CDNL/DOC/2010/29

Conference of Directors of National Libraries
Annual Meeting, 12 August 2010, Gothenburg (Sweden)

Agenda item 3:

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of CDNL, August 2009, Milan

1. Opening

The Chair, Penny Carnaby, opened the meeting, and welcomed members to the meeting. She expressed her pleasure at seeing such a large attendance. She noted that apologies for absence had been received from the directors of the national libraries of Nepal and Sierra Leone.

2. Welcome from the host country

The Chair then gave the floor to representatives of the host country.

Dr Mario Resca, Councillor at the Italian Ministry for Cultural Heritage, welcomed delegates on behalf of Minister Sandro Bondi. He noted the contribution of the City of Milan – a city of art, letters and culture - to hosting this meeting of CDNL which, despite the difficult economic situation, was playing an important role in advancing culture and making it available to all. He noted the work of national libraries in digitisation - an important activity which was making the riches of Italian libraries available to all. In particular he announced that the Ministry was developing a partnership with Google to digitise collections in Italian national libraries. He saw this as an important way to promote libraries and allow everyone to benefit from their contents, and to preserve and protect this content with the best available technology through alliances with the private sector. [Applause]

Mr Massimiliano Finazzer Flory, Head of the Department of Culture of the City of Milan, representing the Mayor of Milan, thanked Dr Resca for his comments and also thanked Dr Antonia Ida Fontana (Director of the National Central Library of Florence) for hosting this meeting of CDNL. Mr Finazzer Flory noted the vocation of libraries to promote peace and preserve identities, values and culture. He noted that libraries faced many challenges in our increasingly multi-ethnic and multicultural societies. Libraries played an essential role in conveying knowledge.

The Chair thanked Dr Resca and Mr Finazzer Flory, and asked Dr Antonia Ida Fontana to address members of CDNL.

Dr Fontana welcomed members on behalf of the National Central Library of Florence, and also on behalf of Dr Osvaldo Avallone (Director of the National Central Library of Rome) who was unable to attend due to illness. She noted her pleasure at being able to host international colleagues in the historic Sforza Castle. She explained that since the 19th century, with Reunification and the transfer of the capital from Florence to Rome, Italy had two national libraries, which worked closely together in the provision of services and in cooperation with other libraries. She noted that the new administrative structure of the two national libraries gave them autonomy, flexibility and financial strength. Since 1995 they had been involved in national and international digitisation projects: many manuscripts and early periodicals and books had been made available on the Web, and the collection of Galileo's autographs had been consulted very frequently in 2009 in connection with UNESCO's 'Year of Astronomy'.

Other special projects of the Italian national central libraries related to scientific manuscripts, e.g. those of Pelli Bencivenni (80 volumes transcribed, indexed and digitised) and Petrarch. The great challenge for them was the project to digitise the national memory. Both national central libraries played a role in collecting and preserving Italian culture, but also in promoting the objectives of the knowledge society.

Dr Fontana thanked the Minister of Culture and the Mayor of Milan, through their representatives, for their support for this annual meeting, and particularly thanked her colleague Federica Paradisi for her hard work to make the meeting possible. [Applause]

The Chair thanked Dr Fontana also for her support and leadership.

3. Introductions

The Chair then asked delegates to introduce themselves briefly around the table. Sixty-three national libraries (or equivalent national-level library organisations) were represented at the meeting. The Chair warmly welcomed all delegates and in particular those who were attending a CDNL meeting for the first time.

4. Minutes of the previous meeting

The draft Minutes of the 2008 Annual Meeting in Quebec City were approved without amendment.

5. Reports on activities of CDNL over past year

5.1 The 'Digital Futures' Conference

The Chair reported first on an event that was fresh in members' minds. Thanks to the generosity of the Italian Ministry of Culture, a significant number of CDNL members had been invited to the IFLA 'Digital Futures' conference held the previous day at the

University of Milan. She herself had made a speech summing up the work of the conference. The Secretariat of CDNL had worked closely with the conference organisers to ensure a wide representation of CDNL members across all regions.

