

INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF LIBRARY ASSOCIATIONS AND  
INSTITUTIONS

Government

Information and Official Publications Section (Section 17)

Standing Committee Meetings

2018 IFLA World Library and Information Congress

**Kuala Lumpur Convention Center, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia**

**SC I – Friday, 24 August 2018, 13:30 – 15:30 Room 406 (Session 024)**

**SC II – Sunday, 26 August 2018, 08:00 – 10:30 Room 304 (Session 088)**

**Standing Committee Meeting I**

**I. Welcome and Introductions**

Kathryn Tallman (Acting Chair) called the meeting to order at 13:30 p.m. GIOPS members present: Kathryn Tallmann (Information coordinator), Cornelia Butz (Secretary). Present via Zoom Video Conference: Jim Church (Chair). Guests: Ivan Donadello (EU-EEAS), Nikiwe Momoti (Western Cape Archives, Cape Town, South Africa), Takashi Koga (Tenri University, Japan), Stephen Wyber (IFLA), Donna Scheeder (Library Strategies International, USA), Rashidah Othman (Business Information Center Matatrade, Malaysia), Mashizam Mohamad (Ministry of International Trade and Industry, Malaysia), Noraini Noran Abdullah (MRU Malaysia Library), Laurena Aloh (Sarawak State Library, Malaysia), Beacher Wiggins (Library of Congress, USA).

**II. Adoption of 2018 agenda and approval of meeting minutes from IFLA 2017 Congress in Wroclaw, Poland**

No objections, agenda and minutes were approved.

**III. Announcements and update on GIOPS activities:**

1. **Access to Information for Women and GIOPS:** Donna Scheeder, former IFLA President entered and introduced herself. She spoke in her capacity as a library consultant. She talked about a meeting she had attended at the Carter Center about access to information for women. There was still a significant gender gap. In many countries, access was centralized in the capital and women were supposed to travel there to get information. This might be impossible, because of lack of financial

resources, because of problems for women travelling alone, because of women not being taken seriously by officials. Information needed to be decentralized and it needed to be quality information. This could be an issue for GIOPS, the UN or IGOs. How could organizations publish their information, how could it be distributed and how could strategies for decentralization be developed? Tools for accessing information needed to be available, for rural areas had difficulties in accessing information. After the meeting, a manifesto was published, see: "Inform Women, Transform Lives", Carter Centre Conference, 14-15 February 2018. Kathryn Tallmann remarked that sometimes, government information was only available online. Nikiwe Momoti reported that in South Africa there were many ways to access information What was lacking was marketing the access to information to people in the rural areas. People were not aware of the information.

2. **Recruitment:** Jim Church greeted the attendees and explained that the recruitment of new members for GIOPS would have the highest priority in 2018. There should be at least 16 to 18 Committee members. Individual membership was recommended, if an institution did not nominate section members and the fee for them had been lowered by IFLA. About 85 institutions were members of GIOPS at present. In 2019, 2 members would finish their second term and would drop out. The nomination process was briefly described and attendees of the GIOPS Committee meeting were invited to join the Section.
3. **GIOPS and GLOBAL VISION REPORT:** Jim Church explained briefly the Global Vision Process and the discussion that took place at the workshop in Barcelona. All sections got a choice of opportunities. Jim Church mentioned the top three for GIOPS and explained the ideas for action according to the report. Government information specialists were marginalised worldwide. GIOPS needed to develop a compelling narrative to build strategic alliances.
4. **Congress Programme and Paper Session:** Kathryn Tallmann announced the date of the 2<sup>nd</sup> session of GIOPS on Sunday, 26 August 2018 at 8 a.m. and introduced the paper session on Wednesday, 29 August 2018 at 10:45 a.m. titled "Global eGovernment: Trust, Transparency & Transformation". Everybody present was invited to the paper session. The GIOPS Section Dinner was scheduled for Wednesday, 29 August 2018 at 6 p.m.
5. **GIOPS Publication Project (Kay Cassell):** Kathryn Tallman talked about the planned publication on Government Information Librarians which would be due in 2019. There were only few publications on Government Information to be found. Special librarians were needed to do that work. The publication would describe the situation of Government Information Librarians in different countries. It had been difficult to find contributors. The Publication was approved by the IFLA Professional Committee in 2015. Beacher Wiggins remarked that papers for publication had to go back to the Professional Committee for approval.

