

# ABINIA

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ABINIA

## AN INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION FOR NATIONAL LIBRARIES OF IBERO-AMERICA

### OBJECTIVE

ABINIA was inspired on the Conference of Directors of the National Libraries (CDNL) and works within the structure of CDNL as a regional body composed of Ibero-American countries that have in common a cultural heritage and share Spanish and Portuguese as national languages, making it possible to work together.

### PRESENT STATUS – AN EVOLVING ORGANIZATION

Created in December 14<sup>th</sup>, 1989 as **ABINIA - Asociación de Bibliotecas Nacionales de Iberoamerica** it has carried its activities towards a larger integration among national libraries of the Ibero-American countries. It has worked in favor of its members obtaining support from all libraries and achieving a goal of common languages and understanding of the broader implications of the association.

Nevertheless, it became apparent that it could serve better its purpose if it could represent governments and discuss policies and actions to reinforce national libraries of Ibero-American countries through a new perception of cooperation where governments could participate more actively towards this goal.

In order to achieve this aim a new Constitutive Act changing the status of the Association was signed by countries present at the 10<sup>th</sup> General Assembly, 12-14 October 1999, Lima, Peru. This Act transformed the association into an *intergovernmental* body and changed its appellation to **Asociación de Estados Iberoamericanos para el Desarrollo de las Bibliotecas Nacionales de los Países de Iberoamerica (ABINIA)**, but maintained its acronym of ABINIA.

Its goals, at present, include aspects of automated technical processing, encompassing recent developments in information technology and dissemination of information using the Internet. Also priority is been given to strengthening regional integration through cooperation programs and the interconnectivity with other information networks which has become a major goal in view of the need to use and share resources.

Another important objective is to influence government and public opinion on the role assigned to the Association and its program through the construction of a positive image that can work in support of a stronger awareness to preserve cultural legacy and documentary memory of its member countries.

At present, the following countries have become signatories of this intergovernmental organization and ratified the instrument at their parliaments or at government level: Cuba, El Salvador, Equator, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Spain, Venezuela.

In view of this new organizational structure the present President and members of the Council of Directors will have to be replaced in its next General Assembly to be held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from 11 to 14 November of 2002. A series of rules were drawn by its present Council of Directors to guide this election and the chair requested member countries of ABINIA for nominations of candidates.

The present President will cease its mandate at the end of the General Assembly of Rio de Janeiro as well as all members of its Council.

This new directorate and its executive secretary to be elected will operate from 2003 on under the new structure and will abide by its new rules of procedure and Constitutive Act and will be composed of official members designated by Governments through its National Libraries.

This change will represent a new challenge for ABINIA, which will begin to operate solely as an intergovernmental institution after this transition period, which has started in 1999.

As countries adhere to this new body it is expected a more active role from governments, and a more active inter-regional forum, which will unite and represent twenty-two (22) National Iberoamerican Libraries. As an intergovernmental body, its financial resources will originate from annual shares paid by member National Libraries. A maintenance budget is the contribution made by the Venezuelan government to maintain its office and secretariat in Caracas.

The program for 2000-04 prepared within the framework of the Information Society approved in Cuba at its XI General Assembly in 2000 will be revised by this new body, which will outline the future orientations of the organization.

In order to discuss priorities and analyze possible new orientations a meeting was held in Antigua, Guatemala organized by the National Library of Spain and financed by the Spanish Cooperation Agency. The focus of this meeting was The Iberoamerican bibliographic heritage: its knowledge and dissemination, and it was held from 22 to 26 April 2002 with the participation of member libraries of ABINIA and its directorate and Presidency. The recommendations of this meeting will also provide material for discussion at ABINIA's next General Assembly in Rio de Janeiro.

The meeting in Rio de Janeiro will focus on Information for all: the role of libraries in the process of digital inclusion and will also be joined by the 10<sup>th</sup> General Assembly of the Brazilian System of Public Libraries. This joint meeting will provide an opportunity to discuss the interface between public libraries and national libraries in Ibero- America. The Directors of National Libraries will discuss their programs and operation of their services at national level and suggest schemes of cooperation among countries.

## **CURRENT ON GOING PROJECTS**

- Digitization project of the Latin America Press of the XIX century
- Union Catalog of Microforms of Latin American and the Hispanic Caribbean
- Union Catalog of Cartographic collections of Iberoamerica from the XVI to the XIX centuries
- Novum Regestrum
- Portuguese-Brazilian data bases for common authority files
- Children literature in Latin America
- Regional register of documentary material in Latin America and the Caribbean
- Legislation of national libraries in the Region and Exchange of authority files among libraries

- New project : Central American bibliography.

#### **INFORMATION OF RELEVANCE TO CDNL**

- *Digital Library of Iberoamerica and the Caribbean (UNESCO)*. This project has started its remote training program for participating countries by Internet, which will help to launch its site.
- *Miguel de Cervantes Digital Library*. Another project in which members of ABINIA are still participating is the Miguel de Cervantes Digital Library in operation by the University of Alicante in Spain. This project has been the object of an agreement signed between ABINIA and the University of Alicante to enlarge the participation of other countries of ABINIA since the Library of Catalunya, Chile and Peru are already engaged in this project. The Brazil National Library will initiate to include Portuguese literature and enlarge the scope of this project, which is only Spanish language literature. The digital library will consist of digitized archives already been prepared or already available at the site of the National Library of Brazil. It is hoped that Portugal will also participate in this project to enlarge further its scope and permit access to Portuguese speaking literature from different countries.
- The National Library of Brazil is signing an agreement with the Library of Congress

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