

## **OPENING SPEECH**

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**Opening of the APE Congress Berlin | Ramping up Relevance**

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Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my pleasure to welcome you all to the 2018 APE meeting.

I want to first thank the organizers for once again pulling together a truly thought-provoking program designed to get us all thinking about the future of scholarly communication.

When you think of Berlin, your mind drifts to the city's most famous landmark – the Brandenburg Gate. For decades a symbol of division, however the monument has always been the beating heart of a major city bursting with ideas, inspiration, art, culture and creativity.

This symbol feels appropriate for our industry. Scholarly communication holds so much potential to addressing the grand challenges of our society, be it curing disease, addressing poverty, climate change or strains of overpopulation on our world.

Yet we stand divided.

It can seem that many times academics, publishers, technology companies and research institutions are at odds with one another. However, each stakeholder plays a vital role in our ecosystem.

Make no mistake, publishing today is a \$150bn global industry that continues to surprise and adapt to a world in flux.

In an age of informational uncertainty, with such phenomena as fake news and alternative facts, publishers have an opportunity – indeed a duty – to maximize their role as stewards of truth and quality.

There has never been a greater need for authoritative, professionally curated, edited, and peer-reviewed content to help humanity decipher these turbulent times.

As the President of the International Publishers Association, I am in the privileged position to see the vibrancy of the industry and the innovation of the STM sector.

This is because the IPA is the collective voice of more than 76 publishers associations in 65 countries including Börsenverein here in Germany. Its membership represents many thousands of publishing companies worldwide that in total serve 5.6 billion people.

So what does the IPA actually do?

In short, it is an alliance of national, regional and international publishers associations with one purpose: to promote and protect publishing and to raise awareness of it as a force for economic, cultural and political development.

Underpinning the IPA's mission are the two core pillars of copyright and freedom to publish, both indispensable principles that face unprecedented challenges today.

Copyright is the bedrock of publishing. It's what makes our industry viable and sustainable.

Without copyright, there would be no professional publishing, which means no quality control; inferior education; stifled creativity; and a lack of diversity and choice.

Combat metaphors may be crude, but they are nonetheless applicable. The international copyright frameworks that safeguard creativity have never been under a more determined, sustained, and well-funded attack. A challenge the IPA is meeting head-on.

At this point we should address the very real threat of piracy to the STM industry. Research articles attract an impressive amount of billions of downloads every year. Articles are also downloaded from a variety of places including publisher's platforms, from institutional and subject repositories, and shared via online social networks demonstrating how STM publishers understand how users want to access and use research.

However, taking this content illegally and hosting this on a server is simply theft. It is the same action as if you stole a physical object. Let's be clear, pirate sites such as SciHub are not adding to our industry or doing justice to our researchers or research institutions:

- They do not reward authors or share data that can enable a researcher to get promoted.
- They do not provide users with validated links or additional context and content to ensure the content is accurate and up to date
- They do not provide research institutions or funders with data so they are aware of what is being published or researched
- They are certainly not preserving content or the scholarly record
- Nor are they a reliable way to access the scholarly record as they have the ability to switch on and off access at any time, for any reason without being held accountable.

This type of unreliability was clearly demonstrated when I opened the Moscow Book Fair back in September 2017. Days prior to the event, SciHub access for Russia was suspended due to the founder Aleksandra Elbakyan's taking offense when a member of Russian Academy of Science decided to name a parasitic insect after her. We can only conclude that pirate sites are unreliable, illegal and not a viable or trustworthy Open Access solution. Piracy is simply not the answer to our challenges as an industry.

Which is why the IPA has a second pillar: freedom to publish. Violations of this right around the world are increasingly commonplace and are also directly effecting the STM industry.

It is the IPA's duty to challenge censorship wherever it occurs – as we did recently in China, when Beijing asked for the removal of a selection of online academic publications by first Cambridge University Press and later Springer Nature.

The IPA criticized the Chinese authorities for imposing academic censorship and undermining the freedom to publish and academic freedom, which are essential for the advancement of the science.

Which leads me to my final thought on scholarly communication. Just like the Brandenburg Gate, for too long our industry has been viewed by others as being divided. In reality, the publishing industry is vibrant, diverse and innovative. Today we have gathered the best minds to start thinking about how we all not only reiterate our relevance to society but ramp it up as we approach 2020 in a rapidly changing world.

Ladies and gentlemen, I wish you all a very enjoyable and fruitful time during the APE conference and I look forward to seeing how we can all ramp up our relevance!

Thank you.