

## GODORT International Documents Task Force Minutes

1997 ALA Midwinter Conference Business Meeting Saturday, February 15, 1997, 2:00 pm - 4:30 pm Capital Hilton, Massachusetts Meeting Room

Attending: Duncan Aldrich (Coordinator), Mary Gay Anderson, Daniel Blazek, Debora Cheney, Erminio D'Onofrio, Sam Dunlap, Chuck Eckman, Mary Fetzer, Peter Hajnal, Dena Hutto, Peggy Jobe, Linda Johnson, Al Kagan, Carolyn Kohler, Michael Levine-Clark, Rosemary Allen Little, Mike McCaffrey-Noviss, Karen Merguerian, Darlene Montgomery, Andrea Morrison, Michael Oppenheim (Secretary), Sandra Peterson, Barbie Selby, Andrea Sevetson, Marian Shaaban, Helen Sheehy, Karen F. Smith, Lucia Snowhill, Kathy Tezla (Assistant Coordinator/Coordinator-Elect), Peter Van Leeuwen.

Duncan Aldrich called the meeting to order at 2:04 pm.

### 1. *Introductions*

Following introductions around the room, Duncan noted the welcome presence of a number of past IDTF Coordinators.

### 2. *Minutes*

1. Minutes of the 1996 Midwinter Meeting of the IDTF in San Antonio, Texas, published in the June 1996 DOCUMENTS TO THE PEOPLE, were unanimously approved.
2. Minutes of the 1996 Annual Meeting of the IDTF in New York City, as published at the IDTF web site ([http://www.library.nwu.edu/govpub/idtf/m\\_ala96.html](http://www.library.nwu.edu/govpub/idtf/m_ala96.html) ([http://www.library.nwu.edu/govpub/idtf/m\\_ala96.html](http://www.library.nwu.edu/govpub/idtf/m_ala96.html))), were unanimously approved.

### 3. *Reports from IDTF Liaisons*

1. GODORT Education Committee--Liaison Debora Cheney reported that the committee will not meet until Sunday afternoon.
2. GODORT Legislation Committee--GODORT Chair Andrea Sevetson reported on behalf of Liaison Julia Wallace that among the resolutions Legislation is working on is one on privatization of government information--an issue as vital to international information interests as to any other. Duncan reviewed the other topics Legislation is working on at this Conference.
3. GODORT Cataloging Committee--Liaison Andrea Morrison, noting that Cataloging also meets on Sunday, reported that its agenda includes the cataloging of U.S. government internet resources and an item of special interest to the IDTF, OCLC's new file of European Union MARC cataloging records (viewable on the Web at <http://www.oclc.org/oclc/tb/tb219/219.htm> (<http://www.oclc.org/oclc/tb/tb219/219.htm>)). The EU Library is the source for the records, which are MARC compatible and not designated at OCLC's highest quality level (although some find the records to be distinctly superior to the UN records available in RLIN). They are also available via

PRISM only, and not through any OCLC reference file. OCLC has asked for GODORT comment on this file. Mary Gay Anderson and Dena Hutto offered to add their assessment to that to be made by the Cataloging Committee.

4. GITCO Committee--Liaison Dan Blazek, also noting that GITCO meets on Sunday, reported that among its discussion items will be the "Recommended Minimum Specifications for Public Access Work Stations in Federal Depository Libraries," a new draft document brought to this Conference by Lee Morey of the GPO's Electronic Transition Staff. The NCLIS standards project (is there a role for GITCO?) and a joint discussion with the Education Committee on proposals to recommend to GODORT for continuing [distance] education uses of Jack Sulzer's 1996 donation to GODORT.
5. Program Committee--Liaison Peggy Jobe reported that the main GODORT program at next Annual in San Francisco will be a panel discussion and Q & A on GILS. Subsequent "new business-type" discussion of the attractiveness of an IDTF-sponsored program at Annual in Washington, DC, in 1998, resulted in passage of a motion to develop an IDTF program echoing ALA President-Elect Barbara Ford's theme of "Local Touch, Global Reach." Peggy also reported that the Notable Documents Committee urgently needs nominations (at this late stage, titles alone are acceptable) of broad-appeal, general interest international documents e-mail her as soon as possible at [jobem@spot.colorado.edu](mailto:jobem@spot.colorado.edu) (<mailto:jobem@spot.colorado.edu>) .
6. Rare and Endangered Government Publications Committee--Liaison Mike McCaffrey-Noviss, pointing out that the Committee will not meet until Sunday morning, reported that its chief focus at this Conference is the SERIAL SET preservation/future issue. Brief discussion of potential IDTF interest in rare and endangered documents revealed that many of those present do have substantial--if mostly non-electronically cataloged--collections of League of Nations documents. These may be "riper" than ever for preservation, particularly with potential renewed interest in them. [Other related discussion appears under "New Business."]
7. Ad Hoc Committee on the GODORT Web Presence--Liaison Mike McCaffrey-Noviss reported that, when the Committee meets on Monday, it will discuss a [permanent or "proper"] home for the site. Establishment of Web publication guidelines, to be overseen (ultimately) by the GODORT Publications Committee and appointment by that committee of a GODORT Web administrator.
8. ALA International Relations Committee--Liaison Rosemary Allen Little reported, inter alia, that internationalism is to be a major theme of ALA President-Elect Barbara Ford's tenure. The U.S. Information Agency is ending its Library Fellows program as of fiscal 1998 and the Committee passed a resolution on "Human Rights and Freedom of Expression." This resolution will go on to the Intellectual Freedom Round table, and finally to ALA Council. [For further action relating to this resolution, see "New Business."]

