



900 17th Street, N.W.
Suite 1100
Washington, DC 20006
Phone: 202.783.0070
Fax: 202.783.0534
Web: www.ccianet.org

Computer & Communications Industry Association

Intervention of CCIA

On the Subject of Limitations and Exceptions for Libraries and Archives Delivered at the 23rd Session of the Standing Committee on Copyright and Related Rights, 22nd March 2011

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity to speak to this important issue and as this is the first time we've taken the floor allow us to extend our thanks to you, and to your vice-chairs, and to the Secretariat for their work organising this session.

The [Computer & Communications Industry Association \(CCIA\)](http://www.ccianet.org)'s members represent a broad cross-section of the information and communications technology (ICT) industries and collectively generate more than \$200 billion in annual revenues worldwide through operations in dozens of countries. They have a substantial stake in the effective operation of the entire intellectual property system.

Like libraries and archives, the ICT sector's role in society is to make information accessible and useful to the largest number of people possible in the most efficient and creative ways it can. We understand how important limitations and exceptions are to the work of these institutions especially in the digital environment, since in the digital world there is increasing evidence that limitations and exceptions actually produce more economic value through ICT services and products than the exclusive rights do.

Libraries and archives are a critical part of the foundation of a healthy society – they have been since the dawn of history. The Dark Ages in Europe began when the greatest library in history was burned around 300 BC, in Alexandria; its loss meant that many discoveries of science and learning had to be rediscovered and it is estimated that human history was held back by up to 800 years by the library's destruction.

Mr. Chairman, it is a well-understood fact that archiving is even more important in the digital environment than it is in the offline world, as digital formats change rapidly and are subject to degradation to a much greater extent than physical goods are. This may be counterintuitive to many but that doesn't make it less true.

Mr. Chairman, we fail to see how anyone could suffer – quite the contrary – if libraries and archives were able to make copies for preservation purposes without limitation, yet very, very few countries allow sufficient archival copies to be made to actually preserve works indefinitely.

Intervention of CCIA at WIPO's SCT, 25th Session

We don't have the magic answer to what, at the international level, needs to be done to ensure that libraries and archives are able to carry out their critically important missions in the digital environment. It is for these institutions to articulate that for themselves and we believe it is a superb use of this House's time to address their issues.

It is clear to us that purely national approaches to their needs are not proving sufficient and that an international understanding must be forged. We hope that WIPO's member-states will be able to forge it.

As we have said with respect to access by the visually impaired to reading materials, we are confident that a species that can send men to other parts of our solar system can at the same time protect creators *and* facilitate the work of libraries and archives. In fact, we would submit to you that the former activity is far more of a challenge than the latter.

Thank you very much for your kind attention.