

WORLD BOOK DAY – AUTHORS, PUBLISHERS AND BOOKSELLERS CALL FOR INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT

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We, the undersigned representatives of the global book industry urge governments all over the world to recognize, support and celebrate the importance of books, learning solutions, and professional and scholarly content by adopting economic stimulus packages to sustain their respective publishing sectors and the value chains that surround them.

Today, on 2020 World Book Day, we acknowledge the vital role that books play in society. Through books we learn, we meet other cultures, we dream. We understand each other. Through books we learn how to empathize. Books are necessary for scientific research, to educate our children and in lifelong learning. Books help us become better human beings.

Books need authors to write and illustrate them, publishers to invest in them, booksellers to get them to readers, and collective management organizations to protect their copyright. This chain, so vital to society, is under imminent threat.

In this time of social distancing, the importance of books has been re-emphasized. Staying at home and reading a book is a way of caring for others. Newspapers and blogs around the world have put together lists of books to read while you are in isolation, whether that be to escape or to understand what is happening. Books are what people turn to in difficult times.

Parents in many countries have had to become educators. Teachers have needed to find new ways of bringing their lessons to pupils. Authors and publishers around the world have responded by licensing their content and digital services. Online book readings like ‘Read The World’ have exploded online, with publishers and authors quick to give parents support. The world is relying on research published in specialist journals to guide its health policies and develop a vaccine. Journal publishers’ investments in the verification of research and its wide communication are crucial here. And they have stepped up, voluntarily making research related to COVID-19 freely available and amenable to reuse.

Whether we are talking about books for a general audience, children’s books, educational resources, or scientific research, authors, publishers, distributors, booksellers and collective management organisations have reacted quickly to adapt where necessary and play a responsible role in society.

The COVID-19 virus is having a disastrous effect on people everywhere. Economies are shutting down and nobody knows for sure when we’ll return to normal, or even if that’s possible. The impact on the world’s creative industries, including the book sector, has been devastating.

In many countries, our industry is already struggling for oxygen. We must find ways to ensure the future for authors, publishers, editors, designers, distributors, booksellers and those who work in collective management, so that the book industry can bounce back once this pandemic is conquered.

A world without new books would be a sad and impoverished place. We are working hard to come through this crisis, but we need help to survive. We need governments to help us get through it together.



Jean-Luc Treutenaere
Co-President
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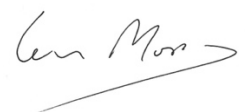
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