

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT
June, 2012

Submitted by Sha Li Zhang, Chair

Members: Nancy M. Bolt, Helen A. Dunbar, Eric Gomez, James A. Keller, Nina M. Kemps, Beverly P. Lynch, Leslie E. McNabb, Tatiana Pashkova-Balkenhol, Carla A. Southers, Jennifer A. Younger, Tim Zou, Jamie Luedtke (intern), Christine Sharbrough (intern), Michael P. Dowling (staff Liaison)

International Librarians at Conference

This year, ALA was pleased to welcome 430 international librarians/visitors from 83 countries to the ALA 2012 Annual Conference in sunny California. ALA was honored that IFLA President Ingrid Parent, University Librarian from the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, Canada, was in attendance. Ms. Parent also spoke at several ALA events, including a keynote speech at the Chinese American Librarians Association Annual Program. Donna Scheeder and Buhler Mambo –Theta from the IFLA governing board also provided IFLA updates at the IRC meeting on the status of IFLA’s annual conference and progress on IFLA’s key initiatives, especially on the initiative of building strong library associations.

In addition to attendance, a big number of international librarians were also invited this year to speak at various ALA programs. These speakers came from as far away as Brazil, China, Germany, Hong Kong, Japan, Romania, New Zealand, South Africa, Taiwan, United Kingdom, and Zimbabwe. Though their presentations/papers/poster sessions, they shared their thoughts, perspectives, and experience with U.S. librarians.

The IRC would like to thank the leadership and members of the IRRT for all their efforts to make this conference a great experience for our international colleagues. IRRT hosted a preconference for 50 international librarians, staffed the International Lounge, and provided mentorships and an orientation on Friday afternoon. This evening, the ALA International Librarians Reception will be held at the Muzeo. It will be a great opportunity for international librarians/visitors to meet their U.S. colleagues, to network, and to solidify friendship at this annual event.

IRC Annual Program

Yesterday the Committee hosted a program featuring speakers from BRIC countries and other regions on library development in emerging economies. Inviting international speakers to share their experience and practices is one of the goals in the ALA’s 2015 International Strategic Plan. Through their papers and presentations, these speakers help us understand the status of library development, national policies, and strategic directions in their countries.

Other International Programs at Annual

ALA units organized and presented a series of international programs, meetings, and events at this annual conference. These programs reflected ALA’s goals and priorities from international perspectives. The speakers at these programs were from both U.S. and abroad. With increasingly global connections and interactions in the library communities around the world, the ALA members would find these programs timely beneficial and educational. Here are the programs:

- “Addressing Global Diversity: Meeting the Needs of International Students in Academic Libraries” (ACRL);
- “Building libraries for the future - Best practices from East Asia” (IRC –East Asian and the Pacific Subcommittee);

- “Dancing at the Revolution? Libraries and the Arab Spring Uprisings” (IRC – Near East and South Asia Subcommittee);
- “Digital Humanities in Eurasia” (IRC – Eurasia and Central Asia Subcommittee);
- “Empowering the People! Libraries and the Attainment of an Information Society in Africa” (IRC –Africa Subcommittee);
- “Expecting the Unexpected: Libraries Respond to Profound Change” (IRRT);
- “How to Prove our Relevance: A Comparison of European and American Assessment Practices” (IRC – Europe Subcommittee);
- “How Taiwan Maximizing Information Services through Public Libraries, Digitalization, LIS Education, Information Literacy, Library Association, and Globalizing” (IRO);
- “Innovative Practices: Developing Sustainable Programs, Mobilizing Support for Your Library!” (IRRT) ;
- “International ILL: A Global Perspective on Resource Sharing” (RUSA);
- “International Library Partnerships: Logistical and Technical Issues Relating to International Digitization Projects” (LITA);
- International Poster Session – 20 poster sessions on international themes (IRRT);
- “Library Development in Emerging Economies: National Policies and Strategic Directions on the Global Scenes” (IRC) ;
- “Mātauranga Māori in New Zealand Libraries: A presentation and workshop on Maori knowledge in New Zealand libraries,” (IRRT);
- “Of Mutual Benefit: The Sister Library Initiative and International Sustainable Library Development” (IRRT);
- “RDA Worldwide” (ALCTS); and
- “Spanish E-Publishing” (IRC-American Subcommittee)

