



Statement by the South Centre to the Forty-eighth Session of the Standing Committee on Copyright and Related Rights (SCCR 48)

May 18, 2026, Geneva, Switzerland

Thank you Chair.

The agenda of the SCCR touches on issues that will determine whether that system serves the interests of all Member States, or continues to reflect the priorities of a few.

The single most important item on this Committee's agenda is Limitations and Exceptions.. The 2012 General Assembly mandate remains unfulfilled. What is needed now is text-based work grounded in substance. Developing countries have submitted proposals that provide a basis for text based work. They draw on the prior work of this Committee, use appropriately binding language, and address the real needs of libraries, archives, educational institutions, and persons with disabilities. We urge the Committee to treat it as the foundation for convergence, not one option among equals.

On the Broadcasting Treaty, we support work towards finding adequate solutions for broadcasters against signal piracy. We note with concern that the draft text remains contested on fundamental points, and expands beyond the agreed mandate, under the approach of expanding exclusive rights to broadcasters with narrow limitations and exceptions.

On Copyright in the Digital Environment, the structural inequity of the global digital economy demands a coordinated response. The South Centre strongly supports the GRULAC Work Plan, Indonesia's elements paper on digital royalty governance, and the African Group's proposals on audiovisual authors and performers as a coherent and mutually reinforcing package. These proposals together address the failure of the current framework to ensure that creators, particularly those from the Global South, are fairly remunerated for the digital exploitation of their works. We call for copyright in the digital environment to become a standing agenda item of this Committee.

Finally, on the US proposals regarding creative industries and technological protection measures, we urge this Committee to prioritize the use of its limited time. With the Limitations and Exceptions agenda still awaiting the text-based progress mandated in 2012, and with the copyright in the digital environment agenda growing in urgency, commissioning new studies on TPM business models and copyright industry economic growth is premature. If these studies are to proceed, approval must be conditioned on their scope explicitly including analysis of the public interest costs of anti-circumvention regimes, their impact on educators, researchers, librarians, persons with disabilities, and users in developing countries. A study that examines only the benefits of TPM protection, without examining how strong anti-circumvention frameworks interact with limitations and exceptions, would produce a fundamentally distorted picture and should not carry the endorsement of this Committee.

The South Centre supports a copyright system that promotes access to knowledge, supports education and research, and serves the development goals of all nations.

Thank you.