impaired persons, of whom 90 percent live in developing countries.

Message of the Director General of WIPO, Mr. Francis GURRY on closure of the Diplomatic Conference: http://www.wipo.int/about-wipo/en/dgo/speeches/dg_dc2013_closing.html [1]

The full text of the Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons who are Blind, Visually Impaired or otherwise Print Disabled
http://www.wipo.int/meetings/en/doc_details.jsp?doc_id=241683 [2]

Photos of the Diplomatic Conference: http://www.flickr.com/photos/wipo/sets/72157634099832789/ [3]

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