ALA presidential Citation for Innovative International Library Projects

Four library projects around the world were selected to receive 2012 ALA Presidential Citation for Innovative International Library Projects:

- The World is Just a Book Away - Projects in Indonesia
- Chinese Medicine Digital Projects — Hong Kong Baptist University
- Riecken Community Libraries - Projects in Guatemala and Honduras
- The Urban Office — Helsinki City Library Finland

Dr. Loriene Roy, 2007-2008 ALA President, created the ALA Presidential Citation for International Library Projects to promote innovative library services and programs in libraries outside the United States. ALA President Molly Raphael will present the Citations at the ALA’s International Librarians Reception held tonight.

ALA 2015 International Strategic Plan

Closely following the ALA’s 2015 International Strategic Plan, IRC continued efforts to follow up and carry out planned international activities. Several ALA units have made concerted efforts in expanding their activities on a global scale. The interim report on reviewing international activities will be presented at the 2013 ALA Midwinter Meeting.

IFLA Nominations

IRC began preparing nominations of ALA members who wish to serve on IFLA section committees from 2013-2017. To prepare nominations, a letter of call for nomination and protocols of process from the IRC chair was sent to the ALA units that will nominate their members to relevant IFLA committees. ALA members have played important roles in serving on IFLA, including promoting international standards and advocating for policies to better serve our communities. IRC hopes ALA members will continue their international efforts.

U. S. National Commission of UNESCO Report

ALA representatives, Barbara Ford, provided a written report and shared the status on U.S. funding for UNESCO (CD 18.2). The U.S. stopped funding the UNESCO in late 2011 when the international agency admitted Palestine into its membership. In February 2012, Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton testified before the Senate Appropriation Committee and asked to waive the restrictions on funds for UNESCO. Ms. Ford will continue to provide updates to the IRC, COL and OIF on this issue.

New ALA International E-Newsletter

The International Relations Office mailed the first issue of ALA International Direct e-newsletter on June 20. This bi-monthly newsletter will increase communication with our international members and customers. The newsletter will highlight ALA resources and opportunities of particular interest, and feature profiles and interviews of international members, as well as best practices from around the globe.

Haiti Library Relief Fund

Thanks to the support of ALA members and others, ALA has been able provide the support to reopen the Petit Goave Public Library in May. The community had been without a library for over two years, since the devastating earthquake in January 2010. To date, ALA has raised over \$60,000 to help reopen three libraries in Haiti.

Campaign for the World's Libraries

Taiwan launched its campaign this spring in conjunction with the new National Taichung Library. The Library is using the slogan "REAL @ your library." The campaign is following up on a year-long campaign focused on children's books, and this month public libraries across Taiwan are celebrating Newberry and Caldecott winners with exhibits, workshops, artwork, etc.

International Access to ALA Store

The IRC would like to recognize ALA Publishing and its effort to make e-content on the ALA Store accessible to international members and customers. After significant effort, the ALA Store is now able to receive payments for e-content from outside the United States.

Hong Kong Book Fair

Next month the Hong Kong Book Fair will again welcome ALA members through the ALA-Hong Kong Free Pass Program. The program makes it possible for ALA members who collect Chinese language materials.

IRC Awards

Jane Kinney Meyers is the recipient of the John Ames/Humphry/OCLC/ Forest Press Award. This award is given to an individual for significant contribution to international librarianship. Ms. Meyers received this award for her significant contributions to libraries in Africa. A Bogle Pratt Travel Grant was provided to Rebecca Miller for her participation and presentation in an international event, Annual Information Literacy Conference (LILAC), to be held in Glasgow. Ms. Miller's paper focused on information literacy.

