

International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA)	
Document nr	RC 21-12-1.2
Agenda Item	1.2
Subject	Minutes of the Regional Council meeting on 6 October 2021
From	Gerald Leitner, Secretary General
Purpose	Adoption of agenda
Date	6 December 2021
Note	Minutes were approved on 6 December 2021
Recommendations	That the Regional Council accepts the minutes as a true and accurate record

MINUTES

**The first meeting of the Regional Council was held on Wednesday 6 October 2021
from 21.00 – 23.15 CEST by teleconference call via Zoom**

Present:

Members: Nthabiseng Kotsokoane, Regional Council Chair; Alejandro Lorenzo César Santa, Latin America and the Caribbean Regional Division Committee Chair; Imad Bachir, Middle East and North Africa Regional Division Committee Chair; Julius C. Jefferson Jr., North America Regional Division Committee Chair; Sarah Kaddu, Sub-Saharan Africa Regional Division Committee Chair; Stuart Hamilton, Europe Regional Division Committee Chair (obliged to leave early); Winston Roberts, Asia-Oceania Regional Division Committee Chair

Observer:

GB Members and Staff: Barbara Lison, IFLA President; Gerald Leitner, IFLA Secretary General; Stephen Wyber, Director, IFLA Policy and Advocacy; Despina Gerasimidou, IFLA's Strategic Development Officer

Welcome and apologies

The Regional Council Chair opened the meeting and welcomed all. There were no apologies, all members of the Regional Council were present and therefore the meeting of the Regional Council could take valid resolutions in respect of proposals set out by a majority of the votes cast.

1. General business

1.1 Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

1.2 Address by IFLA President Barbara Lison

IFLA President Barbara Lison gave an address to the RC Members connecting the mission and work of the Council with the presidential theme and the wider work of IFLA. The IFLA President specifically mentioned: "I welcome this new structure. Nothing is behind us, it is new. You have the keys to shape this. You are the main actors to create this and drive this. We are on the regional track from now and on." Nthabiseng especially highlighted the President's words "we are now on a regional track".

1.3 Matters arising not elsewhere on the agenda

There were no matters arising.

2. Introduction to the work of the Regional Council

IFLA Secretary General Gerald Leitner introduced the work of the Regional Council, presenting the mandate given to the Regional Council and wider regional structures under IFLA's new governance, including the relation of these structures and their actions to other parts of IFLA such as IFLA's Professional Units.

The creation of the structures was an important step in delivering on a long-term commitment to building stronger regional representation and in ensuring that IFLA was delivering most effectively for libraries everywhere, as part of the wider transformation of IFLA launched with the Global Vision process that the Secretary General had launched in 2017.

He strongly welcomed the first meeting of the Council, as a key milestone in the realization of these goals, and looked forward to working closely with the Council throughout the coming years in order to fulfil the potential that exists. He noted his investment in this work, as a key outcome of IFLA's Governance Review.

3. Housekeeping

3.1 Process for election of Vice-Chair

The RC Chair asked the RC members to express their interest volunteering to become the RC Vice-Chair by sending an email to the Chair till the 16th of Oct. It was decided that if there is more than one candidate, there will be an election process by email. The Vice-Chair will support the Chair, notably stepping in if the Chair is not available. A more detailed job description of the Vice-Chair was asked to be described and written by IFLA HQ.

3.2 Designation of RC representative to the Professional Council

The RC Chair volunteered to be the liaison with the Professional Council. The liaison will attend meetings of the Professional Council, both in order to bring back relevant information to the Regional Council, share insights from the Regional Council, and facilitate coordination on issues of shared interest. The Council agreed to this designation.

3.3 Approval of co-opted members of MENA and SSA RDCs

The recommended lists of co-opted members of MENA and SSA RDCs were approved by the RC. IFLA HQ would issue invitations to the new, successful for each RDC (MENA = 13 successful candidates, SSA = 8 successful candidates).

4. Work planning

4.1 Template for RDC Action Plans

IFLA Secretary General Gerald Leitner underlined the strong focus on advocacy in the new structures, highlighting both the importance of this as an issue, and the need to strengthen IFLA's impact and legitimacy in its engagement with external partners.

He set out his hope therefore to see stronger and more coordinated action – the template was designed to do this, providing structure and guidance for RDCs in their planning, as well as to make it easier to fulfil their mandates and contribute to wider IFLA work. It was noted that in some cases, it may make sense to make small adjustments to the template, in order to accommodate regional characteristics.

Timings were discussed. RDC chairs were encouraged to hold their first meetings in the coming weeks, and then to come back with action plans a couple of weeks later (by mid-November). This would mean that action plans, at least at a high level, can be returned to the Regional Council for discussion, comment, and eventually agreement at its meeting in early December. This would also allow the RC Chair to report back meaningfully to the Governing Board.

The RC therefore adopted the Action Plan template, with the possibility to make small adjustments which would not affect the overall structure and comparability of the documents.

4.2 Overview of IFLA's wider advocacy work

An oral report was presented based on document RC 21-10-4.2, giving an overview of IFLA's wider advocacy work in order to help Chairs in guiding their RDCs in developing their own action plans and to help the RC define the global advocacy priority in this meeting.

4.3 Regional Advocacy Priorities Survey

An oral report was presented by Despina Gerasimidou, showing the results of IFLA's Regional Advocacy Priorities Survey (also set out in RC 21-10-4.3). Areas of focus and types of activity that associations, institutions and individuals are carrying out globally were presented through the report. This report is intended to act as a conversation starter within each RDC. It was noted that Regional Reports are being prepared and will be shared with each RDC Chair, in order to boost regional conversations.

4.4 Defining a global advocacy priority

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were chosen by the RC as the global advocacy priority. This global topic would then form one of the sections in the RDC Action Plan template. It was noted that the SDGs was the optimal theme that could act broadly as an umbrella for all regions, thus letting each region pick up on their own region-specific elements and areas of focus (such as youth) for their action plans.

5. Forward planning

5.1 Discussions of preferred working methods

It was proposed and agreed that a Basecamp for the RC for documents and communication would be created.

An extranet to store documents was also proposed; this is something that Secretary General Gerald Leitner underlined that IFLA HQ would explore.

IFLA HQ highlighted that not all members of RDCs had signed up to closed mailing lists, something that would require further work. It was noted that in some regions, it may be necessary to use multiple channels in order to reach people.

5.2 Plans for next meeting

Next RC meeting was decided to take place in the first week of December 2021. In this meeting the RC will have the opportunity to sign off on the action plans proposed by RDCs, receive reports on priorities, so as to enable the RC Chair to report back to the GB on activities carried out.

A doodle poll would be circulated to confirm the exact date of the 2nd RC meeting.

Regarding the RDC meetings, each Chair is asked to send the proposed date and time to Despina Gerasimidou so that she sets up the Zoom room for them.

5.3 Upcoming advocacy opportunities

Document “RC 21-10-5.3 Upcoming advocacy opportunities” was highlighted and it was noted that the RDCs are free to use it as a discussion starter or inspiration for the development of their action plans.

6. Any other business

At the end discussions were focused on communications. The focus was specifically on the creation of a logo for each RDC and whether each one is allowed to create their own social media and page on IFLA’s website. IFLA Secretary General Gerald Leitner noted that work was ongoing on logos, and suggested that a communication item be added to the next agenda. Chairs were encouraged to focus first on finalising action plans, with discussion about communications coming as a next step.