



IFLA World Library and Information Congress  
78th IFLA General Conference and Assembly  
11-17 August 2012, Helsinki, Finland

## Secretary General's Report

Wednesday, August 15, 2012

*Thank you Madam President.*

*In 2011 IFLA moved into its first 2 years of the Key Initiatives for the 2010 -2015 Strategic Plan. There are 4 Strategic Directions within the Plan. For 2011 – 2012 IFLA identified 5 Key Initiatives and I would like to give you a brief report on achievements within those Initiatives up until now.*

Key Initiative 1 is – Digital Content Programme: Driving access to content, and digital resources, for library users

- Our advocacy within the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) domain for an endorsed instrument that provides legal certainty for exceptions and limitations for libraries and archives in all countries has resulted in a working document being considered, with a current timetable of an international instrument being accepted by the WIPO member states in 2014, though we anticipate this may go on longer;
- Activities to promote Open Access include working with UNESCO and EIFL to host a meeting at the WSIS Forum 2011 in Geneva in May; a seminar on open access with United Nations offices in Geneva earlier this year; and submissions to the European Commission and Office for the High Commissioner on Human Rights. In October members of the Open Access Taskforce will meet with UN publishers about making more publications available through open access; and in November IFLA will be represented at the Berlin10 conference in Stellenbosch.
- Having current policies and standards is essential for good professional practice and for our advocacy work. Our Policies and standards work has produced many new endorsed documents, such as:
  - Legal Deposit, Orphan Works, Traditional Knowledge; e-resources collection development; code of ethics for librarians
  - IFLA/UNESCO manifestos on multicultural libraries; digital libraries; media and information literacy; libraries serving persons with a print disability

The Standards advisory committee was implemented late last year and is now very busy auditing our many policies and standards and preparing an agenda for revision and preparing new statements where needed.

- e-lending is a high priority for us all. A background paper on digital lending has been prepared; we have gained funding to develop a think-piece on models of access to digital content which will be followed by an expert meeting in The Hague in November/December to reflect on the paper and propose ways forward. We are also working in collaboration with EBLIDA on advocacy within Europe, where the take

up of ebooks for example is lower than in some other regions and there is the opportunity to influence developments.

- IFLA is commissioning a Trend Report that will look at the evolving digital information environment and how libraries internationally may position themselves within that; this will be launched at WLIC 2013;
- IFLA Repository – we anticipate that in 2013 we will start an IFLA Repository for IFLA publishing and it is planned that the first content will congress papers.

**Key Initiative 2** is about strengthening and sustaining our voice and role as a leading international organisation by building the capacity of those who will provide leadership within IFLA, within their library association, and be international advocates on behalf of the library and information sector

- We have completed Building Strong Library Associations Programmes in Peru, Lebanon, Cameroon, Lithuania, Ukraine, Botswana and Nepal, and the impact evaluation shows that in each case this has been with great success;
- At this Congress we have launched our IFLA International Leaders Programme with the first 12 Leaders Associates participating in the programme through until the WLIC 2014. They will undertake an intensive programme of meetings and workshops with leaders within IFLA during each Congress and will also work on projects and activities relating to our Key Initiatives. This is not a leadership programme. It is a programme unique to IFLA, where we can offer leaders from their own country or region the opportunity to develop in an international environment to become international advocates on behalf of the library and information sector.

**Key Initiative 3: Outreach Programme for Advocacy and Advancement of the Profession: connecting, collaborating, representing strategically.**

- Outreach calendar of events is now available on the IFLA website.

**Key Initiative 4: Cultural Heritage Disaster Reconstruction Programme: culture is a basic need, a community thrives through its cultural heritage, it dies without it.**

- Principles for engagement by IFLA and its members in library-related activities in times of post-conflict or natural disaster recovery have been endorsed by the Governing Board.
- Protecting collections and artifacts from natural disaster or armed conflict has unfortunately become more critical over the last few years. We have opened discussions on this with the international bodies for museums, and monuments and sites, and UNESCO and also hope to collaborate with the Council of Directors of National Libraries on identifying those at most risk, including details in a risk register and working to prioritise digitization of these.

**Key Initiative 5: Multilingualism Programme: a multilingual IFLA website opens windows to the world**

- We expect to launch French and Spanish websites at the end of this year and the remaining IFLA languages in 2013 – 2014.

The Governing Board is in the process of drafting its proposed Key Initiatives for 2013 – 2014 and this document will be circulated for consultation in October and November. In addition to some new activities, some new key initiatives are also proposed. These include a new activity that will

follow up on the President's Meeting on Indigenous Knowledge, and a new initiative that we currently refer to as Blue Sky, but is about examining what sort of an organization IFLA needs to be with, or ahead of the marketplace in an environment where increasingly civil rights, and the civil society, is more linked to information than ever before, and where people who work with information are at the centre of this.

Just to mention a few other activities. We have now moved into our new company structure for the Congresses where they are now under IFLA ownership. This will provide IFLA with greater control and management, and risk management over our congresses.

Also the Governing Board is implementing a new publishing programme that can offer the widest possible access and re-use of IFLA publishing content, and aims to have content that is at the leading edge of practice.

Though membership declined in 2011 by 4% we are grateful for the support of those members who have continued to support IFLA during what is for many a time of economic hardship. We are pleased that renewals are going well this year and we also have new members.

Our professional units have been very busy, and IFLA has had wide representation – more details on these are available in the annual report and on our website.

Madam President I would like to thank you and the Governing Board, and the previous Board because 2011 was a changeover year, for the leadership you have shown in changing IFLA into a dynamic strategic organization with a clear focus and the capacity to achieve its goals. With the support of our members and many volunteers we are making an increased impact as the global voice of libraries. There is great respect for and recognition of IFLA as an authoritative body both within our sector and beyond. We are widening our reach to new domains such as within civil society alliances, and working through our members and professional units able to increase our impact at the local level. All this is supported by our very capable staff at Headquarters and our Regional offices and language centres.

You are what makes IFLA happen. My thanks to you all.

Madam President I present the Secretary General's report to the meeting.

**Jennefer Nicholson**

IFLA Secretary General