

International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA)	
Document nr	RC 23-06-2.1
Agenda Item	2.1
Subject	Minutes, Regional Council Meeting, 4 May 2023
From	Nthabiseng Kotsokoane, Chair
Purpose	Adoption of Agenda
Date	29 June 2023
Note	Minutes were approved on 29 June 2023
Recommendations	Approve the minutes

MINUTES

**The ninth meeting of the Regional Council was held on Thursday 4 May
from 12:00 – 13:30 CEST online by teleconference call via Zoom**

1. Welcome, apologies and agreement of agenda

RC 23-05-1.1

Present:

- Regional Council Members: Nthabiseng Kotsokoane (Chair), Winston Roberts (Asia-Oceania), Stuart Hamilton (Europe), Imad Bashir (MENA), Julius Jefferson (North America, Julius apologised he had to leave the meeting before it was finished), Alejandro Santa (LAC), Sarah Kaddu (Sub-Saharan Africa), Te Paea Paringatai (Professional Council Chair)
- Others: Barbara Lison (IFLA President), Helen Mandl (IFLA Acting Secretary General), Stephen Wyber (IFLA HQ), Despina Gerasimidou (IFLA HQ)

Apologies:

- Julius Jefferson (North America) stayed at the meeting until the 6.2 was discussed. He had to leave the meeting after that.

The Chair welcomed participants.

The agenda was approved.

2. Agreement of Minutes

RC 23-05-2.1

The minutes were approved.

3. Welcome by the Chair

Oral report

The RC Chair congratulated the new GB. Proud that the new GB will be heavily RC-focused (Stuart, Alejandro, Nthabi, Te Paea are on the GB).

The IFLA President shared information about the elections, that all positions have all been filled. There will be some co-options for some Standing Committees. By the time for WLIC 2023 everyone will be ready to work on their positions. There will be an in-person GB meeting in the Hague in the beginning of June. Regarding the new SG, a contract would be signed soon and then there will be public news about it. There was a unanimous vote from the GB for that person.

The RC Chair noted that there is a committee looking at the Regional Offices, with a call for applications from existing and new candidates. Notably, we are going to have a new Regional Office in MENA. The calls are going to go out soon.

IFLA Acting Secretary General congratulated all of those who stood for new positions and were successful. It was great to have some continuity and good to see some very strong regional committees, and hoped to get more elections in future. We have an extensive induction process to have them ready on board already before WLIC so that they are ready to act just after WLIC. There will soon be elections for the Chair.

4. Professional Council, Governing Board Updates

Oral report

The Professional Council Chair congratulated the successful election candidates and mentioned that she uploaded the PC report on the Regional Council Basecamp. The Professional Council Chair also mentioned that whilst the RC meetings are open to all, there isn't an invitation to Officers of the PC, so there is no access to this information. The RC Chair answered that this point is taken.

5. Regional Division Committee Updates (in writing unless there are urgent questions)

Oral report, reports shared by e-mail

Council members have been encouraged to share updates about their work in writing in advance of the meeting. The LAC RDC Chair shared the successful event that was run by IFLA HQ (Despina), IFLA LAC Regional Office and IFLA LAC RDC on 12 April 2023, titled "[Stories from regional IFLA volunteers in LAC: why engagement matters](#)". He mentioned its importance and the hope to replicate it in other regions as well. The LAC RDC Chair also mentioned their successful participation at the [6th Forum of the Countries of LAC on Sustainable Development](#) and the importance of meeting committee members and taking part in such meetings in other regions as well.

The RC Chair noted that she also represented IFLA in Ghana at a similar meeting with ministers, chiefs and kings. The RC Chair highlighted the importance of in-person meetings, and looked forward to more like the one in Bangkok in November 2022. She underlined that the RDC Chair and Members are important because they are there on the ground to represent IFLA and the RDC, to talk about IFLA and recruit members. The AO Chair supported Alejandro's comment and highlighted that of course the pandemic was the barrier in doing physical meetings, although this was something discussed even at the 1st Regional Council meeting. He also suggested to attach RC meetings to regional convenings -that could double the value. The RC Chair said it's a good idea and these could be things to suggest to the new RC.

The MENA RDC Chair suggested that all RDCs should partner with all the local conferences in each region, giving examples from his own region (e.g. Lebanese Library Association conference every two years or other national library conferences).

