



Report by the President, Donna Scheeder

Greetings Colleagues,

Last year in my inaugural address I delivered a call to action. I am pleased to report to you that during the past year all of IFLA has responded. I will talk today about what IFLA as an organization has accomplished in the last year and I will close tomorrow with a new call for our 2016-2017 year.

But first let me tell you briefly about what I have seen and learned from you over the past year. I saw and experienced in my travels to Europe, Africa, Latin America, North America and Asia that many of you are and have been responding to the call to transform your libraries and your selves to create the change we want to see and be. To all of you who made me feel so welcome and who organized meetings in your countries to move librarianship forward, thank you from the bottom of my heart. I also realized however that there is much work to do and I was forced to think about the libraries and librarians who were not at your conferences and meetings. What do we do to bring the change message to them? What we do together to ensure that no library is left behind and that every library is an excellent library. That will be the focus of my closing remarks tomorrow as we continue our journey together.

I am here today to report that it has been a very active and productive year for all of IFLA. Let me begin by thanking all you who are the volunteer leadership, experts and members who have done so much to move the professional work of IFLA forward in the past year. However, none of us could have accomplished our goals and objectives without the dedication and hard work of the IFLA staff and both of the secretary generals we have had the good fortune to work with in the last year. Please give them all a round of applause.

IFLA and by IFLA I mean all of us, have made great strides this year in all four areas that we identified in the IFLA strategic plan. The four areas of concentration for IFLA initiatives are:

- Libraries in Society
- Information and Knowledge
- Cultural heritage
- Building Capacity

Let us take a look at each.

The first, Libraries in Society states we will empower the library sector to build literate, informed and participative societies. We will develop strategies and tools to enable library services to act as key providers of information, education, research, culture and social participation.

Progress was made on all fronts. So much so, that I am highlighting examples but for a more complete picture I urge you to look at the IFLA website.

A number of efforts moved forward the initiative to position libraries as a key to creating a literate and well informed society capable of making decisions that will benefit their lives. IFLA advocated for the role of libraries at important international meetings on Literacy including the UNESCO Literacy Workshop in April, the 3rd International Conference on Inclusive Library Services for Children and Young Adults in the Philippines in July and the International Conference on Media and Information Literacy for Building Culture of Open Government in Russia.

Libraries as engines of development

As you will recall last year IFLA reached its goal to position libraries as critical community assets that can assist society and governments with achieving the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals. I informed you that the next steps are up to you and that IFLA headquarters was there to assist you with your advocacy to get libraries included in national development plans. This year IFLA provided you with a tool kit to assist you with your advocacy at the national level which has now been translated into Arabic, Chinese Spanish and Russian. Many of you are to be congratulated for your efforts. I want to thank you for the many examples of how your libraries are already contributing to the development goals which have been published in the IFLA Booklet "Access and Opportunities for all, How Libraries Contribute to the UN 2030 Agenda" IFLA continued to advocate at the global level at the High Level Political forum in New York where attention is now turned to monitoring implementation.

The IFLA Trend Report

The IFLA Trend report is the basis for the call to action to position our field and our libraries for success in the 21st century. In our rapidly changing world it is critical to have the most current knowledge about the trends that are impacting society so that we can identify and respond to the challenges they present to the library field. The IFLA Governing Board commissioned an update to the report and the *2016 Update* was launched Monday at the President's session and is available for downloading on the IFLA website.

Moving on to strategic direction two, Information and Knowledge, IFLA plans to build a framework that promotes equitable access to information and knowledge in any format and in any place. We seek to establish the capacity for libraries to act as catalysts of innovation, able to facilitate the creation and re-use of content by their communities. Several important milestones were met this year.

The Treaty of Marrakesh received its 20th ratification, meaning that it will come into force on 30 September 2016 and while we are grateful to see the realization of that goal we must also realize that without further action access to information and knowledge in the future is at risk. That is why IFLA continued to advocate at WIPO for effective exceptions and limitations for libraries and archives and saw welcome support among a majority of member states and regions. In addition, IFLA has joined with allied organisations in making the case for a strong copyright exception for text and data mining in the EU, and will include this in its asks at WIPO. Finally, there are numerous other actions taken in support for favourable policies for libraries such as e-lending and ensuring public access to the internet.

