Statement of IFRRO President, Magdalena Vinent, on the occasion of signing the Out of Commerce Works Memorandum of Understanding

Brussels, 20 September 2011

On behalf of the International Federation of Reproduction Rights Organisations, I welcome the signature of this Memorandum of Understanding and congratulate all the parties who have worked so hard to make it possible. IFRRO is the main international body which links together members of the copyright community in the print and publishing sphere and is at the heart of rights management across the world.

We are passionate about partnership agreements to deliver mutually beneficial solutions for stakeholders – providing easy, legal access to copyright creative works. Our business, as an International federation bringing together both authors and publishers, is to facilitate such agreements among our members and the user community on ways to access copyright material within the framework of international copyright law.

This present Memorandum of Understanding on Out of Commerce Works is a great example of what can be achieved by such constructive collaboration among stakeholders and is only one of many, in which IFRRO has been a prominent and often leading participant. Others include the MoU on greater access to the visually impaired signed just a year ago and the ARROW projects for helping libraries obtain reliable rights information when they digitize their collections.

The Out of Commerce Works MoU will be a huge step forward in providing legal access to Europe’s cultural heritage and it confronts some important issues. It asserts the moral right of authors and publishers to decide how and if their works should be made available and it recognises the vital and beneficial role played by collective management organisations in enabling access to Out of Commerce Works.

IFRRO is proud to be a signatory of the MoU and we look forward to further cooperation with our partners to ensure that it is implemented smoothly and efficiently and opens up Europe’s cultural heritage to its citizens.