The NA RDC Chair noted in the chat that ALA Annual has a strong international component and the IFLA President will be speaking.

The RC Chair noted that last year there was an in-person RC meeting in the Hague, followed by the GB meeting -this gives the opportunity for them to join too, which is important.

6. World Library and Information Congress

6.1 Update on the regional hubs WLIC 2023

Oral Report

Stephen Wyber thanked the chairs who suggested hosts for regional hubs. The aim is to give a stronger regional presence to the conference. HQ will make sure to have them work with the RDCs. Answering the AO RDC Chair's question, Stephen noted that the final choice has not been yet made, but that will soon come.

6.2 WLIC 2023 Provisional Programme - Business Meetings, Satellite Meeting and Regional sessions

RC 23-05-6.2a

RC 23-05-6.2b

The RC Chair invited the RC members to review the provisional WLIC 2023 programme (RC 23-05-6.2b) and the overview (RC 23-05-6.2a) of the Satellite Meetings, Business Meetings and Regional Open Sessions (Regional Council and Regional Divisions). The RC Chairs asked the SSA RDC to send another representative to their Satellite Meeting, as it clashes with the RC meeting. The RC Chair asked them to support each other's WLIC open sessions and attend them. The RC mentioned that all programmes are now approved and asked them to advertise their sessions through the IFLA-L list and in their regions so that there is good attendance.

Regional Council Session: the AO, LAC, NA RDC Chairs will convene to finalise the session specifics. There will be an online meeting of this subcommittee to discuss this and finalise the proposal.

7. Effective working practices

7.1 Checklist and detailed results from surveys on communications, emerging leaders, sub-groups

RC 23-05-7.1

Despina Gerasimidou summarized the results that the RDCs were asked to respond around three areas i) communications, ii) emerging leaders and iii) the use of sub-groups in order to deliver on action plans. Despina highlighted that the importance of having IFLA slots in national conferences is already in this checklist and mentioned that HQ will make sure to share these results with the incoming RDCs. The RC chair highlighted that we are all advocates and we need to be seen -insist to be represented in conferences and meetings.

7.2 Tips for inclusive meetings and webinars

RC 23-05-7.2

Facilitating participation of non-English speakers in IFLA work is an ongoing effort for IFLA. Despina Gerasimidou introduced the work of IFLA's Multicultural Populations Section (IFLA Section 32) and the RC members were asked to comment to the two documents about how to make meetings and webinars more inclusive (methods and tips on how to include people with a variety of cultural and skill levels in the working language). The LAC RDC Chair highlighted the importance of giving people the opportunity to take part in meetings and not exclude them due to language, and to make inclusion a key theme in the work of the RC going forwards. The RC Chair highlighted that it's important to listen to people and not leave people behind. We need to speak slowly, have not text-

heavy slides (it takes time and effort to read long slides -we have to be specific about our presentation methods, maybe we could have rules on maximum of words on slides. It's not only language, it is also other disabilities (hearing impairments etc.) to be considered. The next RC and GB will see this language issue and congratulated him again.

The MENA RDC Chair stressed the language issue, mentioning that many people are reluctant to attend due to language barriers. If we work on this, we'll see more participants from the Arab countries and they will be more active. Even if they speak English, they fear the language and don't speak much. The RC Chair mentioned a meeting she attended once and it was in Arabic and it was very productive; the RC is the committee that can make sure this inclusivity happens. And it's not only for the RC, but also for the RDCs -in some not even all members speak the same language, like for instance the EU RDC. She asked to be sympathetic to people. When people can speak in their own language, it makes them more productive and because IFLA represents the world, we need to be inclusive. The AO RDC Chair noted that he encourages interpretation or captioning to be organised for the AO RDC business meetings and webinars but people quite often push back from those who have mastered English and don't think it's necessary.

The RC Chair mentioned a software to be used for translation in the sessions, which is good for being all-inclusive, hoping to be able to use this for the RDC webinars in the future too. Helen Mandl confirmed the use of Worldly during WLIC 2023 (AI simultaneous interpretation service that will work with a device that every attendee will have, with 27 languages available) available in all the rooms at the physical conference, different to other years where only a few rooms had the possibility for simultaneous interpretation. Helen also mentioned that HQ is working on a glossary (e.g. that IFLA is correctly translated). The MENA RDC Chair asked to advertise this AI SI on the website.