#### **IV. Announcement and updates of IFLA activities:**

1. **IFLA Advocacy Team and GIOPS:** Stephen Wyber from IFLA Headquarters entered and introduced himself. He talked about an advocacy team working on changing the environment for libraries. Open access to government information, publishing policies and practices of Intergovernmental Organisations (IGOs) were best discussed in GIOPS. IFLA researched 40 organisations concerning publishing policies and open access. The outcome was diverse. A new UN publishing model has proved to be problematic, because of poor quality. The

OECD model lacked open access. The EU had a good policy. In general, IGO practices needed to be improved. Stephen Wyber mentioned that in 2019, IFLA was focussing on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Goal 16 comprised access to government information. In that context, peace, justice and stability as well as government transparency and accountability would be in the focus. If IGOs supported democracy, debate and accountability, they would have to publish materials as open access. Stephen Wyber was looking for evidence-based stories about the impact of open access for the World Library Map. GIOPS could be a lead section for open access. IFLA was thinking of issuing a statement. The deadline for that campaign would be the IFLA Conference in Athens. Ideas for UN-Publications should have reached IFLA by July 2019. Kathryn Tallmann and Jim Church volunteered to be part of a drafting group.

**2. Ann Oakerson, Chair of IFLA Division 2** entered and introduced herself. She is out-going Division Leader and will be succeeded by Helen Vincent. IFLA was undergoing a process of change. IFLA members mattered, they were the professionals. In future, there would be no more top down planning. In the past, there was a disconnection between the Governing Board and the members. With money from the Gates Foundation, it was possible to do projects. IFLA was at the end of phase I of the Global Vision. During the next phase, the discussion was going to be how the inputs from the Global Vision could be turned into reality. In spring 2019, there would be a draft strategy. Then, the Governing Board would come back to the Standing Committees. Work plans would be important. At the IFLA Conference in Athens, there should be a strategy. The Governing Board would look at the structure of IFLA. There were 53 groups in IFLA and a significant amount of crossover. What would be relevant, what should go away, what should come? That process might take another year. Attendees started a discussion. Several different aspects were mentioned. Committees should work better together and not work on the same thing. Officers should not feel as if they were working for IFLA. There should be less paperwork and less administrative tasks. One problem of GIOPS: roles and expertise of government information librarians were marginalized, even though there was much political interest amongst the public. Strategic partnerships would be welcome, stakeholders should understand the value of government information.

**3. Discussion:** Jim Church explained the agenda of the second GIOPS Committee meeting and encouraged attendees to contribute about their work in government information. Nikiwe Momoti described the situation for government librarians in South Africa. The country was rebuilding, there was new legislation on the protection of personal information. Citizens had access to information, if they needed it. The management of information was challenging, what type of information would be available. Government leaders did not view reliable information as an important task. For the Western Cape Provincial Archive information must be reliable. There were Provincial Information Acts which did not allow to mess up information. Takashi Toga talked briefly about the situation in Japan and suggested GIOPS should look for partners for future work.

Kathryn Tallman adjourned the meeting at 2:57 p.m.

## **Standing Committee Meeting II**

### **I. Welcome and Introductions**

Kathryn Tallman (Acting Chair) called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. GIOPS members present: Kathryn Tallmann (Information coordinator), Cornelia Butz (Secretary). Present via Zoom Video Conference until 9:00 a.m.: Jim Church (Chair). Guests: Nikiwe Momoti (Western Cape Archives, Cape Town, South Africa), Takashi Koga (Tenri University, Japan), Laurena Anak Aloh (Sarawak State Library, Malaysia), Harriet Nalusiba (Parliament of Uganda), Suria Sonia Anip Abdullah (Sarawak State Library), Ruhaa Huang (School of Information Management (Wuhan University, China), Rere Manlargit (University of the Philippines), Billy Leung Tak Hoi (University of Macau), 1 person from an NGO in Macau, 1 person from Iran (Deputy Director of the National Library and President of the Library Association)

## II. **Brainstorming and Planning for 2019 Open Session**

Kathryn Tallman briefly introduced an idea by Jim Church for the paper session at the IFLA Conference in Athens in 2019. The topic could deal with austerity forced upon people in countries with high debt and a weak economy by international financial institutions. It might be interesting to look into the information policy and the transparency of institutions like the International Monetary Fund (IMF) or the European Central Bank. Somebody from Greece might explain the government information policy there, since the international institutions do not directly communicate with the people. The papers would not only have to concentrate on Greece. Jim Church remarked information on this topic could be collected by an experienced user, but it might be difficult to find data. He suggested "International Financial Institutions and Austerity" as a working title. The final programme title would have to be completed by the end of October 2018. The understanding of attendees was, that the austerity ideology would not only apply to Greece. The topic might encompass the impact of austerity, the info used by decision-makers, the transparency of the decision-making process and the accessibility of archival information.

