

| International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) | |
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| Document nr | RC 22-12-3.1 |
| Agenda Item | 3.1 |
| Subject | Minutes of the Regional Council meeting 5 October 2022 |
| From | Nthabiseng Kotsokoane, Chair |
| Purpose | Adoption of Agenda |
| Date | 9 December 2022 |
| Note | Minutes were approved on 9 December 2022 |
| Recommendations | That the Regional Council approves these minutes |

MINUTES

**The sixth meeting of the Regional Council was held on Wednesday 5 October 2022,
from 11:00 – 12:30pm CEST by teleconference call via Zoom**

Welcome and apologies

Present:

- Regional Council: Nthabiseng Kotsokoane (Chair), Winston Roberts (Asia-Oceania), Frédéric Blin (Europe), Imad Bashir (MENA), Julius Jefferson (North America), Alejandro Santa (LAC) & Interpreters to support Alejandro, Sarah Kaddu (Sub-Saharan Africa) Jan Richards (Professional Council liaison).
- Observers and others: Stephen Wyber (IFLA HQ)

Apologies:

- Barbara Lison (IFLA President)

1. General business (15min)

1.1 Adoption of agenda

RC 22-10-1.1

The agenda was adopted. Imad moved, Sarah seconded.

1.2 Adoption of minutes of the previous meeting

RC 22-10-1.2

Adopt the minutes with spelling mistakes corrected.

1.3 Intervention by the IFLA President

Oral Report

The IFLA President was unable to attend the meeting due to other commitments.

1.4 Chair's Update, including Professional Council update

Oral Report

The Regional Council Chair noted that she is happy for the upcoming in-person meeting in The Hague. She referred to the resignation of the Professional Council Chair, and noted the upcoming election process for the new PC Chair after the next Governing Board meeting, and that the successful candidate would be able to stand for a further term afterwards.

The Professional Council liaison noted that the election process had begun, with a deadline for nominations of 14 November, and a result by 30 November. Professional Unit Chairs and Secretaries were entitled to nominate, and Division Chairs and Vice-Chairs could be nominated.

At the last PC Meeting, the Council had gone through the feedback from the officers' briefing in order to support transitioning effectively and they are integrating this for the next cycle and transitioning into the next term: there were lots of practical and sensible issues raised, including lots around communications and administrative improvements. Currently, Professional Units are finalizing their action plan updates and annual reports. Since the guidelines around co-opting and mentors have been finalized, a lot of the PUs are now using those co-opting rules to add regional diversity to their units. It's been quite successful and we hope that there should be a drive to get out the message. As Division Chairs we have been telling them that they should be talking to their regions in getting out the message, from regions that have been identified to be needing more people.

The PC liaison noted that IFLA HQ's report on regional diversity offered a good basis for looking at where there are gaps and think about how we fill those gaps. There is representation from NA and Europe almost everywhere, but for the other regions it's not so strong. We also need to focus on diversity within regions – for example with AO, 90% of PU SCs have representation from this region, but if we think of countries, you could say that probably most PUs have someone from Australia or New Zealand, which immediately gives them a tick, but rather than considering other parts of the region. We need to work on that and work with the Regional Divisions on how we use those networks when we go out for the next elections -in particular, how we recruit and how we get so that it's not only the region, but also the sub-regions within the region that are represented. Also to think about projects that we have, where people can get engaged, since not all will be able to come to WLIC, but we still want them to be engaged in our work.

The RC Chair noted that the divisions wanted to see our plans, so that when they want to be able to collaborate with the regions, wants to be able to see this. Note that this is also part of the coordination. SW added that this is why HQ has been asking if there are any updates to the action plans.

The North America RDC Chair noted that an update of the webpage "projects overview" would do the job for that purpose and this is now done for the NA RDC. He asked how to communicate better with the PC, to communicate across the board: the RC has a Basecamp, the PC has a basecamp but there is no common Basecamp – do we need a shared Basecamp? The RC Chair felt that this is a good idea, because we shouldn't be working in silos, but rather working together. Noted that the speed-dating was helpful. Perhaps then have a combined RC and PC meeting, even if just 1-2 per year, to be together and talk, understand each other. The dating session was helpful towards that direction, but we need a step after that. She noted that the RC is now building its own house, but it's a good time now to invite people into our house to talk, so that they know what the RC is doing.