8. Planning

8.1 Update on how to support the induction of the next Regional Council and Division Committees

RC 23-05-8.1

The RC Chair highlighted the [Volunteer Welcome Event](#) to take place in July for all IFLA volunteers and RDC-specific induction sessions. Despina Gerasimidou talked shortly about the update of the transition planning to ensure that work of the new Regional Division Committees and Council can begin as quickly and as efficiently as possible. Despina also explained a summary of tasks for RC members till the next RC meeting (what the RC members should do by the 29th June).

8.2 Update on the Regional Advocacy Priorities Survey

RC 23-05-8.2

IFLA launched the 2023 edition of the Regional Advocacy Priorities Survey, aiming to give an idea of respective focus and needs. The RC Chair shared that there have only been 46 completed responses and encouraged the RDC Chairs to advertise the survey, with a deadline of the 25th of May. Intermediate results were shared with the RC members. The MENA RDC Chair asked to get access to the link again, because he was not aware of it. Nthabi noted that this was shared through IFLA-L and reminded that the RC approved the launch of this survey. The LAC RDC Chair underlined the value of working through RDC Chairs and Regional Offices to channel information more effectively. The RC Chair noted Alejandro's comment and confirmed that when it will be sent out again, to cc the RDC LAC Chair and mentioned that it was sent by the IFLA HQ email address so that the work will be on the HQ to answer any questions etc. but they can always forward that email to their colleagues and network.

8.3 Brief overview of IFLA nominations results so far

Oral report

The RC Chair congratulated the new RC Chair -Alejandro Santa, the current LAC RDC Chair. She also noted that in some committees there were no elections, everyone who applied went through. Looking across the sections, there is an increase in regional diversity, specifically in 24 Standing Committees; 16 have less and a couple of them have remained the same. There is also greater country diversity, and for the first time, there is an AO person a priori in every Section Standing Committee, although there is also improvement in the score of MENA reps. We hope in future to have elections for every RDC. Nthabi gave credit of the AO score to the AO RDC Chair and noted that there will be co-option for the other committees, encouraging the Chairs to ask themselves why in most regions there were less nominations.

It was suggested that in institutions it's easier to nominate people, they know each other, it's more difficult in associations and in some regions. We need to make it easier so that the association would say to the person: we have nominated you, here is the form, click on the form, accept the nomination. There are still people you still need to guide them step by step. The LAC RDC Chair noted successes in getting the Caribbean represented, as well as getting new leaders into the committee, and hoped for an excellent committee. Nonetheless, the region was in an economic crisis, and many librarians couldn't join associations due to lack of resources, and it was hard to participate for many because of language. There is the desire though.

9. Update on SDG and Internet Governance work

RC 23-05-9.1

Stephen Wyber provided an update on work around the SDGs and internet governance as the two themes identified as priorities by the Regional Council. He congratulated everyone who has been involved in the 5 regional sustainable development fora -it's the first time we had side events in every single one of these. Looking ahead, we have the survey about library association engagement with the SDGs.

Nthabi noted she is very proud of the work the RDCs did on internet governance and the SDGs -all regions have done quite well on it. The EU RDC Chair noted that it's a really good paper and it shows how much stuff going on -sharing his availability to be involved in anything about the internet manifesto review. The SDG pledge is interested to Stuart, what are the levels of success we aim etc.? Would it make sense to do the pledge? Speaking also of his Japanese colleagues, the AO RDC Chair asked not to be left out the Kyoto events, since it's in AO. The RC Chair acknowledged the central point of HQ and reassured the AO RDC Chair that they will not be left out. The LAC RDC Chair noted the value of participating physically in international meetings on IFLA's behalf, but also suggested that the UN Library at the UN could be a real champion for libraires throughout the system. The MENA RDC Chair noted that last week was approached by the director of the Catalogue and information centers in Iraq (University in Iraq) -they will launch an open access platform for governing books and articles about the region in Arabic. They want to announce this through a webinar with MENA RDC with someone from IFLA HQ to be a speaker. Imad welcomes this idea.

The RC Chair noted that there will be a call for volunteers for the internet manifesto review: the EU RDC Chair is one of them.

10. AOB

There was no other business discussed.