

Awareness Forum on the Ratification of Marrakesh Treaty

Below are the feedbacks from the students with visual impairment in higher education.

Gerard Perry P. Novela



At first, I really had no idea what the Marrakesh treaty was all about. Although we were told that it was about the various countries all over the world ratifying for the production and distribution of copyrighted books and printed materials in accessible formats and making it available to persons with visual impairment and print-disability.

During the training, the provisions and scope of the said treaty was discussed in an in-depth manner. The sections and terms from the resolution signed by the participating countries were stated by different speakers on the open forum. There I learned that the treaty was called "Marrakesh" because it was signed in Marrakesh, Morocco. Apart from the good news brought by the treaty, the speakers and participants also brought up the concerns regarding the reproduction and editing of these copyrighted documents, which may be abused especially with the endless access to OCR applications and today's technological advancements. These, along with other concerns, regarding preserving the copyright of published documents were recorded and itemized with the hopes that these will be addressed as the provision progresses.

Overall, the Marrakesh Treaty was a great initiative in providing even greater access to books and printed materials not just locally, but internationally as well. This gives a light of hope to all visually-impaired and print-disabled individuals, as they can finally access even broader information from various copyrighted books which were otherwise limited and inaccessible to them.

At the end of the open forum, the speakers expressed their thoughts hoping that the current president of the Philippines will finally ratify the treaty.

Mike Daryl O. Ocol



One of my biggest problems in my college life is the unavailability of accessible books, especially when the same are published outside the Philippines. Because of the Intellectual Property Law of other countries around the world that, without exemption, strictly prohibits the conversion of published print materials to any format, I, as a visually-impaired college student, find it hard to look for accessible reference for whatever research works I am required to do. The Intellectual Property Code of the

Philippines, which was duly amended by Republic Act 10372, has initially solved the problem of every visually-impaired student in terms of access to books of accessible format when it

provided mandatory limitations for the benefit of all Filipino visually-impaired individuals. Such law really opened the way to accessibility; however, its jurisdiction covers only the publications nationwide. Books that are published outside the country are absolutely subject to the statutes of the state where it was published.

The program set and conducted by the Resources for the Blind became the medium of letting us know that there is a solution to the problem about accessing published books from any country in the world. It really astonished me, knowing that there is such an international law as Marrakesh Treaty that, once ratified by any country, will form part of the law thereof. It is a comprehensive treaty that, once adopted by the state, will ensure that visually-impaired individuals will be able to access information. It is very comprehensive and specific, as it defines the scope of its beneficiary and authorized entities.

Indeed, the Marrakesh Treaty will serve as the way for a real inclusive social setting after the same have been ratified. It will enable the visually-impaired individuals to obtain more information and increase knowledge about the world.

Porferio K. Llono Jr.



The Marrakesh treaty is very important to me. According to its definition, the Marrakesh treaty allows for copyright exception to facilitate the production of accessible versions of books and other copyrighted works for visually-impaired persons. The treaty sets a norm for countries ratifying the treaty to have a domestic copyright exception covering these activities, and allowing for the import and export of such materials. Once it is already ratified in the Philippines, we, Filipinos with visual impairment will already have access to any book internationally in audio format or in large print.