

International Relations Committee Report to Council  
February 2, 2015  
Submitted by Loida Gracia-Febo, Chair

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## **IFLA Report**

IRC welcomed IFLA President-elect Donna Scheeder, who provided the Committee with an update on IFLA activities.

IFLA unveiled the [Lyon Declaration On Access to Information and Development](#) at its Congress last August. The Declaration positions libraries and information as foundations to success across the United Nations Post 2015 Development Goals. ALA Council approved ALA becoming a signatory to the Declaration at the Annual Conference in Las Vegas. There are now over 500 signatories to the Declaration. IFLA is attending monthly meetings in New York to help ensure the Post 2015 Development Goals recognize the importance and value of access to information as necessary to being successful in achieving the goals.

IFLA continued its efforts at the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) to push for a treaty on exceptions and limitations for libraries. Unfortunately, no progress has been made as there is opposition, especially from the European Union, for the need for such a treaty. IFLA will be working with European library associations to try to change the EU's position.

IFLA continues to be pleased with how their [Trends Report](#) has been received since its release two years ago. 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 democratize 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.
- New technologies will transform the global information environment.

President-elect Scheeder's presidential focus will be "Change the Agenda," building off the Trends Report.

## **ALA at IFLA Congress in Lyon**

ALA President Courtney Young led a very strong delegation of ALA members to the IFLA World Library and Information Congress in Lyon, France, last August. In Lyon, President Young signed an agreement for a three-year partnership with the German umbrella library organization, BID, to begin in 2016. In addition to a presence at each other's conferences, exchanges, joint webinars, and other activities are possibilities. In addition to the many ALA representatives serving on IFLA Committees, five ALA members currently serve on the IFLA Governing Board. ALA's exhibit booth was again one of most visited.

International interest in RDA remains strong, and the IFLA Congress provided an opportunity for continued discussions on new translations.

### **IFLA Nominations for 2015-2019**

The International Relations Office would like to thank all the various ALA units for bringing forward qualified candidates for consideration for nomination to IFLA Section Committees for 2015-2019. The IRC spent the late fall and early January reviewing candidates for recommendation to the ALA Executive Board.

### **IFLA Congress in Columbus 2016**

ALA is a member of the IFLA 2016 National Committee. Promotion for Columbus kicked off here at Midwinter with a Columbus Booth. The National Committee met to continue its planning efforts. The National Committee co-chairs are Carol Diedrichs, Ohio State University, and Patrick Losinski, Columbus Metropolitan Library System. Jim Neal will serve as co-chair of the fundraising effort for fellowship to attend the Congress.

### **SIBF-ALA Library Conference**

ALA's first SIBF-ALA Library Conference, held during the Sharjah International Book Fair in Sharjah United Arab Emirates in November, was a huge success. The two-day conference attracted over 500 attendees from 24 countries in the region and beyond. President Courtney Young was the keynote presenter. ALA staff met with Sharjah leadership here at Midwinter to begin planning for the next conference this fall.

### **ALA FIL Free Pass Program to the Guadalajara Book Fair**

For the 17<sup>th</sup> year, ALA partnered with the Guadalajara Book Fair to assist members involved in Spanish-language material collection to attend the Book Fair at the end of November 2014. One hundred and twenty five members from 22 states and DC participated. ALA Past-President John Berry organized a delegation of library school students from Dominican University to be part of the program.

### **IRC/IRRT Mentoring Pilot**

The IRC and the IRRT have created an international mentoring program to assist newer librarians interested in getting involved internationally with mentors. The pilot program included 25 member mentees matched with mentors from the IRRT, the IRC, and the IRC Geographic Subcommittees.

### **Continued International Interest in Declaration for the Right to Libraries**

International interest in the *Declaration for the Right to Libraries* remains strong. During the Philippine Library Association Conference this fall, over 200 librarians signed the Declaration.