## III. **New Business & Round Robin**

**Kathryn Tallmann** opened the Round Robin and explained about the situation in the United States and that she was working with federal documents. The FDLP Modernisation Bill was in Congress, but nothing was happening. The term "Modernisation" referred to the inclusion of electronic information. The bill was also meant to lower the barrier for small libraries to become a depository library. The American Library Association might bring up that topic again in 2019. **Takashi Toga** asked about the relationship between the current president and the National Archives. **Kathryn Tallmann** answered the Director of the Archives had not changed, yet. The nomination process was quite long and the office not as political as the one of the Head of the Government Publishing Agency. **Nikiwe Momoti** talked about the situation in South Africa. The Legal Deposit Act regulated government publications. Those were managed by the National Library. There were government departments resource centres which kept government publications. For the Archives sector, a national Archives Act and Provincial Archives Acts existed. Services at provincial level insured, that government information was authentic, reliable and complete. Electronic records were also incorporated. The Western Cape Province trained records managers and other government employees. They also got training on how official electronic records should be created. Cooperation with the National Library was very close. **Laurena Alak Anoh** from Malaysia said, government had given a mandate to the National Library to work with historical documents. Five printed copies were given to the office in Sarawak. The National Library could also go to the government agencies in order to retrieve government information. **Rere Manlargit** from the Philippines stated that laws and the official gazette were available online. The present government would limit the access to laws. After a few days, the text would no longer be available. There was an institution which was supposed to collect laws. Private institutions would charge money for the documents. **Billy Leung Tak Hoi** reported from Macau, that it was different from China, because it was a special administrative region. The government published official documents which would be sent to the Central Library in Macau. China requested all documents which had been sent to the Central Library, but not all of them were sent there. **Ruhaa Huang** said, the Chinese government had paid attention to online information since 1998. The project had been called Government Information Online. Each ministry and each province had established their own website to share government information. In 2015, the government requested from each government agency to open up their data. By the end of 2018, China would have a national open government data platform. **Harriet Nalusiba** mentioned that in Uganda there was legislation on government deposits, but there were no sanctions for non-compliance. There was more emphasis on digital information, but people had difficulties finding information. **Kathryn Tallmann** replied that **Harriet Nalusiba** had described a typical problem.

In the US, no government agency could be punished. **The president of the Library Association in Iran** explained that the National Library had a mandate to collect published government documents. They also had the Iranian Digital Memory where digital and hard copies of all data produced by government offices were stored. In future, there would be a programme for the conservation of government websites. **Takashi Koga** remarked, the National Diet Library was very eager to preserve digital documents. Statistics are also preserved, but that could take a long time. **The NGO person from Macau** said, there was no punishment, if documents were not being sent. The Macau Law Foundation collected laws and passed them on to the public. This information was difficult to find. The important question would be, how to persuade government agencies to send documents for preservation? **Suria Sonia Anip Abdullah** said, before there was an act in Malaysia, it had been hard to convince people to submit information. **Rere Manlargit** from the Philippines added that government documents vanished under the new government. Complete government document collections could only be found with private data collectors and they made people pay before they gave access to the information. The NGO -person from Macau explained, Macau was still going through a transition period and nobody knew when China was officially taking over. Laws were in Portuguese and Chinese, but the translation from Portuguese to Chinese was sometimes very faulty, but only few people would realise. Even though Macau had two official languages, Chinese and Portuguese, many people did not speak Portuguese. The discussion focused on several topics: the accuracy of government information, the question of trust in governments, the question of how government information is transmitted to libraries and how the public is informed about government information? **Cornelie Butz** spoke briefly about the General Data Protection Regulation within the European Union.

Kathryn Tallman adjourned the meeting at 9.35 a.m.