

<b>International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions</b>	
Document nr	<b>RC 23-12-2</b>
Agenda Item	<b>2</b>
Subject	Minutes, Regional Council meeting, 27 November 2023
From	Alejandro Santa, Chair
Purpose	Agree on the minutes
Date	2024
Note	
Recommendations	That the Regional Council agrees these minutes

***The extraordinary meeting of the 2023-2025 IFLA Regional Council  
was held on Monday 27 November 2023, online, 11:00-12:30 UTC***

## **1. Welcome, apologies and agreement of agenda**

**RC 23-11-1**

**Present:** Alejandro Santa (RC Chair), Maria Florencia Tebano (Interpreter), Despina Gerasimidou (IFLA HQ Strategic Development Officer), Sanjay Bihani (AO RDC Vice-Chair), Premila Gamage (AO RDC Information Coordinator), Hui Pheng, Ertugrul Cimen (EU RDC Chair), Julia Konopka (EU RDC Information Coordinator), Saif Al-Jabri (MENA RDC Chair), Fatme Charafeddine (MENA RDC Information Coordinator), Diane Koen (NA RDC Chair), Evviva Weinraub Lajoie (NA RDC Vice-Chair), Meg Mering (NA RDC Information Coordinator), Ayanda Lebele (SSA RDC Chair), Monica Mensa Danquash (IFLA SSA RDC Vice-Chair), Sarah Kaddu (SSA RDC Information Coordinator), Michelle Lau (AO Regional Office), Isela Mo Amavet (LAC Regional Office), Yamila Cortenova (LAC Regional Office), Eiman Alshamari (MENA Regional Office 2024-2026), Lindi Nhalpo (SSA Regional Office).

The agenda was agreed upon. The Chair welcomed participants. Alejandro Santa congratulated Ertugrul Cimen for the workshop in Brussels and apologized for not being able to attend due to the elections in Argentina. He also discussed the situation in Argentina and thanked the Regional Offices for participating in the meeting.

## **2. Presentation of the Context**

### **Oral reports**

Alejandro Santa emphasized the importance of communication and its role in each of the presented regional action plans. He mentioned reaching out to Diane Koen. Alejandro Santa introduced Yamila Cortenova, a member of the BCN working team, who would lead the meeting and share some ideas for strengthening communication and visibility. This includes enhancing communication with IFLA HQ.

Yamila explained the steps to be taken by the Regional Council to strengthen communication. The proposal includes: a) setting up a space in Basecamp with information coordinators where divisions can share generated content to promote communication of their activities. The Basecamp space already exists and the Information Coordinators are added there since September. It can be accessed here: <https://3.basecamp.com/3833672/projects/32321129> - Chronicle of activities carried out in the Regional Divisions to improve internal communication and have an impact on the website (a small document on how to present this chronicle will be shared on Basecamp).

### 3. Regional Priorities and Objectives

#### Oral reports

Each Regional Division Committee was invited to present two ideas or proposals from their region about communication. Yamila Cortenova mentioned the transmission of significant information and asked everyone:

- Which social media platforms do they use and consider suitable?
- Based on the chosen platform, what communication strategy do they intend to deploy?

#### EUROPE RDC

Ertugrul Cimen (EC) comments on the four specific actions outlined in Europe's action plan and highlights the importance of communication within it (committees, national library associations, etc.). There are many tools, IFLA's website, blogs, and facebook from social media. The regional workshop in Europe was very interesting. EC hands over the floor to Julia Konopka, information coordinator, who mentions two central actions: a focus on democracy and freedom of expression and the other: working with advocacy.

They are focused on working with IFLA's website, the division's website, and social media. They will upload activities and surveys conducted there. Additionally, she adds that she believes Basecamp is very useful for sharing this information with other regional committees. They also considered the possibility of conducting surveys. Despina explained that IFLA has a platform for this type of work.

#### MENA RDC

Saif Aljabri introduces the information coordinator. YC is consulted on whether the information coordinator should coordinate with Yamila to decide on the information. Despina responds: The information coordinators will receive information from Louis Takacs (webmaster) to access the backend of the IFLA website to create events and news on the IFLA web pages. Despina offers to guide and train them. Fatme Cheraffdine (FC) emphasizes the importance of training and appreciates the guidance.

Saif Aljabri introduces Fatme Charaffedine (FC), the information coordinator. FC mentions that they will work strongly on communication with associations and plan to organize conferences or meetings in the coming years, hoping to invite the majority of stakeholders. She also discusses the networking efforts in MENA and their plan to continue working towards deploying advocacy in the region. They aim to increase the membership of institutions in their region and expand the number of countries on the library map.

#### MENA Regional Office 2024-2026

Eiman Alshamari, MENA Regional Office 2024-2026, emphasizes visibility to increase engagement. They use Facebook, one of the most popular platforms in the MENA region, but they also plan to start using Instagram, which has a presence in the Gulf region. They also intend to work with newsletters and emails, aiming for inclusive cultural interaction. They are considering the best ways to communicate and express a lack of complete trust in newsletters, hence the opening to Instagram while maintaining reliance on Facebook. They will also open a YouTube channel and record webinars for future reference (to be worked on with Fatme, documenting all information and content for the division's future). She encourages others to share best practices. Despina mentions that these could be added to IFLA's main YouTube channel, to reach bigger reach globally and to have this communication/information centrally organised.