### **IRC Supports Letter on United Nations Depository Library Program**

The IRC supports GODORT'S efforts to have ALA send a letter to the United Nations asking for more clarification on its plans related to the *Depository Libraries Program*. Since Superstorm Sandy three years ago, the Library of Congress and other Depository Libraries in the United States and elsewhere have received very few documents. The United Nations needs to assure the library community of the UN's commitment to openness, transparency, and long-term preservation of its information. ALA will work with IFLA to set up a meeting with IFLA and ALA representatives in mid-February to discuss this important issue.

## **Resolution Denouncing the Recent Attack on *Charlie Hebdo* and Other Attacks on the Freedom of Expression**

The IRC was pleased to work jointly with the IFC on the Charlie Hebdo Resolution, which the IFC is bringing to Council.

## **Resolution on ALA Divestment from Caterpillar, Hewlett-Packard, and Motorola Solutions**

The IRC discussed the resolution and decided not to endorse.

## **Resolution on the Destruction of Libraries and Schools in Gaza in 2014**

The IRC discussed the resolution but did not take action to endorse.

## **UNESCO 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Recognition**

ALA is a member of the U.S. National Commission of UNESCO. Fred Stielow is serving as the ALA Commissioner. UNESCO was founded in 1945. For 70 years it has helped to foster collaboration among the nations through education, science, and culture to further universal respect for justice, for the rule of law and for the human rights and fundamental freedoms for the peoples of the world, without distinction of race, sex, language or religion.

A key focus of UNESCO now is the advancement of education around the world, freedom of expression, including a free and open internet and media sector, the sharing of scientific knowledge, and cultural understanding through the preservation of world heritage, and intercultural dialogue.

The IRC would like to ask Council to recognize UNESCO on its 70th Anniversary by recognizing UNESCO's 70 years of achievement and urging Congress to approve the national interest waiver so the United States can again pay its dues, and become a fully functioning member of UNESCO. With this resolution, we urge the continued efforts Council approved in 2013 to get the United States to again pay its dues to UNESCO to help strengthen the ability of UNESCO to be able to fulfill its mission.

### **[Action Item]**

#### ***Resolved*, that the American Library Association (ALA):**

- 1. recognizes UNESCO's 70 years of achievement, as well as encourages its members to join in support of anniversary activities; and**
- 2. continues to urge Congress to approve the national interest waiver so the United States can again pay its dues, and become a fully functioning member of UNESCO.**

***This resolution was adopted by the ALA Council on Tuesday, February 3, 2015***

**Resolution Recognizing and Supporting United Nations, Educational, Scientific,  
and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) on Its 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

Whereas the United Nations, Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) was founded amidst devastation in 1945 with the purpose to contribute to peace and security by promoting collaboration among the nations through education, science and culture in order to further universal respect for justice, for the rule of law and for the human rights and fundamental freedoms for the peoples of the world, without distinction of race, sex, language or religion;

Whereas UNESCO has for 70 years promoted the advancement of education around the world, freedom of expression, including a free and open internet and media sector, the sharing of scientific knowledge, and cultural understanding through the preservation of world heritage and intercultural dialogue;

Whereas ongoing examples are the Memory of the World Program, Information for All Program, and the International Program for the Development of Communication, whose project priorities are freedom of expression and media pluralism;

Whereas ALA maintains ongoing relationships through its position on the U.S. National Commission for UNESCO;

Whereas ALA Policy 51 (Federal Legislative Policy) specifically recognizes the need for the United States to be a member of UNESCO for the development of libraries in the United States and around the world;

Whereas the United States currently does not have a right to vote in the UNESCO General Conference for failure to pay its dues; and

Whereas ALA passed a resolution, CD#18.2, at Midwinter 2013 supporting the request by the State Department to Congress for a national interest waiver that will allow the United States to pay its dues to keep its vote in UNESCO and advocate for shared values globally through full participation in UNESCO projects; now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, that the American Library Association (ALA), on behalf of its members:

1. recognizes UNESCO's 70 years of achievement, as well as encourages its members to join in support of anniversary activities; and
2. continues to urge Congress to approve the national interest waiver so the United States can again pay its dues, and become a fully functioning member of UNESCO.

Adopted by the Council of the American Library Association  
Tuesday, February 3, 2015, in Chicago, Illinois



Keith Michael Fiels  
Executive Director and Secretary of the ALA Council