ALA Leadership International Outreach

ALA leadership has continued efforts in reaching out to library colleagues around the world. President Molly Raphael participated in the Month of the Librarian in Rio de Janeiro, Brazilia, and Sao Paulo, Brazil. She gave a presentation on "Developing Diverse Library Leadership for the 21st Century," focusing on the diversity and leadership initiatives. During her visit to Brazil, President Raphael toured libraries, met in small groups with library leaders, and spoke with library school students on diverse library leadership.

President Raphael was also the keynote speaker at the Mexican Library Association Conference in Villahermosa, Mexico, held on May 22 – 25, and participated on an E-book panel at the Canadian Library Association in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada on May 29 – June 2, 2012. President-Elect Maureen Sullivan will focus her international activities on three areas: strengthening ALA’s work with Sister Libraries program, exploring a partnership with the Peace Corps alumni association, and providing webinars for ALA’s international members.

Library Leadership Conference in Shanghai, China

The Chinese American Librarians Association (CALA) and the Tongji University in Shanghai, China, jointly organized an International Conference, “Leadership and Innovative Management in Academic Libraries in the Age of New Technology,” held on April 24–28, 2012. ALA’s International Relations Committee and International Relations Round Table were also co-sponsors of the Conference. Nearly 200 library and informational science professionals were at the Conference, from China, Hong Kong, Macao, Africa, Australia, Mideast, the United States, and other countries. Among the conference keynote speakers was Jim Rettig, ALA past president.

Outreach to Mexican Library Colleagues

This year, Maria F. Kramer, Reforma President, reached out to the library colleagues through participating in the Annual Conference of AMBAC (La Asociación Mexicana de Bibliotecarios, Asociación Civil), held in Villahermosa, Mexico, with assistance and participation of ALA IRO and U. S. Embassy in Mexico as well. The Mexican library colleagues were also invited to participate in the 4th Reforma National Conference held in Denver, Colorado. The outreach efforts connected U.S. librarians with Mexican library colleagues. Due to geographic proximity a high percentage of Latino patrons came from Mexico to the United States, and resulted in important networking opportunities. Refoma in-coming president Denice Adkins will continue this outreach effort during her presidency.

Participate in the ALA Advocacy Coordinating Group

The IRC Chair has continued participating in the ALA’s Coordinating Group’s meetings and conference calls. She brought international perspectives to the Group’s advocacy agendas.

Staff Thanks

Many thanks to the IRO Office, Michael Dowling and Delin Guerra, for their timely support and ongoing assistance to carry out many international initiatives and activities.

**2011-2012 ALA CD #18.2
2012 Annual Conference**

TO: ALA International Relations Committee

FROM: Barbara J. Ford
ALA Representative to the U.S. National Commission for UNESCO

DATE: May 31, 2012

U.S. FUNDING FOR UNESCO

The U.S. stopped funding the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in late 2011 after the agency admitted Palestine into its membership. Using a law from 1990 as its rationale, the U.S. pulled the roughly \$250 million in funds it would have paid to UNESCO for 2011, 2012, and 2013, creating a huge budget deficit and either canceling or jeopardizing countless programs that improve people's lives.

In February, Secretary of State Clinton testified before the Senate Appropriations Committee Foreign Operations Hearing and asked that authority be given to waive restrictions on funds for UNESCO. On May 22, members of the U.S. National Commission had a phone call with Assistant Secretary of State Esther Brimmer about the suspension of U.S. funding and she acknowledged that the Administration was communicating with lawmakers on Capitol Hill to request a waiver that would permit the restoration of funding to UNESCO. The U.S. dilemma is a practical one – how to continue participation without government funds and how to work with Congress to get the funding issue resolved.

