

## CDNL: CHAIR'S REPORT 2016 – 2017

The last few years have been demanding for many of us. I will only mention economic restrictions, in some cases political instability, and natural disasters. This has compelled us to deal with the changes involved, even the most difficult, and show our real professional nature: never giving up.

In these years I have witnessed real organisational and professional progress in our field. There are outstanding new buildings, more solid digital services, and new leadership stepping in. Our national libraries are the driving forces of the nations and digital heritage. Something for the nation to be proud of. Something that carries us on.

The CDNL has been focusing on the chosen mission: serving and integrating its members by providing vital professional discussion and presentations. CDNL sessions have been successful in highlighting the most interesting of questions. This year's session in Wroclaw is designed to meet these standards and we are again proud to present a field of merited professionals to challenge us.

Cooperation with the IFLA has been one of the highlights of this period. The IFLA hosted an exciting and innovative two-day workshop in Athens this spring, and I, as well as several other CDNL members, had the pleasure of attending.

The aim of the workshop was to begin the process of defining a Global Vision for Libraries (website link can be found at <https://globalvision.ifla.org/>). It was a truly engaging experience where we discussed library issues and core values over the two days with representatives from the IFLA Sections. I was invited as the CDNL representative and ensured that the viewpoint of national libraries was heard.

The workshop had plenty of group discussion, a quick turnaround analysis based on the input from the different groups, and then a voting mechanism which enabled everyone to participate in prioritising points from the group discussions. It was truly amazing to have been part of this, and the two days left us very enthusiastic, even though slightly tired.

I am very pleased that the CDNL is part of this global process, and I cannot stress enough how much I would like to encourage all of you to get involved to ensure that our voice is heard in the Global Vision.

In close cooperation with the IFLA we have been progressing in a truly vital field: digital unification (formerly digital repatriation). IFLA has led us to working group and future conferences. Digital unification will mean many things: discussing the digital integration of the scattered WW II cultural heritage and also fresh views on bringing lost languages, scattered pieces of collections together. I think this will be something that will challenge and encourage us in the future. This area will usually attract politicians to digital diplomacy, returning lost properties to other countries in digital format, maybe encouraging new funding in this field as well.

At the end of 2016 we lost one of our most long-serving colleagues, Erland Kolding Nielsen, the director of the Royal Library of Denmark. Erland's merits and contributions were in a league of their own. Erland was a strong colleague and true friend to all of us. He always stimulated the meetings he participated in. His memory lives strongly among us and will long be cherished. CENL has established a grant in his honor. Erland Kolding Nielsen's memorial occasion was attended by many of our members in December 2016 in the Black Diamond, the library he was so proud of.

As I finish my period as CDNL chair, allow me to thank you all. It has been a real privilege to serve this organisation, perhaps bring something new to it, and turn it over to the reliable hands of the new chair. I will not be able to finish the original four-year period as I will retire in 2018, so it is fair to step down in due time and give the lead to a new chair.

Allow me to particularly thank our vice chairs and our hard-working secretary Liisa Savolainen. Liisa has put real effort into this organisation and we should never underestimate the role of a secretary in any organisation.

Once again, it has been a privilege to serve you.

I thank you all for given me this opportunity.

Kai Ekholm  
CDNL Chair, National Librarian of Finland