

Presidential Newsletter

NO. 1 JANUARY 2009

Dear colleagues,



It's never too late to wish you a wonderful year for 2009 and all the best for your personal life. I hope you all can look back on a successful 2008 and you had a good start in 2009.

As the financial crisis is a global phenomenon I hope it will not bring too many difficulties for the development of libraries and information services in your country. On the contrary, libraries can serve as stable and important places for the public in times of crisis. IFLA is working on arguments and success stories for members to use. It will be another argument to put libraries on the agenda.

After a [very successful, excellently organised and inspiring World Library and Information Congress in Québec \[IV/ifla74/post-congress.htm\]](#) I was invited by the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) Conference in Alice Springs in Australia to talk about IFLA and my Presidential theme "Libraries on the Agenda". One month later I went to Capetown in South Africa on the invitation of the Goethe Institute. I met with our President-Elect Ellen Tise at the University Library of Stellenbosch and I participated in the 10th LIASA Annual Conference and gave a paper.

A very interesting and high level [meeting was organised by our Parliamentary library section on October 16 \[http://www.ipu.org/splz-e/asgp08.htm\]](#) together with the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the Association of Secretaries General of Parliaments. The discussion about the importance of parliamentary libraries in all countries was an excellent start for in depth co-operation in the future.

From October 22 to October 30 I was invited by our Chinese Colleagues to visit China. I gave lectures in Beijing, Chengdu, Wuhan and Chongqing, where the [Chinese Library Association held its annual conference \[http://www.cqlib.cn/lib/index2008.jsp\]](#). I delivered my Welcome speech in Chinese and a lecture on Libraries on the Agenda in English. Near Chengdu I visited the Earthquake Region. I was deeply moved by the extent of the destruction, and the challenges for librarians with destroyed libraries and lost lives in their families. I admire the courage and ideas they have developed to serve the people in this difficult situation. I met two activists, who represent the will of all library and information professionals of the region to rebuild their libraries and develop regular library services again. They will be invited as guests of IFLA to our IFLA Congress in Milan. (See the pictures below [\[#pictures\]](#))

At the end of my travel to China I gave a lecture in Wuhan and received the Honour of a Guest professorship of the [Wuhan University School of Information Management \[http://www.sim.whu.edu.cn/\]](#), the oldest library and information school in China. You can read about other travels and meetings in my 2008 letters.

Governing Board had a busy round of meetings at IFLA Headquarters from December 1–3. [A summary report on the GB meeting \[gb/gb-outcomes-2008dec.htm\]](#) is available on this website. The new Statutes endorsed at the General Council meeting at the IFLA World Library and Information Congress in Quebec in August have now been translated into Dutch and registered as required under Dutch law. Translations into IFLA's languages will be done progressively. [The English version is available on the IFLA website \[statutes-en.htm\]](#).

Advocacy

On October 7-9 2008 IFLA co-hosted *The Role of Libraries in Freedom of Expression, Tolerance, and Access to Information* [<http://www.bibalex.org/IFLA-libraries-tolerance08/>] regional conference, at the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, Egypt. There were over 150 delegates including writers, academics, senior government officials, journalists and librarians. The lively discussion and media interest put the role of libraries on the agenda for these issues in the region.

This year the third IFLA Presidential meeting will be held on February 19-21 at the Foreign Ministry in Berlin. "Access to Knowledge Infrastructures: Networking through Libraries" is the theme and the discussion will be about the political support for libraries infrastructure in a sense of 'Libraries on the Agenda'. International library experts, politicians and decision makers, many of them from Islamic countries, will discuss the role of libraries within the international networking of the knowledge society. If you want to join us in Berlin for these 2 days [you need to register](#) [[PresidentsProgram.htm#Meetings](#)] .

Also this year IFLA will be putting 'Libraries on the Agenda' through participation in the Internet Governance Forum (IGF), which is an important development of the WSIS process. Stuart Hamilton, IFLA's Senior Policy Adviser represented the sector on three panels at the IGF meeting in Hyderabad, India on December 3-6, 2008, and Stuart will be participating in the Multi-stakeholder Advisory Group (MAG) and further IGF meetings.

Also see: [Stuart's blog](http://blogs.prodigio.nl/stuart/) [<http://blogs.prodigio.nl/stuart/>]

IFLA's advocacy framework for the period 2009-2011 was endorsed by IFLA GB in December 2008. This framework links our representational advocacy with training and awareness raising actions, and brings together advocacy activities across the whole IFLA family. Professional Development, Political Advocacy and Community Advocacy are the areas in which training and awareness raising will take place. This will be supported by an extensive Statistics and Advocacy Tools Program, and all will feed into our future sustainability.

Strategic Partnerships

Over the last few months we have worked on strengthening our relationships with a number of strategic partners.

Following initial discussions between IFLA and representatives of international partner NGO's at the IFLA World Library and Information Congress in August 2008, I invited representatives from ICA, ICOMOS, ICOM and CAAA, with CDNL and ICSTI as observers, to the 1st INGO partner meeting on the 21st of November in Paris, generously hosted by the Bibliothèque nationale de France and the French National IFLA Committee. The main purposes of this first meeting were to create interest and willingness among the NGO's to reinforce and renew cooperation and to come to a concrete working agenda for (at least) 2009. This meeting resulted in a good outline of priorities and in a solid and practical basis for information exchange. Initial priorities are WIPO, Blue Shield, UNESCO and a program to identify and develop other common issues. IFLA will host the Secretariat for 2009-2010 and take the lead on WIPO issues. Formal support by these partner organizations on copyright matters will strengthen our shared position and advocacy at WIPO.

Also see: www.ifla.org/III/announce/convergence-ngos.htm [[announce/convergence-ngos.htm](#)]
More information on this initiative can be provided by the NGO Convergence Secretariat (Ingeborg Verheul, at convergence@ifla.org [<mailto:convergence@ifla.org>])

In late December Ellen Tise and I, together with Jennefer Nicholson and Stuart Hamilton, met with our Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, UNESCO and eIFL colleagues to look at how we may better work together on areas and projects of common interest. I am expecting there to be some very interesting and exciting developments from this collaboration in 2009.

My best wishes to all of you.

Claudia Lux

President of IFLA 2007 – 2009
January 2009

Pictures



Claudia Lux with Li Chun, who she invited as guest of IFLA to the IFLA Congress in Milan



Claudia Lux with Li Kaicheng, who she invited as guest of IFLA to the IFLA Congress in Milan

The Letter of the President "*LOP*" is distributed at least once a month providing an overview of some of the current activities of the IFLA President, President Elect, the Governing Board and the Headquarters. It contains LINKS for further consultation and will be sent to **IFLA-L** [<http://infoserv.inist.fr/wwwsympa.fcgi/subrequest/ifla-l>] and all other mailing lists [[/ll/iftalist.htm](#)] organised by IFLA. Concise (one page), with no illustrations or special layout, it should cause no reception problems.