The UN meeting calendar is determining which other agencies are approached by Palestine to petition for full membership. The next agency meeting where Palestine is expected to request membership is the World Patents Organization and other meetings on the calendar include the World Health Organization, UNICEF, the World Bank, and later the Atomic Energy Commission and Civil Aviation Association. Following its current mandate, the U.S. would be required to stop contributing dues to those important organizations as well. Solving global issues such as illiteracy and changing climate conditions requires the leaders and citizens of all countries to work together.

The work of UNESCO and other UN agencies is needed during these times. UNESCO focuses on the advancement of cultural understanding and education around the world and on freedom of expression including a free and open internet. "Why UNESCO Matters" provides links important articles on the topic of U.S. engagement in UNESCO. Go to <http://www.whyunescocomatters.blogspot.com/> and <http://unesco.us/home/> to learn more about why UNESCO is important from a variety of professional and social perspectives. A group of young activists, BeTheGoodGuys, is calling on Congress to reverse the U.S. law and the decision to stop funding UNESCO. Join them, and let your members of Congress hear your voice on this issue. <http://bethethegoodguys.org/congress-is-making-us-the-bad-guys/> *Fact Sheet: UNESCO Funding* which was provided to Commission members is attached at the end of this message.

UNESCO VALUES

"Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers." (Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Paris 1948, art. 19) The right to

seek and receive information establishes the duty of governments to provide citizens, and their freely chosen representatives, with all relevant information concerning governmental activities and services. Active and informed participation is consistent with the international human rights framework that affirms the right to take part in the conduct of public affairs. UNESCO's open training platform has resources that are useful and World Press Freedom Day is an opportunity to highlight these issues.

UNESCO works toward open knowledge societies in which people have the capabilities not just to acquire information but also to transform it into knowledge and understanding, which empowers them to enhance their livelihoods and contribute to the social and economic development of their societies. Major information literacy initiatives have been supported by UNESCO, many in collaboration with the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA). The Alexandria Proclamation of 2005 describes information literacy and lifelong learning as "illuminating the way to development, prosperity and freedom. Information literacy empowers people in all walks of life to seek, evaluate, use and create information effectively to achieve their personal, social, occupational and educational goals. It is a basic human right in a digital world and promotes social inclusion in all nations."

UNESCO and IFLA have launched two declarations of principles which should guide the creation and operations of public libraries and school libraries worldwide. The Public Library Manifesto, adopted in 1994, proclaims UNESCO's belief in the public library as a living force for education, culture and information, and as an essential agent for the fostering of peace and spiritual welfare through the minds of men and women. The School Library Manifesto adopted in 1999, aims to define and advance the role of school libraries and resource centers in enabling students to acquire the learning tools and learning content that allow them to develop their full capacities, to continue to learn throughout their lives, and to make informed decisions.

DIGITAL INITIATIVES

The UNESCO Charter on the Preservation of the Digital Heritage was adopted in 2003 and includes sections on guarding against loss of heritage. It outlines measures required including developing strategies and policies, selecting what should be kept, protecting the digital heritage, and preserving cultural heritage. Roles and responsibilities, partnerships and cooperation and the role of UNESCO are outlined.

UNESCO endorsed the IFLA Manifesto for Digital Libraries at its General Conference 2011. The Manifesto provides principles to assist libraries in undertaking sustainable and interoperable digitization activities to bridge the digital divide - a key factor in achieving the Millennium Development Goals of the United Nations. Digital libraries are essential for access to information, and for preserving national heritage.

UNESCO will organize an international conference in September 2012 in Vancouver, Canada, to explore the main issues affecting the preservation of digital documentary heritage, in order to develop strategies that will contribute to greater protection of digital assets and help to define an implementation methodology that is appropriate for developing countries, in particular. The conference will bring together professionals from the heritage sectors, as well as a range of government, IT industry, rights holders and other stakeholders to assess current policies in order to propose practical recommendations to ensure permanent access to digital documentary heritage. Despite the adoption of the UNESCO Charter on the Preservation of the Digital Heritage in 2003, there is still insufficient awareness of the risks of loss of digital heritage.