She then asked the Vice-Chairs Lynne Brindley and John Tsebe for their personal reflections on 'Digital Futures':

Lynne Brindley commented that one urgent message regarding digital libraries was that "the future is now": libraries would not survive if they did not keep very closely in tune with their users. Digital users (of all ages, not only young people) exhibited new kinds of information-seeking behaviour, they bounced around, often viewing but not always reading, they were immersed in the digital environment.

Other important messages reported by the Vice-chairs were:
- Users have no sense of what a collection is, in the sense that libraries understand the term;
- We must observe habits of users not only in the physical setting but also in the online environment;
- Global access may open up primary collections but it is not a substitute for the full context;
- Libraries insist too much on the distinction between expert users and popular users – this distinction is actually not so clear;
- Regarding web 2.0 and social networking: it is good to have user involvement in the resources we put on the web, but we all need to think about our use of our collections: what is the user's motivation and who will benefit?
- The conference had included case studies of China and Italy: there is no single way – China applies a macro strategy, while in Italy collections are developed across the culture sector in a federal system – one size does not fit all, each country looks for its own solutions.
- Financial viability was a challenge: how could we sustain large developed services in the context of ever-rising user expectations?;
- Publishers have concerns especially relating to mass digitisation (e.g. initiatives of Google), and to the open access movement;
- It was critical to put users at the centre of the stage, as in the CDNL 'Vision' statement: we need to work closely with users and develop citizen-created content;
- The conference had emphasised the importance of cooperation with other heritage institutions, and of partnerships with international organisations.

John Tsebe also noted that the Digital Futures conference had underlined the importance of the new IFLA president's theme of 'Libraries driving access to knowledge'.

5.2 Report on the activities of ICADS

Caroline Brazier (British Library) gave a brief update on the activities of ICADS (IFLA-CDNL Alliance for Digital Strategies) over the past year, and its future plans, as discussed at the recent Advisory Board meeting. She noted that ICADS had grown out of the previous Alliance for Bibliographic Standards: members had decided that there needed to be a stronger focus on digital initiatives. It was hoped to increase the

membership and strengthen the governance of ICADS, to develop its web presence. The participation of ICADS at the Milan conference would help promote and disseminate digital library developments.

The ICADS Advisory Board had discussed the proposal regarding 'National Libraries Global', and wished to propose to CDNL that a review of NLG be carried out. ICADS proposed to entrust this review to The European Library.

Ms Brazier noted some recent developments:
- The digitisation of newspapers was very valuable for users (and the National Library of Australia had noted involvement by users, some of whom were correcting data created by the NLA on newspapers);
- ICADS had helped to organise the 'Digital Futures' conference;

The focus for the coming year would be on expanding the content of the website and increasing editorial control. New governance arrangements might be proposed at next year's meeting of the ICADS Advisory Board in Sweden.

In response to questions, Ms Brazier advised that members of CDNL interested in joining ICADS should contact her. She noted that, currently, members were national libraries, but consideration could be given in future to extending membership to include other research libraries.

The Chair thanked Ms Brazier for her report.

6. Reports from IFLA

6.1 Remarks by the president of IFLA

The Chair then welcomed the out-going President of IFLA, Claudia Lux.

Dr Lux thanked CDNL for the opportunity to address the meeting. She believed that collocating the CDNL meeting with the IFLA Conference was important: she had noticed that the support of national libraries in every country was crucial to get "libraries on the agenda" (her presidential theme), and that national libraries mirrored their countries as a whole. She thanked all CDNL members for their support for IFLA, and noted in particular:
- Their support for the work of the IFLA Section of National Libraries;
- Their support for IFLA's Core Activities (and she noted with gratitude that the Bibliothèque Nationale de France had just renewed its support for the PAC Core Activity);
- the British Library's support for ICADS;
- the National Library of Portugal's support for UNIMARC;
- support from the Netherlands for IFLA Headquarters;
- support from Finland for FAIFE (the director of the National Library having just been elected the new Chair of FAIFE).