The Asia-Oceania RDC Chair suggested to the PC liaison that the PC chairs shouldn't necessarily look for a reference document, but just e-mail the RDC chair to ask for what they need – this would offer more than trying to rely on a single document.

The PC liaison noted that the co-opting process is separate, it's a formal process. The PC is also, looking, with co-opting, rather than always going out each time, you can then dip back into a reserve list, in order to simplify some of the processes.

1.5 Matters arising not elsewhere on the agenda

The RC Chair noted that we are looking for a volunteer to stand on the IFLA ethics team. The MENA RDC Chair, Imad Bachir volunteered to do this. It was clarified that this was going to be an important piece of work, and that it was led by the GB. The RC Chair mentioned that this would likely lead to wider guidance for everyone – i.e. officers, units, staff etc. The NA RDC Chair is going to be the back-up.

2. Strategic Discussion: Evaluation (30min)

2.1 Learning Lessons: Optimising meetings

RC 22-10-2.1

Each Regional Division Committee Chair (or their representative) shared lessons learnt on a number of elements. See the paper produced for the December meeting for more.

MENA RDC Chair: they are learning a lot here, but happy with the fact of having our own division here. It was good to meet in the evening as you don't get cut off. They have a WhatsApp group to deal with issues – one general one, one for the comms team, and one for the working groups focused on different projects. They discuss things in a group, but each is responsible for one of the projects followed. Concerning engagement, he works to get everyone involved, including those who are more resistant.

Europe RDC Vice-Chair: similar to Imad, the Europe RDC meetings on the first Tuesday of the month for about 90min. They share the agenda a week before, and regularly have 12-16 people, although not all of us speak actively. There's also a language issue. Key challenges going ahead were to boost communications.

LAC RDC Chair: in-person meetings are essential. The toughest thing was to move from a technical section to a division. Get together once a month, had the last meeting in May in Colombia, had projects emerging, and since then have materialized them. Have a February meeting in Puerto Rico. Important to meet that way.

Asia-Oceania RDC Chair: noted that some of the comments made in July are still top of mind, and likely to stay with him. One issue is communication within the committee. There had been an issue with the lack of a full in-person meeting since they began, meaning that the committee might not have gelled as a group. At the beginning of the term, they had decided to meet every two months. Risk is that every two months may be too rare – better to break up the committee into groups, but these don't always work either. They have a communications issue also, people don't remember each other, and so quite often it's Despina who reminds people about the need for this – sometimes it's the chair who needs to remind people, sometimes better for HQ to do this.

North America RDC Chair: appreciate hearing from colleagues. We meet twice a month. The Chair and the Vice-Chair, tried to move this to once per month but people wanted to meet twice a month. We have a slight advantage, because 19 people speak English, only one speaks French and we have some other people who speak French so we can cover this small language gap. It's kind of a set schedule, we are looking of changing this schedule. There were questions about whether Committee members could run again for the next 2 years? We feel that continuity is needed, because we are just getting our foot in and we feel we just been able to get some attraction with the action plans and we are beginning to understand how this regional division fits in the larger scheme of IFLA and we hope to have a good amount of people return back. Conversations with other chairs from other RDCs are important.

Sub-Saharan Africa RDC Chair: meet once a month, but have sub-committees which emerged as a result of the different initiatives in play. For example, advocacy, outreach. These meet according to need. Sometimes, up to 3-times, so they are easier. Turnout is variable – try to push on people to come or say that they can't. Have managed to collaborate in action plan about areas to collaborate. Have worked with EURDC, working with Stuart and the session there with him. Look forward to more. Happy with the action plan, sticking with it. Has some issues with sub-groups and how to get people better involved. Lack of commitment from a few colleagues, especially when they can hide behind someone else.

The **RC Chair** asked the answers to be sent to the HQ and noted in general the point about 4-year terms.

