

## Submission to the Joint Standing Committee on Treaties Inquiry into the Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for People who are Blind, Visually Impaired or otherwise Print Disabled

Mozart Olbrycht-Palmer (mozart.palmer@pirateparty.org.au)

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Pirate Party Australia thanks the Joint Standing Committee on Treaties ('JSCOT') for the opportunity to participate in the treaty consultation process. The *Marrakesh Treaty*<sup>1</sup> represents an important step forward in the world for improving the ability for the visually impaired to engage with cultural materials. As submitted to the Attorney-General's Department's consultation on implementation of the *Marrakesh Treaty*, the Pirate Party recognises the importance of improving access to, and dissemination of, materials in ways that encourage broad cultural participation and allow *all* persons to benefit from a vibrant global culture. Given that the World Blind Union estimated in 2013 that only 7% of published books are made available in formats accessible by the visually impaired (such as braille, audio and large print versions) in the wealthy countries, and less than 1% in the poorer countries, the Pirate Party welcomes the *Marrakesh Treaty* and is fully supportive of its ratification.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons Who Are Blind, Visually Impaired, or Otherwise Print Disabled, opened for signature 28 June 2013 [2014] ATNIF 15 (not yet in force).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup>Pirate Party Australia, Submission to Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department, *Marrakesh Treaty options for implementation*, 30 November 2014, 1.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup>World Blind Union, 'June 17 Press Release for WIPO Book Treaty' (Press Release, 17 June 2013) <a href="http://worldblindunion.org/English/news/Pages/June-17-Press-Release-for-WIPO-Book-Treaty.aspx">http://worldblindunion.org/English/news/Pages/June-17-Press-Release-for-WIPO-Book-Treaty.aspx</a>.