Regarding the Core Activities, she noted that, with national libraries' support, IFLA could really be present and make a difference in these key areas – she referred

members to the Annual Report on the Core Activities for 2008 which IFLA Headquarters had recently circulated.

Regarding activities during the coming year, Dr Lux noted that IFLA would:
- enter agreements to strengthen its relations with WIPO, UNESCO and similar organisations;
- integrate the ALP office into IFLA Headquarters;
- launch its programme to strengthen library associations in developing countries;
- strengthen its contacts with national libraries through its new advocacy training programme;
- pursue its collaboration with other NGOs on 'convergence' issues (and here she noted that CDNL was a permanent observer at meetings of the 'Convergence' group, and that it had been agreed that the group could adopt and adapt the CDNL 'Vision for the global digital library'.

Dr Lux expressed confidence that the excellent relations with CDNL would continue, and that more national libraries would become members of IFLA. She had noted with interest the report on CDNL's 2007 survey, and particularly its comments on cooperation across the wider information sector, the culture sector and publishing.

The Chair congratulated Dr Lux for an inspired presidency, for having put libraries on the agenda, and for publicly acknowledging the contribution of national libraries to the Core Activities. She expressed her pleasure that IFLA wished to adopt the CDNL vision statement. [Applause]

6.2 Remarks by the in-coming IFLA president

The Chair then invited the incoming president of IFLA, Ellen Tise, to comment on her presidential theme.

Ms Tise reported that she had held two brainstorming sessions on her theme 'Libraries driving access to knowledge' and she would draw on such input during her presidency. In particular she would continue the excellent advocacy work of Claudia Lux at international level, developing links with organisations promoting the information society and strengthening partnerships including with CDNL. She would promote new paradigms for libraries, for access to knowledge for the benefit of the profession, improve access to information and knowledge for persons with print disabilities, promote open access, promote national digital libraries.

The Chair thanked Ms Tise for her remarks and wished her well for her IFLA presidency.

6.3 Report from the Section of National Libraries

The Chair then asked Ingrid Parent, out-going Chair of the IFLA Section of National Libraries, to report on the Section's activities over the past year.
Ms Parent reported on the following activities:
- The Section had continued to develop its Directory of national libraries on Wikipedia, with the help of a consultant: so far there were entries for 133

national libraries; she noted that each library needed to take responsibility for updating its own entry: any that needed assistance with this should contact the Section; she also noted that the Section planned to have the Directory entries translated into other IFLA languages.
- The Section had started a Special Interest Group (SIG) on the international relations of national libraries and library associations (with the acronym NOIR); the objective was to discuss policies and practice in international relations: a successful meeting had already been held in Milan to launch the activities of the SIG with a survey and the preparation of a tool kit.
- The Section had worked closely with the Section on Bibliography to bring out a new publication 'National Bibliographies in the Digital Age'.
- The announced seminar on legal deposit for Francophone African national libraries had not taken place due to lack of funding – it was hoped to hold it in the autumn of 2010;
- Martyn Wade had been elected to take over as chair of the Section, and Jasmine Cameron had been re-elected as Secretary.

Ms Parent noted with satisfaction that, while CDNL was a high level strategic body, the Section was more operational: they were therefore complementary. It was good that representatives of the two bodies attended each other's meetings – this positive approach would be continued.

Ms Parent thanked members of CDNL for their support for her election as IFLA President-elect 2011-2013: CDNL members' views were important to her and to IFLA. [Applause]

In response to a question from Maria-José Ramos (Angola), Ingrid Parent clarified that the Section did expect to hold its planned workshop in Africa, but first needed to find the necessary funding.

The Chair thanked Ms Parent for all the work that the Section had done under her leadership; and congratulated the in-coming officers Martyn Wade (NL Scotland) and Jasmine Cameron (NL Australia).

6.4 Report from IFLA CLM

The Chair then welcomed Winston Tabb, Convenor of the IFLA Core Activity on Copyright and Legal Matters (CLM).