In the area of software, UNESCO fulfills its basic functions of a laboratory of ideas and a standard-setter to forge universal agreements on emerging ethical issues by supporting the development and use of open, interoperable, non-discriminatory standards for information handling and access as important

elements in developing effective infrastructures that contribute to democratic practices, accountability and good governance.

UNESCO promotes Open Access (OA), with particular emphasis on scientific information (journal articles, conference papers and datasets of various kinds) emanating from publicly funded research. Working with partners, UNESCO works to improve awareness about the benefits of OA among policy makers, researchers and knowledge managers. Through its global network of Field Offices, Institutes and Centers, UNESCO facilitates the development and adoption of OA-enabling policies. In addition, UNESCO engages in global OA debates and cooperates with local, regional and global initiatives in support of OA.

UNESCO is developing a new, innovative Open Education Resources (OER) platform which will offer selected UNESCO publications as OERs and allow communities of practice including teachers, learners, and education professionals to freely copy, adapt, and share their resources. In partnership with key European institutions, UNESCO is a member of the (Open Education Quality (OPAL) Initiative to develop a Framework of OER Practices that improve quality and innovation in education.

UNESCO ASSOCIATED LIBRARIES IN THE U.S.

A project to recognize U.S. libraries advancing programs that cut across at least three of UNESCO's five sectors (education, natural science, social science, culture, and communication/information) has been developed. Recognition through the U.S. UNESCO Associated Libraries program conveys to visitors and patrons that the library has a commitment to international engagement. A special certificate for display is issued by the U.S. National Commission for UNESCO. Any library located in the U.S. is eligible to apply. The application form asks the library to describe examples of programming that relates to UNESCO's sectors and information on who participates in these programs. You can find additional information at <http://www.state.gov/p/io/unesco/188335.htm>

WHY SHOULD WE CARE ABOUT UNESCO?

Public diplomacy through organizations like UNESCO allows us to gain creditability by working with others and seeking consensus. UNESCO's conduct and constitution are profoundly influenced by the U.S. Its mandate to promote education, science, and culture to advance universal respect for justice, rule of law, human rights, and fundamental freedoms reflects American values. Out active engagement is critical to ensuring that the organization continues its work in these areas. The United Nations and organizations like UNESCO reflect the full spectrum of its membership – democracies, dictatorships, failed states, emerging powers. We can either be engaged and active in working for our values and interests, or we can let others provide the directions.

Mainstreaming the culture of peace which is a set of values, attitudes, modes of behavior and ways of life that reject violence and prevent conflicts by tackling their root causes to solve problems is a key activity of UNESCO. Two ways UNESCO does this is by fostering a culture of peace through education and supporting participatory communication and the free flow of information and knowledge. These are values that libraries support and can help with.

It is no easy thing to assess the usefulness of an organization that is answerable to nearly 200 nation states. Yet the reason that since the 1940s we have been part of the UN system is that we need venues that are multilateral and within which the participation of smaller nations as equals enables a different kind of conversation to take place to that which we have elsewhere -- in OECD or G8 or IMF or World Bank where the United States has in the past been dominant and small nations count little. Like other similar organizations, inside the UN system and outside, it has a cumbersome constitution and ungainly

mechanisms designed to keep the organization together through issues of disagreement -- and that inevitably produces some unusual results.

UNESCO supports many of the issues that are important to libraries. By working with an international organization we strengthen the impact of our messages and work.

You can subscribe to the U.S. National Commission for UNESCO E-Newsletter at

<http://www.state.gov/p/io/unesco/>.

I will keep you informed about activities of the U.S. National Commission for UNESCO and welcome comments or questions. You can reach me at bjford@illinois.edu.