

International Relations Committee Report to Council

Submitted by Beverly Lynch, Chair

Members: Buenaventura Basco, Jaclyn Bedoya, Sergio Chapparro, Maggie Farrell, Al Kagan, Nina Kemps, Johan Koren, Zary Mostashari, Heleni Pedersoli, Blanche Woolls, Sha Li Zhang, Rowena Greim (intern), Liladhar Pendse (intern), Michael Dowling (staff liaison)

International Participation and Programming at Annual

ALA was delighted that 450 librarians from 88 countries were able to attend the conference this year. In addition to attending, many presented in the 15 international focused programs as well as the international poster session. Thanks to assistance from the U.S. State Department, the 'Building Bridges to Establish International Partnerships' program was broadcast live to a worldwide audience. Other programs enlightened audiences on how African libraries are meeting diverse communities; public libraries in Mexico, Argentina, and Chile; and library education in the Egypt, India, and Sri Lanka.

Over 600 conference goers enjoyed the great evening last night at the International Reception in the Great Hall at Library of Congress. The IRC would like to thank President-elect Roberta Stevens for making the event at the Library of Congress possible.

Haiti and Chile Library Relief Efforts

ALA's relief efforts for earthquake damaged libraries in Haiti and Chile continue. The IRC would like to thank President Camila Alire for encouraging those attending the Opening General Session to make a 'text' donation for Haiti. Over \$500 was raised during the two minutes, helping ALA to reach the \$20,000 mark in overall donations. A second part of ALA's efforts will be encouraging libraries in the United States to 'adopt' libraries in Haiti and Chile, as they did for libraries in the Gulf region after Hurricane Katrina.

U. S National Commission of UNESCO

In May this year ALA was invited by the U.S. State Department to again be a member of U.S. National Commission of UNESCO. ALA was a standing member of the Commission before the U.S. left UNESCO in 1984, but was not part of the re-established Commission when the U.S. rejoined UNESCO in 2004. The IRC will be announcing a call later this summer for an ALA member to serve as the representative to the Commission.

U.S. Committee of the Blue Shield

Following the U.S. ratification of the Hague Convention in 2008, the ALA became a charter member of the U.S. Committee of the Blue Shield in 2008. Corine Wegner, President of the U.S. Committee attended the conference and participated on a program, “Libraries in a time of War”, where she described the activities of the Committee. The U.S. Committee of the Blue Shield is working in Haiti, emphasizing the preservation of cultural objects. It is working closely with IFLA which also is working in Haiti on the preservation of libraries and archives.

International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA)

The IFLA President-elect, Ingrid Parent, the IFLA Secretary General, Jennefer Nicholson, and Donna Scheeder, member of the IFLA Executive Board briefed the IRC on IFLA’s strategic plan and its activities relating to the plan. They also did a briefing to international visitors and other ALA members active in international activities.

Traditional Cultural Expression Task Force

The International Relations Committee has two representatives on this task force, Maggie Farrell serves as co-chair and Bradley Schafner as a member. The task force met once at this conference and considered issues of process and content. It intends to work strenuously into the fall, as it is charged to present its report to Council at Midwinter. The Task Force is committed to an open and transparent process and will keep the Council and all interested parties informed as it works. Three members of the Council are members of the Task Force, including Maggie Farrell, the co-chair.

American Library in Paris

The American Library in Paris was established after World War I with the leadership and direction of the ALA. It has been in operation ever since, now being a self-supporting, stand alone organization. ALA continues to have a representative on its board, the current representative being Winston Tabb. Mr. Tabb, and the library’s current director, Charles Trueheart, briefed the IRC on library activities.

ALA 2010 International Strategic Plan

Attached to this report is a report of activities relating to the IRC’s International Strategic Plan, based on the ALA plan, Ahead to 2010. The IRC is impressed with the breadth of international activities that have been implemented during the past five years. The committee is also impressed that all of this work has been carried out so ably by one half-time director, Michael Dowling, and one full-time program officer, Delin Guerra, together with dedicated ALA members and other ALA staff.

**International Relations Committee
Report to ALA Council on the Results of the
ALA 2010 International Strategic Plan
June 28, 2010**

Introduction

On behalf of the International Relations Committee (IRC), the International Relations Round Table (IRRT), and the International Relations Office (IRO), I am pleased to present this report to ALA Council. Our purpose is to inform the Council of the array of activities within the Association on international issues and to put these in the context of the 2010 strategic plan. Because of the complexity of the Association and the wide spread interest in international activities among the many units, we are certain we have missed some important international activities. Any omission is not by design or intent and we will be making additions and corrections.

