

# UZBEKISTAN

THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF UZBEKISTAN

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## ANNUAL REPORT TO CDNL 2003 – 2004

At the beginning of the year 2004 the National Library of Uzbekistan comprised 10 million units. There are nine specialized reading rooms for 300 persons at the readers' disposal. Annual attendance is above 550,000 users, annual circulation is 1.700.000 publications.

In 2002 in accordance with the President's decree, "On the Improvement of the Organization of Scientific Research Activity", the library received the official status of the National Library. Later the National Book Chamber was joined with the National Library. These changes are aimed at the further development and improvement of Librarianship with due regard for changes taking place in traditional library technology and services to users.

In 1870 the National Library was opened to the public as Tashkent Public Library. During the years of its activity the National Library indeed has become the national library. It performs an humane mission as the curator of the national documentary heritage of the Uzbek people. The NL collection holds above ten million publications. This unique collection of the national written culture (more than 250 thousand copies) includes rare and antique editions, manuscripts, lithographs, first national periodicals, books and other documents. There are some pearls among them such as the first books in Uzbek: Sh.M. Ibragimov. Kalendar (Tashkent, 1872); N.P. Ostroumov. Amir Temur (Tashkent, 1890); N.P. Ostroumov. Skazanie o gorode Oshe (Tashkent, 1885). There are also works on the history of Turkestan: "Turkestanskij sbornik" in 594 volumes generated from the articles and anthologies; "Turkestanskij albom" A.L. Kun (1871) consisting of four parts in ten volumes (historical, archaeological, ethnographic, trade) and having 1200 photos; the first translation in Russian of classical works of the Uzbek literature "Shedžere-i-tjurk" ("Genealogical history of the Tatars") by Abdul-Gaza, khan of Khiva (SPb., 1768); the first edition of Philipp Efremov's "Ten-year traveling and adventures in Bukharia, Khiva, Persia and India and returning from there through England and Russia, written by himself" (SPb., 1785). The first newspapers printed in Turkestan are gathered in the library. They are as follows: "Turkestan vilojatining" (1870-1917), "Tidžor" (1907), "Turan" (1919), "Sadoi Turkestan" (1914), "Ishtakiun" (1917), "Turkestanskije vedomosti" (1870-1917), "Samarkand" (1904-1907). Books in foreign and Old Slavonic languages are stored in the library:

Incunabulum "The Ninth German Bible" belongs to the outstanding masterpieces of typographical art of the XVth century;

"The Oriental Library" by Bartolomeya Erbelo is the original encyclopaedia of the East issued in French in 1697;

"Ostrozskaja Biblia" by Ivan Fedorov was published in Ostrog in 1582.

Every historical period in the progress of society made its alterations to the library structure, service system, in the work of the reading rooms changing the trends, functions and priorities. But the quality and energy in satisfying the informational requests of the users are the main and invariable aims of the assistance. The status of the National Library enhances the responsibility for improving library service.

During 135 years of its activity the library revised the trends of serving more than once. It depended on social, economic and political events in the country.

During 1990-2000 the main tendencies of the assistance to users are to open reading rooms in the newly founded departments and to widen reading rooms attached to the art department, rare book division, foreign language department and the service division for young people. The National Library has become the coordinating center of interlibrary loans in the Republic. During these years the composition of the readers was rather various and high in quantity, more than 35,000. The library successfully attended to all categories of users starting with 14 years.

The system of library service must respond to the changes in the informational requests of the users. For this purpose the readers have access to the electronic database and to the Internet. For the readers' convenience there is a reading room for 70 persons attached to the storage department, supplied with computers.

The main objects of the Uzbekistan National Library in the library service are:

to make use of traditional (printed) and electronic bearers of information;

to preserve traditional forms of service and to inculcate innovations;

to make the greatest use of information technology;

to extend access to the national information resources not only for the readers within the library but also for the distant users.

The electronic catalogue database of the National Library contains more than 50,000 records accessible to readers. The project "Virtual Library. Consortium of Uzbekistan Libraries for Making up the Union Electronic Catalogue" is being realized. Its database is above 150,000 records.

The initiatives on the working out the law project of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On the Librarianship" are the NL's important achievements. This project will create a legal basis for library strategies, a normative basis for practical activity of the libraries, and the Conception and Program of the Development of the Librarianship in the Republic till 2010. The NL is the cooperative and coordinative center of the libraries' activity and the Interdepartmental Library Council is the consultative body. It will coordinate the libraries' activity of the different boards and departments.

The NL international connections have become stronger. More than 150 organizations from almost 30 countries are the book exchange partners of the NL. In 1995 the library became a member of IFLA and now it has an opportunity to take an active part in the work of the international library forum. Our specialists go abroad to participate in the international conferences, seminars and training courses. The NL is one of the organizers of the international conferences "Library and Information Resources in Science, Education, Culture and Business" (Samarkand – 1999, Buchara – 2002, Tashkent-Samarkand -2004). The conferences have demonstrated the competence of the library and information resources of the Republic and have shown the interest in the conferences on the part of the international community.

While keeping the traditions, the NL is making changes. The stable development of the NL depends on the legal guarantees on the part of the state, the efforts of the staff and the help of the interested organizations including those internationally. The National Library of Uzbekistan will take a proper place in the commonwealth of the national libraries of the world.

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