In the area of cultural heritage our strategy is to work closely with our network of cultural heritage partners to safeguard cultural heritage in its diverse forms, including traditional, historical, indigenous and contemporary expression; and to achieve optimal coordination of our cultural heritage activities. There is important progress to report in this area as well. Three new Preservation and Conservation Centres have joined the PAC network. Welcome Poland, Cameroon, Qatar. For success it is also critical that we identify gaps in our abilities to preserve and conserve. One of these gaps is palm leaf preservation. The Governing Board approved in April 2016 the use of funds from the Stichting IFLA to hold a scoping workshop on the needs for effective and unified palm leaf preservation. Finally, the cultural heritage initiative is actively seeking your help. IFLA's Key Initiative 3.2 states that we will work on developing standards for the collection and preservation of content in its diverse forms. In order to achieve this, a small committee of IFLA experts (from IFLA Professional Units, IFLA Core Activities and the wider network) has created a survey to collect standards/guidelines and best practices used by institutions for the preservation and conservation of materials held in their collection (in any format). You have until October 31 to take this survey but please don't delay. Do it now.

Finally, we come to strategic Direction 4, *Capacity Building*. It states IFLA will establish the capacity to raise the voice of librarians and library representatives at national, regional and global levels. We will develop an advocacy agenda and strengthen the ability of IFLA's members to advocate effectively for libraries as key players in political, economic and social change. I am happy to report that all of us have been working together to make this promise a reality. Let me give you a few examples.

Building Strong Library Associations programme

The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation Global Libraries Initiative partnered with IFLA on a US \$1m grant for Capacity Building in International Librarianship to support the Building Strong Library Associations programme over three years from 2013-2016, this grant concludes in August 2016. The program has achieved all of the desired key results established at the start of the current program model. The Programme was implemented in Africa, Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean, Europe (Spain), Qatar and Moldova. In May a Global meeting in Manila, Philippines hosted in collaboration with the Philippine Library Association 30 May - 2 June 2016 and I had the honour of attending. It was inspiring to me to see the enthusiasm and seriousness with which the representatives planned the next steps of advancement for the library field in their countries and more importantly how they reached out and planned work together crossing the boundaries of nations and continents. I would like everyone here who was at that meeting to stand and be recognized as you are examples of IFLA working at its best to unite our profession and make it stronger for the future. I also want to recognise publicly the strong support we received from the Global Libraries initiative that made this very successful program possible.

The International Advocacy Program is another very important part of this direction. IFLA has streamlined the approach to IAP implementation to move quickly from trainer development to the activity phase including holding a train the trainer workshop and several regional meetings before the end of the last quarter of 2016.

Many of the initiatives and activities to build capacity come from a desire to strengthen our regional presence and leadership and to ensure that IFLA is a truly representative global body for the diversity of

views and expertise from across its regions regardless of geographic location, the economic capacity of associations, institutions or individual members to actively participate and benefit.

The IFLA International Leaders program is one of these. In February 2016 IFLA issued a call for applications for a new cohort for the IFLA International Leaders Programme 2016-2018. The competition was intense and out of 62 applicants 9 were chosen. They are beginning their program here in Columbus and I would ask them to stand and be recognized. Also part of this direction are on-going efforts to improve communications including a redesign of the IFLA website. IFLA has also begun efforts to redress the under-representation of the public libraries sector by significantly increasing the participation of public libraries and public library workers in IFLA's activities, associations and national, regional and international representation.

But perhaps the most important accomplishment of IFLA this year is not an action that is part of the strategic plan. As you recall last year our Secretary General announced that she would be retiring on 1 June 2016. Both the outgoing 2015 Board and the incoming 2016 Board thought about the IFLA of the future and what it would take to lead it as Secretary General. We wanted a proven leader with a compelling vision who has all the skills necessary to communicate that vision effectively and work closely with the IFLA's Governing Board, membership and experts to create and implement a strategic plan to realize the vision. I am happy to say that we found that individual, Gerald Leitner, former head of the Austrian Library Association, former Chair of the Management of Library Associations Section and former Governing Board member. So please join me in welcoming Gerald Leitner to deliver his first address to the general assembly as Secretary General.

Donna Scheeder

IFLA President