#### 4. *Old Business*

1. Thanks to Helen Sheehy (who also thanked Sandy Peterson and Marian Shaaban) for drafting the letter expressing GODORT concerns about continued access to EU information (especially via a website created in conjunction with the 1996 Intergovernmental Conference at the European Parliament in Brussels). The letter, from GODORT Chair Andrea Sevetson, was sent on January 7, 1997, to M. Claudio Guida, Head, Information Relays and Networks, at the Parliament. Although Helen and Andrea have been advised by Barbara Sloan of the UN to reiterate these concerns in much stronger terms, it was decided to wait for a response to the first letter (until ALA Annual in June, if need be), before taking further actions.
2. Darlene Montgomery of CIS reported that the new, second edition of the GUIDE TO OFFICIAL PUBLICATIONS OF FOREIGN COUNTRIES, edited by Gloria Westfall, should be published this summer. It contains a wealth of new material, including two new subject categories Gloria has added: Environment, and Human Rights and the Status of Women. The book will be jointly marketed with last year's new GUIDE TO COUNTRY INFORMATION IN INTERNATIONAL GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATION PUBLICATIONS, edited by Marian Shaaban (the book has been selling "very nicely"). Marian reiterated the need to work with CIS to carry out the distribution of up to 300 free copies of the newer GUIDE to less-developed countries (a list of same will be double-checked with Al Kagan). Also from CIS, the new, seventh edition of DIRECTORY OF GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS COLLECTIONS AND LIBRARIANS (edited by immediate past IDTF Secretary Marianne Ryan Kapfer) is now outnew editorial matter includes URLs for library or departmental home pages, and more detailed indexing of depositories' country-specific holdings.
3. Wrap-up discussion of Helen Sheehy's and Al Kagan's participation in the August 1996 IFLA Conference in Beijing highlighted their successful program (Al moderated, Helen presented, along with two others) on "Access to Human Rights Information." Attendees included 60 Chinese librarians. The presentations are to be published in DTTP (possibly the June 1997 issue). Some official censorship of certain documents from Geneva deemed to be "against Chinese law" was encountered, along with major bandwidth problems; similar experiences are not anticipated when IFLA meets next, in Copenhagen (8/31-9/5/97). At that Conference, IFLA's Government Information and Official Publications Section (GIOPS, of which Helen is Secretary) hopes to present a program on G-7 initiativesa Pre-Conference on national statistical organizations is also planned. As yet, IFLA programs have dealt very little, if at all, with such issues as electronic information dissemination, fee versus free, and preservation. Finally, Helen also discussed a projected new edition of the "Directory of Government Information Specialists" working in the international community. This work, which was last updated in 1990, is to be primarily Web-based--although a paper edition will also be produced.
4. Regarding the IDTF's recently-revived Agency Liaison Program, Duncan distributed the following documents on behalf of Program Coordinator Mercedes Sanchez (who was unable to attend the meeting): "List of Liaisons With Organizations (as of February, 1997)"a substantially-detailed, six-

page "Program [progress] Report" to the IDTF and "Most Frequently Asked Questions" about the program. There are currently 17 liaisons covering 22 agencies/IGOs, foreign governments, or commercial publishers.