Mr Tabb announced that he would make brief remarks: the Powerpoint presentation he had planned to show would now be made available to the Secretariat after the meeting. He commented that it was important to restore the balance between protecting IP holders' rights and defending the right of access to information:
- users were being sidelined by developments such as the extension of the term of copyright protection to 70 years and perhaps longer; so the public domain was evaporating: technology was double-edged: IFLA believed strongly that the balance should be restored;
- IFLA was developing its relationship with WIPO, which had agreed to commission a study on copyright [exceptions and limitations] – the study had shown that some countries had no copyright law; some had a law that was

ineffective, 21 countries (mainly in Africa and Latin America) had no reference to the role of libraries in their copyright laws.

Mr Tabb noted that CLM had convened a meeting in London in April [on exceptions and limitations] with the help of the British Library. CLM had developed a set of 12 principles, and was working to get them adopted and incorporated at international level. IFLA delegates had noted that national delegates to WIPO were often not well briefed on issues of concern to libraries: CLM wished to enlist the help of national libraries and library associations to raise the awareness of their national WIPO delegates and brief them. [Applause]

In response to questions, W. Tabb informed CDNL members that:
- reports of IFLA/CLM activities at WIPO would be published on the IFLA website;
- IFLA representatives had introduced the CLM principles in May 2009 at a meeting of the WIPO Standing Committee on Copyright (SCCR); they believed that WIPO would develop an international instrument, and link it to the proposed WIPO Treaty on access for the print-disabled.

The Chair thanked Winston Tabb, and noted that the matter was an important challenge.

7. Panel discussion on 'Challenges facing national libraries'

The Chair introduced the panellists, Elisabeth Niggemann (German National Library), Makoto Nagao (National Diet Library, Japan), Monica Rizzo (National Library Foundation of Brazil) and John Tsebe (National Library of South Africa).

Dr Niggemann observed that new challenges seemed to be all digital, but people had heard that too often: what was needed was to create new balances (between the rights of users and the rights of owners, between researchers and publishers in science, between reliable digital access and sustainability); we should not think only about the users of today but look forward to the users of the future.

The Chair agreed that major changes were underway in workplaces, just as in the wider economic situation.

Dr Nagao commented that the challenges for the NDL were:
- to provide users all over Japan with services 'anywhere, anytime';
- to negotiate with copyright owners for the benefit of the print-disabled – he noted that the Japanese copyright law had just been amended to help persons with disabilities;
- to preserve original copies – digitisation was legally able to be done inside the Library without requesting rights owners' permission, but digitised materials could not legally be transmitted outside the National Diet Library.
- To employ more software engineers and computer scientists (at present all the NDL's technical staff were librarians);
- To speed up bibliographic processing of material: users found it too slow; ideally staff should shorten processes, but there were many barriers. There was

an urgent need to get metadata done fast, e.g. for digital libraries we should be able to get data extracted automatically. Technical departments needed to be restructured, but it was not easy to change the system.

The Chair commented that restructuring revealed complex polarities: a minor restructuring would not provide the change needed to carry national libraries forward to a new agenda. Tinkering with structures would not achieve the necessary change.

Winsome Hudson (Jamaica) asked the Chair if she had full authority to carry out the National Library restructuring which she was leading in New Zealand. Ms Carnaby replied that she did, as the Chief Executive of a government department, but that she had also consulted around the country.

Lynne Brindley (UK) commented that most libraries did not work on an industrial scale, and it was not really necessary for all work to be done at one institution any more.

The Chair then asked the 3rd panellist, Monica Rizzo, for her views.

Ms Rizzo observed that:
- The National Library Foundation was remodelling its buildings, developing networks, and developing digitised memory collections;
- another major challenge was to fully implement legal deposit of e-publications (the Library received academic e-journals offline but needed to get all e-publications).
- There was a need to ensure that each municipality in Brazil had at least one public library in good working condition – talks were proceeding with the Gates Foundation;
- Everything depended on cooperation, in a time of recession

The Chair commented that the theme that seemed to be coming through this discussion was: cooperation in times of recession - national libraries had a leadership role to play in that cooperation. She asked how Brazil was approaching the digitisation of collections.