The IRC developed a strategic plan for international activities in 2005, basing the plan on the ALA Plan, Ahead to 2010. This report identifies goals and objectives in the international plan and describes activities supporting these that took place during the period 2005-2010.

ALA 2010 International Strategic Plan - Goals, Objectives, and Activities

Goal I – Advocacy and Value of the Profession: ALA and its members will be leading advocates for the value of libraries and librarians throughout the world.

International Strategic Objectives:

1. Objective: Increase international public awareness of the value and impact of libraries and librarians through the “Campaign for the World’s Libraries.”

Activities:

Ten new countries or regions joined the “Campaign for the World’s Libraries (CWL): Bermuda, Greece, Ireland, El Salvador, Jamaica, Latvia, Nicaragua, Pacific Island Association of Libraries and Archives, Romania and South Africa. Thirty countries and regions have participated in the CWL).

2. Objective: Increase awareness in the U.S. library community of library services and activities from other countries.

Activities:

Forty-two articles have been published in American Libraries about libraries in 24 countries, plus the *Global Reach* segment in each issue of stories about libraries around the world.

Three ALA presidents have included a focus on international librarianship in their planning: Camila Alire organized two presidential programs with international speakers: Yohannes Gebregelorgis (Ethiopia) and Eppot Van Nispen (Holland). Lorie Roy initiated the awards of International Presidential Citations during her presidency and the IRRT is working to establish criteria that will enable the citations to continue in a systematic way. Michael Gorman sponsored Forums on International Education during his presidential year.

3. Objective: Highlight U.S. Library projects ongoing in other countries to garner support for ALA's international efforts.

Activities:

Publicity on ALA's activities in IFLA, the participation in the Guadalajara Book Fair, the Iraq Book Project, the Toyota Japanese Literature Book Project.

ALA presidents, Lorie Roy, James Rettig, Camila Alire, and Roberta Stevens were invited to give presentations and share U.S. Library projects in China through the Chinese American Library Association (CALA) Seminar Project Series.

Roberta Stevens (ALA President Elect), Sari Feldman (PLA President) and Beverly Lynch (IRC Chair) were among international library leaders invited to participate in a symposium celebrating the opening of the new public library in Shenzhen, China, and describe on-going U.S. Library activities.

The IRRT launched an Endowment Campaign in 2009 to raise funds to support international library projects.

4. Help mobilize, support and sustain grassroots advocacy for libraries and library services internationally.

Activities:

IRO organized and carried out advocacy training in Africa (2006), Pacific region (2007), Latin American (2008) China (2008) and Sri Lanka (2009).

Grants of \$ 500 were made from IRO to support "Campaign for the World's Libraries" initiatives in Argentina, Brazil, El Salvador, Guatemala, Jamaica, Nicaragua, and Uruguay.

Goal II. Education: Through its leadership, ALA will promote high quality education for librarians around the globe and provide continuing education opportunities for library staff throughout the world.

International Strategic Objectives:

1. Develop continuing educational programs, especially utilizing state of the art technology, that are attractive, affordable to and accessible to international members and other international librarians.

Activities:

In FY 2008 librarians in fourteen countries participated in the ALA Online CE, taking 54 classes. In FY 2009 librarians from 22 Countries participated in ALA Online CE, taking 90 classes.

ALCTS, ACRL and Publishing have offered free opportunities for online courses to librarians from developing countries.

The 2010 IRRT Emerging Leaders' Project released launch of the new Free Links Program Website, International Partnership for Advocacy and Library Services (IPALS) which focuses on the web resources related to library advocacy.

2. Increase participation of international librarians in programming at ALA conferences and meetings to allow more interaction with international colleagues and expose all ALA members to library and information science issues and developments around the world.

Activities:

In the past five years there are have been 100 international posters sessions at the ALA annual conference, 12 geographic specific programs presented by the six regional subcommittees of the International Relations Committee. Five international focused pre-conferences have been sponsored by the International Relations Round Table. Among the fifteen internationally relating programs at the 2010 conference, there was a special program on "Libraries in Times of War."

3. Generate materials, publications, and products that reflect a global approach to librarianship.

Activities:

The "Guide to the Campaign for the World's Libraries" has been translated into five languages (Spanish, Chinese, French, Polish, Romanian).

American Libraries and International Leads online versions which can be accessed through the Internet making it more readily available to librarians outside the U.S.

There has been increased numbers of translations of ALA and divisional guides and standards into multiple languages, for example, the Library Advocates Handbook has been translated into Spanish.

AASL Knowledge Quest international focused issue.