5. IDTF Webmaster Mike McCaffrey-Noviss distributed printouts from the ever-growing IDTF home page. He reiterated that visitors are welcome to download the .TXT versions of such pages as the alphabetical list of hot links to international organizations (<http://www.library.nwu.edu/govpub/idtf.igo.html> (<http://www.library.nwu.edu/govpub/idtf.igo.html>)) to use on their own homepages (all the HTML coding is retained after downloading). He also hopes to continue to bring more small, rare, and "unusual" sites to the IDTF pages. As founder/ owner of the INTL-DOC listserv, Mike reported that it is now just 8 shy of 300 subscribers, and he has heard unofficially from persons at the UN that they would like to see the list become the official site for communications/announcements about UN information. Mike also distributed a printout introducing "Govhoo!" This new, experimental Web site (a "learning project") for Mike and other Northwestern University webmakers, and not yet publicly available) is using Oracle software to build a forms-based, sophisticated yet easily-searchable, relational database of the Web sites of foreign governments, IGOs, and NGOs (that is, *not* their individual electronic publications, or Web versions of print publications). Subsequent plans include encompassing subnational units and links to related "fourth world" (i.e., fringe) sites, and developing a base of contributors. Any and all comments are invited now, as well.

## 5. *New Business*

1. Erminio D'Onofrio reported that there has been no further word concerning the proposal, first announced at the UN program at ALA Annual last July, to close the UN's Dag Hammarskjold Library. (The cessation of UNDOC, also foretold then has now become reality the Library does hope to reinstitute the index in some form, though.) Peter Hajnal reported that he and the Head of the Department of Information Studies at the University of the West Indies were engaged to conduct an assessment of the Library, following a UN General Assembly Committee on Information initiative. He cannot discuss their completed report, which is UN property. The Committee will review the report in May, after which it can be made public. It can be stated now, though, that there is no recommendation to abolish the Library. Moreover, its Web site has been greatly enriched of late, and it now includes an excellent new search engine, UN-I-QUE. In recognition of this accomplishment, and continuing concerns about access to and indexing of UN documents, the question of whether GODORT should write a letter to the UN resulted in the IDTF's passage of the following motion, authored by Erminio, to be brought to the GODORT Business Meeting: Ask the Chair of GODORT to write a letter to the appropriate UN bodies to express gratitude for their implementation of the UN-I-QUE search engine on their Web site to encourage them in their approach to further electronic access to UN information and to express concern about long-term access to UN publications and documents. The IDTF also passed a motion to ask the GODORT Chair to write a letter to the Center for Research Libraries concerning their acquisition of the New York Public Library's collection of the

official gazettes of foreign countries, and whether the Center intends to continue the microfilming program of those highly preservation-worthy, "rare and endangered" newsprint documents, that the NYPL and the Library of Congress have long carried out together. (Also unknown is whether LC will sustain its part in this endeavor.) Mary Gay Anderson composed the motion, which was brought to the GODORT Business Meeting: Ask the Chair of GODORT to write a letter of inquiry to the appropriate office at the Center for Research Libraries concerning the future of the transferred foreign countries' official gazettes microfilming program, formerly managed jointly by the New York Public Library and the Library of Congress. Specifically, what are CRL's plans for continuing to acquire and microfilm these documents, and providing access to them? Also, what roles, if any, will the NYPL or LC continue to play in this heretofore cooperative project?

2. The best ways by which to "institutionalize" GODORT line- item budgetary support for its (and, of course, ALA's, as well as an individual's home institution's) enjoyment of the benefit of having representation at the expensive, usually rather far-flung IFLA Conferences were discussed. Pertinently, certain CIS publications, royalties for which significantly enhance GODORT's treasury, directly owe their existence to the IDTF. A motion passed that Duncan propose [at Tuesday's Second Steering Committee meeting] that GODORT add a line item to the budget setting aside up to \$1,500 in matching funds to help defray the expenses of IFLA Conference registration and attendance for the GODORT member who attends and participates.
3. Following up from Rosemary's Liaison Report for the ALA International Relations Committee, the IDTF members agreed that GODORT should endorse in principle the Resolution on Human Rights and Freedom of Expression of the ALA International Relations Committee.
4. Mike McCaffrey-Noviss announced still more Northwestern University international documents projects: (1) League of Nations Committee of Enquiry Into a European Union documents (published 1931-1936) are being scanned to create a Web site and (2) a "CIS-level" index of League of Nations statistical publications is being developed. Formal announcements of these initiatives will soon appear on the INTL-DOC listserv.
5. Helen Sheehy announced that Penn State colleague Melissa Lamont is working with a group of GIS (geographic information systems) students who want to use ArcView software to create maps of individual countries' UN voting records on Passed and Failed Resolutions. The students would like to find electronic sources of this information. Peter Hajnal recommended the Peace Research Institute, in Ontario, as a potential source.

#### 6. *News From the Field*

Peter Van Leeuwen (Readex) reported that a beta version of the new Web version of the UNITED NATIONS INDEX should be completed by the end of this March and an April product release is expected. Pricing will be based on that for the CD-ROM edition of the index. Following an earlier motion to extend the meeting to

4:30, it adjourned in fact at 4:26 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Oppenheim