

International Relations Committee Report to Council

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Submitted by Luis Herrera, Chair

Members: Chair Luis Herrera, Nancy M. Bolt, Sharon Bostick, Yolanda Cuesta, Allene Hayes, Esmeralda Kale, Bradley Schaffner, Carla Southers, Joan Weeks, Jennifer Younger, Laura DeLancey (intern), Cathy Zeljak (intern), Michael P. Dowling (staff liaison).

International Librarians at the Midwinter Meeting

IRRT continued its support of international members and attendees at ALA with a reception at the beginning of conference. This year there were 95 international attendees from 21 countries.

IFLA Report

IFLA President-elect Donna Scheeder provided the IRC with an update on IFLA activities. IFLA released its [Trends Report](#) at their conference in Singapore last August. The report identifies five trends shaping the information society, spanning access to education, privacy, civic engagement and transformation:

- Technologies will both expand and limit who has access to information.
- Online Education will democratise and disrupt global learning.
- The boundaries of privacy and data protection will be redefined.
- Hyper-connected societies will listen to and empower new voices and groups.
- The global information environment will be transformed by new technologies.

In December IFLA also released a [Statement on Libraries and Text and Data Mining](#), which states the belief that legal certainty for text and data mining (TDM) can be achieved only by (statutory) exceptions.

It also released a joint statement, [Access to Information Central to the Post-2015 Development Agenda](#) with a number of other organizations. It also is intended to start a discussion on access to information as a central pillar of the framework outlines possible metrics to measure progress.

IFLA's [World Library and Information Congress \(WLIC\)](#) will take place in Lyon, France, August 16-22. Scheeder encouraged U.S. librarians to submit paper and poster session proposals.

The IFLA WLIC is scheduled to return to the United States in 2016. ALA is part of the U.S. National Organizing Committee, which includes representatives from the other U.S. associations members of IFLA. Site visits to three prospective host cities will take place in February, with a decision to be made at the IFLA Governing Board Meeting in April.

ALA and IFLA

ALA President Barbara Stripling and President-elect Courtney Young led a strong ALA delegation to the IFLA WLIC in Singapore last August. ALA is pleased that the four U.S. members on the IFLA Governing Board are all ALA members: President- elect Donna Scheeder, Loida Garcia-Febo, Lynne Rudasill, and

Russell Lynch. The IRC thanks them, and all the other ALA members serving on IFLA standing committees.

ALA's booth was once again one of the most popular spots on the exhibit floor in Singapore. Lots of interest in Graphics "Big Bang Theory" poster, as the show has achieved worldwide popularity.

The IRC also commended IRO member and ALA Councilor Loida Garcia-Febo for spearheading IFLA's "New Librarians Global Connection: best practices, models and recommendations" quarterly webinar series. ALA's International Relations Office assists as the host site through Adobe Connect.

International Relations Strategic Plan

The IRC reviewed [ALA 2015 International Relations Strategic Plan](#) during the last 18 months, and were encouraged by the amount of activities that took place. Implementing the plan involves the participation of IRO, IRC, IRRT, OITP, and ALA divisions, round tables, and other ALA units, as well as the ALA ethnic affiliates. The IRC agreed to set up a small task force to identify, by March, new initiatives to undertake through Annual 2015.

Preparation for International Attendees and Programs for the 2014 Annual Conference

IRC and its regional subcommittees, IRRT, and other ALA units are preparing international programs for Annual in Las Vegas. Both US and international speakers were identified and will be invited to present various sessions on international topics. ALA conference attendees will have opportunities to learn and appreciate the international experience through these programs and events. ALA is also working with the Japan Culture Corporation to attract Japanese companies to exhibit in Vegas.

China Connections

ALA participated in the Library Society of China conference this year in Pudong (Shanghai). ALA coordinated with Publishing's main distributor in the region to showcase ALA resources and initiatives. The Library Society of China is again organizing a large delegation, 30 to 40 librarians, to attend Annual. ALA is assisting the Library Society in setting up visits to libraries in Toronto and Los Angeles.

MOU with Korea Library Association

The Korea Library Association celebrated its 50th anniversary this year. ALA Past President Molly Raphael was the invited keynote speaker. To foster further cooperation between the two associations, ALA has signed a Memorandum of Understanding to invite delegates from each association to each other's conferences. KLA leaders will be attending Annual in Las Vegas.

Sharjah International Book Fair

At this Midwinter, ALA met with organizers of the Sharjah International Book Fair (United Arab Emirates) to finalize partnership activities for SIBF 2014. ALA will be organizing a two-day library conference during the Fair for librarians in the Near East South Asian region. ALA expects 200 librarians, including many ALA members in the region, to attend the conference. ALA will also bring over U.S. librarians as presenters for the conference, but also librarians who will provide insight to Arabic publishers about the U.S. library market.

ALA FIL FREE Pass Program to Guadalajara Book Fair

This year 115 ALA members participated in the 16th year of the ALA-FIL Free Pass Program to the Guadalajara Book Fair. In addition to their participation, the librarians contributed to a book donation

effort with the Mexican Librarians Associations (AMBAC) to collect books that will be distributed to public and school libraries in Monterrey during AMBAC's Annual Conference in May. ALA President Barbara Stripling will be a keynote speaker.

Philippine Library Relief

The Philippines face a long path to recovery in the wake of Typhoon Haiyan on November 8, 2013--one of the most powerful storms ever recorded. ALA has created a [Philippine Library Relief](#) donation effort to help rebuild libraries and archives in the Philippines that were destroyed or damaged. ALA has already raised \$5,000. ALA is coordinating with the Philippines Library Association Inc (PLAI) and the National Library of the Philippines. The National Library will be sending a fact-finding delegation to the hard hit region next month

International Library Tours

ALA's first collaboration with People to People resulted in a very successful tour to Costa Rica at the beginning of November. The next tour offered through People to People will be to India. ALA is also now sponsoring a second tour to Costa Rica this summer that has a strong library service component. ALA receives a small portion of tour fees to help further its international efforts.

Damage to Egypt National Library and Archives

The IRC was alerted to the damage to Egypt's National Library and Archives (NLA) that occurred on Friday caused by a bomb that targeted Cairo's central police station. Early reports are that the NLA suffered structural damage. Reports are that a small number of unique manuscripts and papyri were damaged. The IRC asked the IRO staff to monitor the situation.

International AL Direct

International AL Direct continues to be a new opportunity to reach out to the global library community. The e-newsletter appears bi-monthly and has a subscriber base of over 13,000 and climbing. ALA Council members are invited to subscribe. You can read an issue at <http://www.ala.org/offices/international-al-direct>.