### **NA RDC**

Diane Koen introduces Evviva Weinraub Lajoie and Meg Mering (Information Coordinator), who will be in charge of communications. Evviva details a key point in the action plan, "Digital Inclusion," and explains how they want to work with social media, including TikTok, and creating impactful videos in multiple languages to reach a broader audience. The second point is for example about Twitter and if we want to use it, because as it seems it is a tool that pushes out misinformation. Do we want to be there on twitter? Since we want to be a place of trust, we shall consider if we want to be on Twitter or not –we should not be a passive stakeholder. They express the desire to address one of the hottest topics in the United States: banned books, censorship, and budget cuts. They are considering how to work on high-impact content. While acknowledging the complexity of TikTok due to geopolitics, they see it as reaching younger audiences. They also plan to use Instagram, mentioning that Facebook still works for existing audiences but not for new ones.

### **SSA RDC**

Ayanda Lebele (chair) is experiencing microphone issues. Sarah Kaddu (Information Coordinator) mentions that communication in the region is primarily through email and WhatsApp. Regarding the community, they use the listserv and the website. She mentions that she was given training by Despina on the website and it is a nice tool. Concerning the content they disseminate, it is related to the Action Plan, particularly focusing on "capacity development." She discusses the work done during the last workshop and a series of seminars related to capacity development. Additionally, they plan to increase participation on the world library map and boost membership –she mentions they want to enroll two colleagues every month. She notes increased participation from new colleagues in recent months and efforts to expand the reach of the four webinars. Colleagues are encouraged to translate webinars, especially into French.

Ayanda Lebele adds that the initiatives of the Plan are heavily focused on communication and seeks collaboration to streamline communication with HQ and Regional Offices. She indicated an observed need for guidance or capacity building on new volunteers on communication protocols. Alejandro Santa emphasizes the work of the workshop in Nairobi. He states that the goal is not just membership; the focus should be on being present, showcasing action, establishing a presence, and ensuring colleagues understand the importance of IFLA before emphasizing membership. He suggests not to reverse this order.

### **AO RDC**

Sanjay Bihani (vice-chair), introduces the colleague coordinating information and apologizes for the absence of the Chair at the meeting. He mentions five projects in the plan, emphasizing the importance of communication in each project. Key points include social media interaction and standardizing a strategy. In Asia-Oceania, there are five subregions with varying network functionality and internet coverage. They plan to implement a WhatsApp group for members around subgroups formed for each project. Additionally, they want to add another platform for library associations and share all information and webinars with the broader community, create a calendar with all the events in the region. He highlights free access to online content on topics like climate change and disaster management. They also plan to coordinate membership matters in each activity. Premila (information coordinator) adds that they will use various dissemination tools, including Basecamp, website, listservs and social media (facebook and other social media -they might have different groups of people handling different social media). Having a single tool for the entire Asia-Oceania region is challenging due to platform preferences and accessibility issues in certain countries. Premila mentions the creation of different subgroups within the division to coordinate work on different platforms. She also notes that Asia-Oceania already has a

"communication plan" and will focus on working in subgroups to enhance outreach on various platforms.

**LAC Regional Office (speaks on behalf of the LAC Regional Division too)**

Isela (LAC Regional Office) explains how internal communication works in LAC: WhatsApp and Basecamp are used. The IFLA-mailing list is increasingly used with IFLA membership. For broader communication with associations, librarians, and the community, Facebook and Twitter are used, with an expansion to Instagram. The Action Plan emphasizes expanding visibility on the library map. It is clarified that efforts are made to showcase activities within the IFLA website by sending brief updates and reports with photos to HQ for incorporation. The Regional Office works to strengthen existing communication in the region but does not have a separate communication strategy to avoid overlapping efforts.

**AO Regional Office**

Michelle Lau (AO Regional Office) emphasizes the importance of the Quarterly Newsletter of Asia and Oceania, which gathers information from the region. While it is used to be solely from the Regional Office, they are now working to strengthen the newsletter with the collaboration of regional division members. The website also features news and utilizes social media. Despina mentions if other regions find this as a good idea, they may very well ask to be trained on how this newsletter is being produced -it is easy and appealing.

**SSA Regional Office**

Lindi Nhalpo from the SSA Regional Office emphasizes the importance of supplementing the SSA RDC and them supplementing the work of the Regional Office. She discusses training young colleagues, working for collective benefit, and efforts to boost the visibility of actions, populate the world map, and focus not only on recruiting more members but also utilizing existing membership for greater visibility. She highlights the importance of subscribing to IFLA groups for news and mentions the coordination work done in Nairobi. She announces a webinar on disability and emphasizes the importance of inclusion.

**4. Resources and Capacities**

**5. Implementation Plan and Review**

**Oral reports**

Yamila Cortenova expresses gratitude for the presentations, asks about the visibility of actions, and inquires about the roles each action will play. Yamila shared a communication document defining roles and actions and emphasizes the importance of measuring communication impact. Metrics are deemed fundamental.

Despina thanks everyone for the meeting, stating the productive approach to work. She notes that IFLA-List has 7,000 subscribers, encouraging its use for dissemination. Despina provides tools for surveys mentioned in Europe and mentions the MENA YouTube channel. Regarding North America, she suggests integrating/embedding the Tik-Tok style videos on IFLA's website as a series. For Sub-Saharan Africa, she stresses the importance of French translation and offers assistance with protocols.

Alejandro Santa expresses gratitude for participation, emphasizing the importance of members' performance in their native language. He acknowledges the crucial role human interpreters play as AI is not fully developed.

## **6. General Discussion**

No further questions arose.

## **7. Commitments and Closure**

The meeting ended.