

Presidential Newsletter

NO. 3 MARCH 2008

Dear IFLA Members,



March started with a meeting of the IFLA Working Group on Guidelines of Digital Libraries at the Central and Regional Library of Berlin. This working group consists of representatives of different IFLA sections and regions. The two-day meeting, sponsored by the World Digital Library of the Library of Congress, Washington, was very productive. I hope that the group will be able to supply the first draft of the Guidelines to IFLA members at the World Library and Information Congress (WLIC) in Québec in August 2008.

On March 6th I took part in a meeting of critical friends at the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMG) in Seattle. I met again with Martha Choe, who has changed position from the Foundation's Global Libraries to become Chief Administrative Officer of the Foundation, after the BMG Foundation had monitored their activities and reviewed their work and their strategy. BMG has become a very important and valued partner of IFLA. Among a number of topics, we discussed the impact of access to the Internet through libraries. IFLA needs to learn more about this impact. I would appreciate if you could give us your library success stories: how do users of your library services access the knowledge in the web, how does this help them in their personal, educational or professional life? Please send stories to us or put them directly into our [success-database \[/success-stories/\]](#) which has been recently updated by Danielle Mincio, GB member from Switzerland.

From March, 12-15 2008 I participated in the seminar 'Libraries on the Agenda' organised by the 'Goethe Institute New Delhi' and co-sponsored by other cultural institutions. I was very impressed by the open discussion about the challenges Indian librarians face; their deep understanding of the need for advocacy and the development of a common plan; the success Indian professionals have had in consultation with the National Knowledge Commission and its president Sam Pitroda. Mr. Pitroda participated in the conference by video through a lecture and discussion. In addition to the personal efforts of our colleagues, a focussed, unified effort by librarians will achieve the best results.

I congratulate the Indian colleagues on their successful seminar and support them in pursuing these activities. I visited a Special Art Library, the Central Public Library in Old Delhi and a University Library in Agra. I saw the differences and challenges of their daily library work. What unites us all is our opportunity to enable people to access information and knowledge.

On 31st March I participated in the International Conference on Libraries from Human Rights Perspective in Ramallah, Palestine. This conference was the result of FAIFE activity in the region a year before, when Frode Bakken and Stuart Hamilton analysed the library situation there. Both Frode and Stuart and the current President of the Norwegian Library Association, Anne Husted, were part of the delegation. In Jerusalem, we learned about the impressive activities of the Van Leer Institute to save collections and visited the University Library, now the newly established National Library of Israel. I observed the progress made in their new legal framework and in digitisation of the wonderful collections they have. The meeting ended at a wonderful lunch with old and new Israeli IFLA friends.

In the Occupied Palestinian Territories, we travelled to Nablus and Ramallah. In Nablus

we visited the construction site of the new part of the University Library and the well equipped Central University Library. We met with the current President of the Palestinian Library Association, Hani Jaber, who learned with appreciation and pleasure that the Norwegian Library Association will support their IFLA membership. This gesture was also wonderful news to me.

On Sunday we went to Ramallah, where the International Conference on Libraries from Human Rights Perspective took place the first day before they met in East Jerusalem. The conference was a real success! Thanks go to the organisers. See: rchrs.ps/test/aboutC.html [<http://rchrs.ps/test/aboutC.html>] and rchrs.ps/test/aboutc_a.html [http://rchrs.ps/test/aboutc_a.html] .

Both the Palestinian Cultural Minister and the Mayor of Ramallah gave speeches at the conference opening and the press coverage was excellent, with some [Radio and TV-stations on site](http://www.alquds.com/node/16807) [<http://www.alquds.com/node/16807>] . For many local librarians, this was their first opportunity to give a paper at a library conference. We hope that they will be able to participate actively in one of the next IFLA conferences.

With best wishes to all of you

Claudia Lux

President of IFLA 2007 – 2009

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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) [<http://infoserv.inist.fr/wwwsympa.fcgi/subrequest/ifla-l>] and all other [mailing lists](#) [[/ll/iflalist.htm](#)] organised by IFLA. Concise (one page), with no illustrations or special layout, it should cause no reception problems.

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