“Read” posters have been issued in bi-lingual editions, e.g., Spanish (Ceasar Milan), Chinese (Yao Ming) Arabic (Queen Rania).

4. Be leading participants in the programmatic planning of IFLA conferences.

Activities:

100 ALA members served on various committees and sections in IFLA. These members were major participants in developing interesting and topical programming.

ALA organized a program on the “Campaign for the World’s Libraries” at each annual meeting of IFLA.

5. Be educated as world citizens with an understanding of cultures and issues facing libraries worldwide.

Activities:

The ALA and members have participated in organizing the third and fourth China-US library conferences, the third conference March 22-25, 2005, Beijing, on “Knowledge Management and Service in a Digital Age” and the fourth conference, October 23-25, 2007 in Dublin, Ohio.

2009 ‘Core Competencies of Librarianship’ for library school graduates includes understanding of national and international library issues.

Between 2007 and 2009 there has been a 33% increase in international related courses in LIS programs (34 courses in 2009).

Goal III: Public Policy: ALA will be a key voice in the formulation of international policies, standards and guidelines that impact library and information services.

International Strategic Objectives

1. Be an influential force in international arenas that impact the libraries nationally and internationally such as intellectual freedom, copyright law, fair use, and privacy.

Activities:

The efforts of the Library Copyright Alliance (members are ALA, ARL, ACRL) have been strenuous in ensuring that the LCA gain nongovernmental standing to comment at WIPO meetings. In December 2009 the US delegation to WIPO for the first time verbally supported the need to balance intellectual property rights with copyright limitations and exceptions.

The LCA has actively engaged in opposition to aspects of the Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement.

2. Be influential internationally in promoting a robust and growing public domain to provide effective library programs and services and to provide new opportunities for creativity, research, and scholarship and in opposing the privatization of government and other public information.
3. Support and promote the development and implementation of international guidelines, standards, and procedures through coalitions with IFLA and other library and educational organizations and various independent entity.

Activities:

ALA became Charter Member of US Committee of the Blue Shield in 2008.

ALA has been invited by the U.S. State Department to name a representative to U.S. National Commission of UNESCO.

ALA representatives of IFLA sections have been involved in the development and implementation of guidelines and standards on topics such as serving multicultural communities and babies and toddlers, and promoting through conferences, workshops, trainings.

4. Increase collaborative efforts on legislation and international treaties relevant to libraries.

Activities:

ALA advocated to the ratification by the U.S. government of 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict. The treaty was ratified in 2008.

The LCA has worked closely with IFLA's Committee on Copyright and Other Legal Matters to support a treaty to improve access to the reading impaired and to balance international copyright policy to include minimum mandatory limitations to copyright to advance education and access to information.

5. Advocate for appropriate technological development and freedom of access to information worldwide.

Activities:

ALA and its members were involved in the U.N. World Summit of the Information Society, shaping the position of the U.S. delegation to support the efforts of IFLA to include libraries in the Declaration of Principles and Plan of Action.

6. Utilize technology and the ALA website to increase understanding of international issues affecting library and information services and generate support for international partnerships that strengthen library and information services.

Activities:

The International Relations Office has established a Facebook page and a Twitter page which is in both English and Spanish.

A wiki has been established to promote the Sister Libraries program (<http://wikis.ala.org/sisterlibraries>)

Goal IV: Building the (Library) Profession: ALA will be instrumental in helping develop a highly qualified library work force.

International Strategic Objectives:

1. Work with IFLA and other associations to develop, support, and promote career development to improve the profession and the provision of library and information services.

Activities:

ALA is working with IFLA on the development of Strengthening Library Association modules

2. Provide training in the international arena in those areas where U.S. librarianship is particularly strong such as freedom of access to information, equity of access, information technology, reference service, and bibliography.

Online CE courses are offering access to ALA member experts on these topics. Members also continue to present at various conferences and workshops around the globe. (See Goal II Education, Objective 1.)

3. Make available the professional expertise of the ALA membership to countries interested in assistance.

Activities:

The Association, through its International Relations Office provides recommendations of resource experts to those, such as the State Department.

4. Increase leadership development opportunities nationally and internationally by working to bring international librarians to the United States and send U.S. librarians abroad using scholarships, grant programs, and exchanges to enrich professional lives and to share professional experiences.

Activities:

The Library Fellows program which ceased in 1998 when the USIA merged with the U.S. Department of State is widely lauded as a very successful program managed by the ALA. At this conference there will be a meeting of various governmental, foundation staff, and ALA staff to consider the issues relating to the establishment of program similar to Library Book Fellows.