2.2 Preparing for the in-person meeting of the RC

RC 22-10-2.2

The RC Chair noted the upcoming in-person meeting of the Regional Council in December as a valuable opportunity to discuss how the Council can have the greatest impact over the rest of its term, offer the best possible start to its successor, and more broadly shape IFLA's work to build a strong and sustainable library field at the regional level.

3. Strategic Discussion: Communication (30min)

3.1 Updates on activities

Oral Reports

The RC Chair opened the floor to a discussion around the important role RDCs play in communications, in particular with IFLA's wider membership in their regions. The RDC Chairs shared updates on how their Committees are carrying out communications, including audiences targeted and tools used.

The AO RDC Chair suggested the creation of a Basecamp group of communications team people across the regions in order to share ideas. The RC Chair felt that the MENA RDC has a good group and the MENA RDC Chair said the WhatsApp groups (a general and a comms one) seem to work. The MENA RDC Chair suggested (in the chat) the creation of a WhatsApp for the RC, something that was endorsed by the AO RDC Chair.

The RC Chair stressed the need of stronger promotion and sharing news more effectively with the community, for example the digital versions of the WLIC Sessions need to be promoted on the IFLA-L. That way, all the Sections and PC will understand what we're doing.

The NA RDC Chair noted the need for better links amongst selves, therefore the suggested common Basecamp with the PC would work here. Each RDC communicates within the region (wider audience) -the NA RDC in particular has a list of stakeholders with which is engaging and trying to attract new members-, but there is a lack of communication with other parts of IFLA involved, the IFLA community. Need also to talk more with the PC, or even just have a joint meeting with all PC and all RC chairs in order to promote coordination.

The RC Chair stressed the need to communicate more broadly with the audience on a global level. "Are we visible? Does the IFLA community know about us? We need to promote our existence to the IFLA community as a whole.". A communication strategy is needed here, perhaps have a small team focusing on this – how can we get individuals to get involved? How to show what we can do

there. News can be shared with the open lists of each region, but nothing prevents each RDC to share these on IFLA-L too -this is how the broader community will learn about our activities.

Additionally, other than the social media posts focused on each RDC, IFLA HQ could do an updated post about the existence of the RDCs and their work as a whole, especially now that the election process is coming -that way people will be able to understand where they can stand and where to get involved from their desk. The AO RDC Chair noted that we can't assume that people can participate from their desk in the Pacific –good to invite people from other regions into their sessions.

The LAC RDC Chair stressed the need to be involved in our regions, earn respect, show that we're interested and care, not just run in and shout that we have solutions. Draw on comms professionals as well, in order to be engaged in what is happening, talk to people, be IFLA out there.

3.2 Maximising participation at the next elections

RC 22-10-3.1

This item was not discussed.

4. Supporting engagement in Voluntary National Reviews (10min)

4.1 Plans and next steps

RC 22-10-4.1

Stephen Wyber noted the main documents that describe some initial ideas for actions for views from the Council, following on from the sense at the last meeting that work on supporting colleagues in countries undertaking Voluntary National Reviews –a key area of focus for our work.

The MENA RDC Chair updated that they plan to be active for Arab countries, they're engaging with ESCWA, and doing something in early December in preparation for the Arab Forum on Sustainable Development, 14-16 March.

The LAC RDC Chair mentioned that there's the session on 13 October, they plan to hold a workshop on this. Need to build confidence, get close to the community, reach out, engage, sit down with the presidency, engaged them strongly. Argentina had a great contribution, which also means that this gives the country a certain strength. The SDGs are the future – everyone must be brought towards the language of the SDGs, also as indicators that allow us to tell if we're doing things right.

5. RDC Updates*

Oral Report

No oral updates were provided.

6. Any Other Business (5min)

The HQ will be reaching out to the RDC Chairs for a call for people who can be on the comms group.

The RC Chair stressed the importance of communications, and the need to be more visible/seen/heard.

The NA RDC Chair asked when it'd be possible to meet president Lison, which will be possible in the next December meeting.