



INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF LIBRARY ASSOCIATIONS AND INSTITUTIONS  
FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE DES ASSOCIATIONS DE BIBLIOTHECAIRES ET DES BIBLIOTHEQUES  
INTERNATIONALE VEREINIGUNG BIBLIOTHEKARISCHER VERBÄNDE UND EINRICHTUNGEN  
FEDERACION INTERNACIONAL DE ASOCIACIONES DE BIBLIOTECARIOS Y BIBLIOTECAS  
МЕЖДУНАРОДНАЯ ФЕДЕРАЦИЯ БИБЛИОТЕЧНЫХ АССОЦИАЦИЙ И УЧРЕЖДЕНИЙ  
国际图书馆协会与机构联合会

الاتحاد الدولي لجمعيات ومؤسسات المكتبات

## IFLA High-Level Statement to the WSIS Forum May 27 2015

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, distinguished colleagues

The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions – or IFLA – is the global voice of libraries and their users. IFLA has been a supporter of the WSIS process since the beginning, and we want to see the ten-year review once again prioritise the potential of ICTs for development as we go forward together, including our joint actions to reach the Sustainable Development Goals.

To bring this about, IFLA believes that more must be done to achieve affordable access, particularly for people who are socially and economically marginalised. We urge you all to recall the strong support for public access to ICTs stated in the WSIS+10 High Level Event outcome documents in 2014, and we reiterate the importance of public access to an open Internet through facilities such as libraries and community information centres, or other publicly available access points, particularly in rural and remote areas.

We continue to believe that the digital preservation of cultural heritage is a matter of the utmost importance to all stakeholders in the information society. The continuing explosion in digital content and expression must not just be a fleeting moment in human history – we must work together to ensure that standards are in place to ensure interoperability across formats and platforms in the pursuit of long-term preservation. As the United Nations Special Rapporteur in the field of Cultural Rights pointed out in her report to the 28<sup>th</sup> session of the Human Rights Council earlier this year, we must have a fit-for-purpose copyright framework that allows libraries and archives to preserve and make digital material across borders. Greater sharing of digital knowledge can only lead to more creation, innovation, and understanding.

IFLA's overall vision for WSIS complements our vision for the SDGs and the post-2015 development framework. Harnessing the potential of ICTs for development requires more than access to technology; it requires states and other actors to invest in human development, institutional capacity, human rights, and democratic, transparent and accountable governance. It requires building more just societies. These are processes that go well beyond the narrow Internet governance issues that have dominated much post-WSIS intergovernmental debate, and they should have our full attention going forward.

We would therefore like to see that the WSIS Review is an open, inclusive and transparent process with meaningful input from all stakeholders – including by facilitating regional processes to elicit such input. The goal of people-centred information societies can only be achieved through the implementation of processes that engage all stakeholders, including those representing marginalised groups.

In closing, we call on those of you who share our vision to sign the *Lyon Declaration on Access to Information and Development*. IFLA launched the *Lyon Declaration* in 2014, and it sets out how access to information can support all of the Sustainable Development Goals, and how access to ICTs is a crucial part of the development equation. By signing it you will join more than 550 institutions and organisations from the library, development, business and technology sectors who wish to see access to information placed at the heart of the post-2015 development framework.

Thank you.

**Genevieve Clavel**, Governing Board member, IFLA