5. Assist in increasing the diversity of the library workforce in the U.S. to reflect a changing population by recruiting international librarians and individuals from immigrant populations.
6. Encourage other U.S. library associations to create focused partnerships with library associations outside the United States.

Activities:

Various national associations have developed partnerships similar to ALA efforts.

A number of state associations have undertaken fund-raising efforts for building libraries in specific regions- Montana Library Association and the Central Asia Institute to build libraries in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

7. Through ALA-APA, assist with international efforts that advocate for improved compensation for librarians and other library workers.

Activities:

ALA-APA still very much focused on U. S. issues but staff participated in the IFLA Quebec conference in 2008 to make connections.

8. Promote the value and benefit to a library's program by the participation of staff in internationally related events and encourages support for librarians involved in international activities.

Activities:

Guadalajara Free Pass Program and Hong Kong Free Pass Program.

Toyota Book Project reached 200 public libraries, many of them small, many of which created programming on Japan.

Goal V: Membership: International members and internationally involved members will receive outstanding value for their ALA membership.

International Strategic Objectives:

1. Increase efforts to recruit and retain and international members by effectively communicating the value of association membership to international members.

Activities:

A new marketing tool, an International Supplement to American Libraries, was created in 2009.

The International Relations Office has had increased contact with international members through emails, AL Direct, etc.

2. Provide a greater international presence at conferences and meetings.

Activities:

There has been an increase in the participation of international librarians at ALA conferences; over 400 international librarians attending the 2010 conference.

3. Promote increased involvement by international members in its programming and committee work through encouragement of their attendance at meetings and through electronic communication.

Activities:

First through virtual memberships, and now with regular membership there have been international members on almost every geographic subcommittee during the last three years.

4. Provide a wide range of opportunities for members to become involved in international work.

Activities:

The following list describes some of the opportunities

- International Relations Round Table (1,800 members)

- International Relations Committee and Subcommittees, IRRT Committees, and Division International Committees and Groups
 - Mentor for international attendees at ALA Annual Conference
 - IFLA (100 members nominated by ALA served on committees and Governing Board)
 - Book Fairs (688 members from 38 states, D.C. Puerto Rico and Canada participated ALA-FIL Free Pass Program to Guadalajara Book Fair and 40 librarians from 12 states participated in ALA-HKBF Free Pass Program to Hong Kong Book Fair)
 - Sister Libraries Initiative
 - New Adopt a Library Programs for Haiti and Chile
 - Bogle Pratt International Travel Fund Award
5. Promote involvement by all types of libraries in international activity.
 6. Facilitate connections between U.S. and international librarians by identify opportunities for exchange programs and publicizing their availability.

Activities:

ALA President, James Rettig, signed an agreement between ALA and Berufsverband Information Bibliothek (BIB) to foster exchanges between U.S. and Germany.

The IRO assisted delegations from abroad interested in visiting libraries in the United States (Denmark, Holland).

State Department, Mortenson Center, and other delegation visits to ALA offices in Chicago and Washington.

7. Link libraries through ALA's Sister Libraries Initiative and highlight models of successful matches.
8. Assure the selection of highly qualified individuals, through equitable review processes, to carry its views to the international arena and prepares these representatives to present views authoritatively and in the most appropriate and culturally sensitive way.

Activities:

The IRC has an process whereby it issues a call to members interested in representing ALA in various international venues; it reviews the response, and prepares recommendations for action by the ALA Executive Board.

9. Provide information on resources for cross-cultural interaction to members, official ALA representatives to international events, and ALA leadership and staff.

The IRC orients incoming ALA leaders on ALA international activities and opportunities for participation.

Goal VI: Organizational Excellence: ALA will be an inclusive, effectively governed, well-managed, and financially strong organization.

International Strategic Objectives:

1. Allocate sufficient resources to support the international activities and programs of the International Relations Office, the Washington Office, and other units in ALA.
2. Understanding of all units of the importance and relevance in participating in international activities.
3. Increase and improve communications, cooperation and collaboration on international activities throughout ALA.

Activities:

Within headquarters an International Working Group has been created that brings various units of ALA together-membership, publishing, divisions, conference.

4. Increase the amount and diversity of revenue sources to support ALA international programs and services to meet current and future needs.

Activities:

A number of small grants received.

5. Seek funding for international activities from foundations, government, non-governmental organizations, international agencies, corporations, private sources, and member contributions.
6. Work with foundations, U.S. government agencies, and other organizations interested in international library and information issues to leverage resources devoted to international programming.
7. Continuously improve ALA's technology infrastructure to meet international member needs more effectively.

Respectfully submitted by Beverly Lynch, IRC Chair