Ms Rizzo replied that the National Library Foundation worked with academic institutions, sometimes approaching them to digitise their collections for them. The Library had begun digitisation with the (US) Library of Congress, as one of the founding members of the World Digital Library. The Library was also engaged in a project with France, and would launch 'France-Brazil' at the end of 2009.

John Tsebe commented that the NL of South Africa had been offered funding from the Carnegie Foundation, New York, to join the World Digital Library; but had decided to forego that and pass the offered funding to the national research foundation. But he agreed that the major challenge was to digitise collections.

The Chair asked the panellists to comment on how digitisation should be done (and funded) in a time of recession.

E. Niggemann commented that Google had helped, and publishers; but many people were reluctant to engage with such a large organisation as Google.

The Chair commented that it was important to carry out digitisation in the framework of a national strategy, such as New Zealand's 'Digital Strategy' and the UK's 'Digital Britain Report'.

L. Brindley commented that a key point in the 'Digital Britain' report was the absolute need for high-speed links: content was needed of course, but without high-speed links content could not be moved around. A second point was that not all citizens are digitally active.

The Chair observed that ubiquitous broadband was important, and quality content to fill the 'pipes'; and e-legal deposit was important: the mandate expressed in New Zealand's National Library Act 2003 had helped the National Library get $NZ24m of government funding for the National Digital Heritage Archive.

M. Nagao reported that, in the light of the recession, the Japanese government had voted a supplementary budget for the National Diet Library including support for digitisation – the equivalent of $US127m for digitisation of books. The NDL was creating a task force to digitise its books within two years. To create really usable digital libraries, e-legal deposit was needed.

Alfonso Quintero, Executive Secretary of ABINIA, noted that members of his organisation had a problem with the development of collections – they should collect not only information about their countries and information produced within their countries, but also information from and about all the organisations that their countries belonged to. He noted that, while there was action to digitise materials, national libraries were not paying enough attention to born-digital materials; that could lead to large gaps in collections. ABINIA had a project to improve the collection of born-digital materials by national libraries.

The Chair summarised the main issues raised by the panel:
- The digital paradigm: balancing the digital and analogue environments, developing both broadband infrastructure and digital content
- Collection storage issues
- Strengthening public libraries
- Cooperation at regional level
- Economic issues
- The changing workplace: staffing issues, redesigning jobs

She concluded that "in hard times, leveraging from best practice is probably the way to go."

8. Presentation on the RFBNN

The Chair then invited Guy Berthiaume (Bibliothèque et Archives Nationales du Québec, Canada), to present the Réseau Francophone de Bibliothèques Nationales Numériques (RFBNN), the French-language digital national libraries' network.

Mr Berthiaume noted that his presentation was also available on the CDNL website.

He referred to the promotion by UNESCO of digital libraries, and the support given by the Bibliothèque Nationale de France. In 2007 the Sommet de la Francophonie had mandated the development of the Francophone network of national digital libraries. This network had been officially launched during the IFLA conference in Quebec in 2008. Mr Berthiaume described the key features of the architecture of the network, and the challenges its creators had had to overcome. The network gave access to all types of materials (including newspapers, maps, photos), from 94 collections from 11 countries. A key factor in the success of the network was training, and field assignments. More national libraries were expected to join the network.

In answer to a question from a Russian colleague, Mr Berthiaume advised that there were no plans, at present, to include French-language collections from other than French-speaking countries.

The Chair thanked Mr Berthiaume for his presentation.

[The meeting then adjourned for a group photograph, followed by lunch.]

9. Discussion groups

[During the first half of the afternoon, members broke into three discussion groups, to discuss 1) national libraries responses to current economic challenges, and 2) various models of collaborative digital libraries, with particular reference to 'National Libraries Global'.]

