**First Meeting of European Organizations in the Book Industry**

**Declaration, 5 April, 2014**

Publishing is Europe’s leading cultural industry.

In a world in mutation, digital technology is creating new opportunities and new markets, but also causing anxiety. All the players in the book industry - authors, publishers, booksellers, librarians and the institutions that defend them - are seeking new models that will sustain creation, protect jobs, and ensure that consumers have the most varied and accessible offer possible.

The European political project cannot be absent from this debate. Throughout Europe and within the European Union, States support the book industry. They have all signed the Berne Convention for the protection of literary and artistic works and the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions.

In line with the international engagements of their respective governments, the signatories of the present declaration are keen to see the emergence of common stances in favour of the promotion and sustainability of cultural diversity in the book sector.

**Intellectual property law /**droit d’auteur, author's rights, is an essential factor in the development of cultural diversity. It is one of the fundamental conditions of the creation of wealth and of jobs in Europe, and the *sine qua non* of the diffusion of European ideas and languages.

Ensuring the respect of intellectual property, and searching for solutions to impose it in the digital age, are priorities. The fight against piracy of content, the struggle for equitable remuneration for creation and the simplification of legal usages form the core of our common actions.

**In terms of taxation**, in order to facilitate the widest possible access to the book, a reduced VAT rate - as low as possible - on printed and digital books must be encouraged within the European Union and all over Europe.

Today, the book industry is facing the commercial methods of certain multinational **Internet** firms who practice tax dumping, slashing prices to penetrate markets and distort competition. The reader’s free choice must take priority: the interoperability that permits readers to read any book on the device of their choice must be upheld. Readers must be able to buy the books of their choice via a brick-and-mortar or an on-line bookshop, without being limited by the reading device they have purchased.

As publishing professionals in Europe, we propose to form a network of European organisations in the book industry, which will meet regularly in order to take collective action, continuing these reflections, striving to guarantee the rights of authors and protect those of readers.