



SERVING AUTHORS WORLDWIDE
AU SERVICE DES AUTEURS DANS LE MONDE
AL SERVICIO DE LOS AUTORES EN EL MUNDO

COM25-0381

Source language: English / Written on: 29/04/2025

Document prepared by ULVAEUS Björn (CISAC President)

Björn Ulvaeus's speech at Westminster

Good afternoon.

Thank you for giving me this opportunity to speak to you today on the important topic of AI.

This is an issue that's close to my heart: as a creator and as an avid technology enthusiast.

I am speaking today not just as an artist but also President of CISAC, the largest global network of creators.

And more than that: I am speaking as someone who is very closely involved in the UK creative sector.

From the early days of ABBA, London and the UK meant a lot for us – and not just because of Waterloo...

These days I have three shows that are running here in London: Mama Mia the Musical; Mama Mia the Party at the O2, and of course ABBA Voyage.

The UK is a hub for the music and the creative sector.

And there's a good reason for this: the UK has always been supportive of this sector, appreciative of its contribution to the economy, and rewarding it with a strong legal protection in the form of copyright.

Yet these days the UK is at a crossroad, like many other countries, when it comes to addressing the issue of Artificial Intelligence.

We are living in an era of unprecedented transformation. And nowhere is this more evident than in the rise of generative AI.

AI is bringing huge benefits, and opens doors we did not even know exist.

I'm a very keen and enthusiastic user of AI tools. I've been enjoying using AI for nearly two years now.

But AI tools also raise many concerns.

The main concern, is quite simply, that we have to secure the protection of human creators.

This debate is now reaching a climax, and policy makers in many countries are considering changes to the laws on copyright and AI.

The message from creators is loud and clear: this is about upholding the entire system of copyright and authors' rights.

Copyright is the oxygen which creators and the creative economy depend on for their existence and survival.

They cannot be sacrificed.

I am convinced that the AI revolution can be not only the biggest, but also the best, revolution that the creative industries have faced.

That is possible, but only if there is a legitimate, mutually-respecting partnership between creators and AI operators. Unfortunately, there is an alternative and, in my opinion, more dangerous view, driven by profit-seeking tech companies.

That view favours a weaker rights framework and broad exceptions to copyright.

This would take away from the creators their right to negotiate for the use of their works, and that would be a historic setback for both creators and the tech sector.

At this point I think it is vital to be clear: protecting creators' rights in no way means trying to stop the advance of technology.

On the contrary, it means embracing and licensing AI tools in a safe, legal environment.

I say this as the number one fan of AI and of its possibilities for enhancing human creation.

What is pre-requisite, however, is that creators' rights are respected.

Specifically that means:

1. AI training must be subject to clear transparency rules;
2. Creators must be able to license their own works;
3. and remuneration of those creators must be guaranteed.

I have frequently been called on to be the message-carrier on this issue, to Presidents, Prime Ministers and anyone else who can help ensure that this debate ends fairly.

I've been delighted to be able to use my experience to do that, and I would like to see other well-known artists do the same.

Look at what was achieved by the inspiring "Make it Fair" campaign in the UK, rightly protesting against the misguided suggestion of loosening copyright rules.

The truth is that creators are not afraid of AI; but they are afraid, and legitimately so, of losing their rights and losing their income.

There is no doubt that, as AI technologies get smarter and better, the regulatory debate around AI and creators' rights is getting more critical.

The global economic study by CISAC and PMP Strategy, which I helped launch in December, projects deep revenue losses in music and audiovisual repertoires by 2028, if the right rules are not in place. Time is running out.

We must remember that this is not about the future of big successful artists. It's about the vast majority of those creators whose royalties support their careers and sustain our culture. And it's about the multi-trillion dollar creative sector that powers our economies, including the tech sector.

Upholding creators' rights is not only about fairness, it's also about economic good sense.

So bring on the AI revolution – and one that stays true to creators' rights.