10. Feedback from the group sessions

In the plenary session, the following feedback was given by the groups' rapporteurs on Question 1:

Lynne Brindley (The British Library) reported the views of her group:
- national libraries had to respond by setting priorities, and taking difficult decisions on the allocation of resources, despite knowing that this would lead to tensions
- libraries had to consider their core functions and core values
- they could outsource
- they should not give up too early ('on the advice of Eastern European friends, who have known harder times..!'), and continue to advocate to governments.
- They could engage in many kinds of collaborative activity, across the sector, shared services
- The potential role of volunteers should be considered: in some countries with unemployment, good people wanted experience on their CV
- Libraries should develop partnerships: e.g. for digital archiving and digital preservation, consider services which libraries could offer to the private sector.

Andrew Green (NL of Wales) reported on the conclusions of John Tsebe's group:

- with declining resources, better productivity was needed, better work flows
- libraries should improve their fund raising
- they should not assume it will be possible to preserve everything
- in tropical countries with high preservation costs it is essential to keep preservation going
- The group expressed strong support for the suggestion by W. Tabb that national libraries take back to their governments a plea for libraries as special cases
- Libraries should work for digital inclusion

Dr N. Varaprasad (National Library Board, Singapore) reported his group's conclusions:
- different libraries have different responses to the economic crisis: the solution is not year on year budgeting but budgeting for sustainability: some innovative responses are needed;
- it is not hard to get money for collections or systems if you can make a strong business case for it;
- the group was more concerned about people and capabilities
- there were opportunities for partnerships, collaboration and resource sharing
- how should libraries engage in partnerships: with publishers, citizens, media, philanthropists?
- but what must libraries stop doing? they cannot keep on adding to their list of responsibilities or workload.
- There are two parallel universes: print and digital – both are still expanding and according to different sets of rules – is this not unsustainable?
- We must give free and equal access to our collections to all citizens

Feedback on Question 2 (collaborative digital libraries, with reference to National Libraries Global) was as follows:

L. Brindley reported that her group recognised that this type of collaboration was advantageous – however the group was largely made up of Europeans who are already in Europeana, so overall they preferred the approach offered by ICADS, i.e. to arrange for the TEL office to further investigate the prototype. Consideration would then need to be given to the cost of completing the prototype and implementing it: a cautious approach was best.

Andrew Green reported that his group backed the CDNL vision and believed that each national library should do its bit; but the group thought the priority was not to develop gateways like NLG and others but rather to look hard at metadata: the group had been struck by a statistic from the Library of Congress, that the great majority of metadata were not picked up by Google, so the question should perhaps be: how to maximise the chances of robots picking up libraries' metadata? Or: how much of libraries' collections was in OCLC WorldCat? So the group did not come to any firm conclusions on NLG, but considered how each national library could improve its own digital metadata.

N. Varaprasad reported that his group thought that aggregation of metadata was happening anyway. And there were regional aggregators also: China, Japan and others, so the overall aggregation would happen in time anyway: if libraries saw some advantage in collaboration then they would do it; but libraries definitely needed to expose their metadata to various search engines.

The Chair thanked all the groups for their work. She summed up the key issues raised, issues which all national libraries needed to address, as follows:
- The need to expose and maximise metadata, as a top priority
- The need to promote affordable open source and open information solutions
- The need to promote digital inclusion
- healthy questioning of the some of the aggregations, are they ultimately affordable and sustainable?

11. Actions for the coming year

The Chair noted that the theme of digital inclusion had come up several times during the meeting, and she wished to put this on the agenda for the following year.

She noted that members had accepted the recommendation from ICADS that TEL should be asked to carry out a review of National Libraries Global, and report back to ICADS. The Chair would advise CDNL members when the report of the review was received.

12. Close of the meeting

The Chair then warmly thanked all those who had contributed to the success of the meeting, particularly the host library, and the team of local organisers. She thanked in particular Dr Antonia Ida Fontana for the outstanding organisation of the meeting, in such a splendid venue.

Bruno Racine (BNF) added his thanks to the team of French interpreters.

Dr Fontana then made a presentation to the Chair – and Lynne Brindley also publicly thanked the Chair.

The official business of the meeting closed at 3.55pm.

Before members departed on their group tours of the museum collections, Mr Claudio Salsi, the director of the Castello museum, spoke briefly about the collections that members would be shown.