

REPORT TO CDNL 2005

IFLA NATIONAL LIBRARIES SECTION Information Report 2004-2005

Following the Strategic Plan that the National Libraries Section established for 2004-2005, at 2004 IFLA Conference in Buenos Aires, the Section invested specially in two areas:

1. The promotion of the educational role of national libraries as centres for lifelong literacy and learning with special emphasis on e-learning technologies.

This was the theme for a session with five presentations from Lynne Brindley (BL, UK), Graciela Perrone (National Library of Teachers, Argentina), Francis Zogo (Bibliothèque nationale du Bénin), Marianne McLean (Library and Archives Canada) and Joan Osbourne (National Library of Trinidad and Tobago). The variety of perspectives from these different national libraries provided, nevertheless, a clear understanding that there is an educational role for national libraries and that new technologies represent, nowadays, a major contribution and a great opportunity to fulfill that role, especially through e-learning developments that reach an outstanding number of people and help them to learn more. Papers are available on IFLANET and Lynne Brindley's contribution was selected and published in IFLA Journal.

2. The development of awareness for disaster planning dispositions in national libraries in order to help the preservation of our cultural heritage.

During 2004 the National Libraries Section participated with IFLA Preservation and Conservation Core Activity in a survey of disaster planning in national libraries. The outcomes of that survey were presented at a Joint session in Buenos Aires along with some reports from national libraries of Australia, Brazil and Chile, presenting successful disaster preparedness. Papers are available on IFLANET.

The strategic plan also included four other areas for discussion and investigation:

1. The promotion of management training for national librarians from countries with less opportunities.

I am happy to inform that in 2004 a course was prepared by the National Library of Malaysia that had kindly offered to promote and host it, and attended by a large number of national librarians of Southeast Asia but also from other parts of the World, as South Africa, with great success.

2. The investigation of shared experiences in the access to digital cultural heritage, involving cooperation between national libraries, archives and museums in order to provide guidance and best practices.

This is the theme that the Section prepared for 2005 Oslo Conference. The title of the session is “Networking cultural heritage: national libraries, archives and museums working together” and it comprises the following keynote papers:

- *Networking heritage – opportunities and challenges* (Graham Jeffcoat, Radboud University Library, Nijmegen, Netherlands)
- *Cross-sectorial challenges for archives, libraries and museums* (Jan Birger Ostby, Norwegian Archive, Library and Museum Authority, Oslo, Norway)

The session also includes a panel of five reports with Overviews of networking cultural activities in Africa (John Tsebe, NL-South Africa), Asia-Oceania (Zawyia Baba, Librarian Association Malaysia), Europe (Kai Ekholm – NL Finland), Latin America (Celia Zaher – NL of Brazil) and United States and Canada (Andrew Green – NL of Wales, UK) The reports were carried out by members of the Section and provide very complete and detailed information about the state of the art concerning the networking initiatives of cultural heritage institutions, in the world and the role that national libraries are assuming in these activities.

3. The continuation of the survey on performance indicators in national libraries.

It started in 2002/2003 and results about national libraries in Europe and Asia-Oceania were presented in Berlin. However, due to the fact that the member of the section in charge of coordinating this action, left his job and the need to revise the questionnaire made it impossible to proceed.

4. To share experiences and best practices concerning national libraries new buildings and equipments.

It was planned for 2005 to organise a session about this topic, however the Standing Committee decided that it was better to postpone it to Seoul, next year.

Other relevant activities

During the course of this year, the National Libraries Section was invited by the Rare Books and Manuscripts Section to participate in the revision of the UNESCO Memory of the World program, and this contribution was done by Kai Ekholm, director of National Library of Finland.

This was an election year in IFLA and the National Libraries Section held vacancies in its Standing Committee. The number of candidates was 14 and as a result of the ballot carried out among all registered members of the Section, it is my pleasure to welcome the new members: Ingrid Parent (Library and Archives Canada), Jarmine Cameron (NL- Australia), Deanna Marcum (LC-USA), Vigdis Moe Skarstein (NL-Norway), Martin Bossenbrock (KB, Netherlands), Rennée Herbouze (BNF-France) and Araceli Sanchez-Piñol (NL-Spain).

Having served two terms, the second one as Chair of the Section, this is my last report to CDNL. It was a real pleasure to be member of the Section and a challenging but very rewarding task to Chair it. To all the members of the SC and especially to the Secretary Geneviève Clavel, my warmest gratitude for the enthusiasm and hard work performed in Glasgow, Berlin, Buenos Aires and now Oslo. To the many observers who participated with such goodwill in the activities of the Section, my greatest thanks. To CDNL whose work and initiatives the National Libraries Section is always an interested partner, my sincere votes for a continuing and fruitful cooperation.

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