

# **SOUTH AFRICA**

**NATIONAL LIBRARY OF SOUTH AFRICA**

**DR PETER JOHAN LOR – NATIONAL LIBRARIAN**

## **ANNUAL REPORT TO CDNL 2002 – 2003**

### **STATUS**

The National Library of South Africa was formed on 1 November 1999 following the enactment of the National Library Act, 1998. It is an autonomous statutory institution linked to the Department of Arts and Culture and is controlled by a Board appointed by the Minister of Arts and Culture. The first Board of the National Library was appointed in February 2001 by the Minister of Arts and Culture. During its term of office (extended to June 2003) the Board has overseen the restructuring of the two former institutions. A national transformation team representing various sectors within the Library was formed to assist the Board with transformation of the two old institutions into the National Library of South Africa.

### **TRANSFORMATION**

The transformation which started in 2001 was continued in 2002/3 and progressed to the middle levels of the Library. A new structure was drawn up and staff whose posts were made redundant are being reallocated where suitable positions are available. Those who cannot be accommodated in the new structure will be retrenched. The National Librarian, who was appointed on a three-year contract in 2000, announced that he would be retiring at the end of October 2003. Preparations are in hand to seek a new National Librarian for the Library. Owing to staff turnover at the top management level, a number of key posts were left vacant, viz. for Programme Executives for the Collections Management and Information Services Programmes. These posts will not be filled for the time being. A new Executive Head: Information and Communications Technology was appointed early in 2003.

### **ACTIVITIES**

Apart from the normal national library activities the Library has been engaged in several key outreach projects. These are highlighted below:

- The state-of-the-art Millennium library management system was successfully implemented at the Library. In the second phase, which seeks to enhance digital access to information sources in South Africa, the Library is exploring the possibility of installation of the same system at all the legal deposit libraries in the country. This would significantly enhance resource sharing and create synergy.

- The Library is assisting in the Timbuktu binational project between the governments of South Africa and Mali, which has as objective the conservation of the historic manuscripts of Timbuktu through the provision of training, technical support and the mutual development of conservation facilities. The Mali project could serve as pilot project for NEPAD (New Partnership of Africa's Development).
- In March 2003 the National Library hosted a meeting of the Standing Committee of the IFLA Section for Newspapers. This was followed by a seminar on the preservation of South African newspapers.
- The priceless San drawings in the Library's Bleek/Lloyd Collection are listed on UNESCO's Memory of the World Register. Wilhelm Bleek and Lucy Lloyd were the first persons to conduct a formal, in-depth study of any of the Southern African San languages. Their work enables researchers to gain access to interpretations of San language, mythology and folklore. These drawings along with those at the University of Cape Town and Iziko Museums are now being digitised, which will greatly enhance access for specialised research.
- The Department of Arts and Culture is to erect a US\$16-million new building for the Pretoria campus of the Library in the city centre, located on the envisaged new Government Boulevard leading to the Union Buildings. The Library will gain approximately 14 700.usable square metres of space for its book collections, currently scattered in various Pretoria premises, as well as approximately 1300 seats for library users. The present building can take only about 130 users, and people queue for hours every day to gain access.

**ADDRESS:**

National Library of South Africa  
Private Bag X990  
Pretoria 0001  
SOUTH AFRICA

Tel: +27 12 321 8931  
Fax: +27 12 325 5984

URL: [www.nlsa.ac.za](http://www.nlsa.ac.za)