

International NGOs bonding for convergence of Libraries, Archives and Museums

Today in Paris, the International Federation of Library Institutions and Associations (IFLA) and the Bibliothèque nationale de France co-hosted the 1st meeting of international associations for the cultural heritage sector to advance the convergence agenda from within the Libraries, Archives, Museums, Monuments and Sites community at non-government organizations (NGO) level. This meeting was initiated by IFLA President, Prof. Dr. Claudia Lux following initial discussions at the 2008 IFLA World Library and Information Congress in Quebec City, Canada, in August.

IFLA, together with the International Council on Archives (ICA), the International Council of Museums (ICOM), the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) and the Co-ordinating Council of Audiovisual Archives Associations (CCAAA) have a longstanding relation of cooperation and now agreed to intensify possibilities of cooperation between their organisations in those areas where libraries, archives and museums have mutual interests and activities.

All parties recognize the mutual benefits of stronger cooperation on the theme of convergence from a strategic, financial and political point of view, and underlined the importance of moving towards a mutual agenda to strengthen advocacy for the role and position of libraries, archives and museums in the knowledge society of today and tomorrow, and to safeguard the world's cultural written, visual, and built heritage.

Areas explored to intensify international cross-sectoral cooperation are: advocating on copyright and intellectual property rights issues; the protection and recovery of cultural heritage worldwide (Blue Shield); preservation and collection security and digitisation (including the aspects of digital continuity, the development of global digital libraries and standards) and information literacy. Improving knowledge dissemination and knowledge sharing, especially in the framework of WIPO (the World Intellectual Property Organization) and UNESCO, are considered important mutual goals. The practical agenda for 2009 that was drawn up during this meeting further indicates the need to define priorities and practical strategies and to set a time frame for future years.

For the coming two years, the Secretariat will be hosted by IFLA, at IFLA Headquarters in The Hague, the Netherlands. The International NGO Working Group on Convergence is strongly supported by several stakeholders, such as the Conference of Directors of National Libraries (CDNL) and the International Council for Scientific and Technical Information (ICSTI).

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Organisations represented at this meeting were:

- The Co-ordinating Council of Audiovisual Archives Associations (CAAAA); www.ccaaa.org
- The International Council on Archives (ICA); www.ica.org
- The International Council of Museums (ICOM); <http://icom.museum/>
- The International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) ; www.icomos.org
- The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA); www.ifla.org

The meeting was attended by the following observers:

- The Conference of Directors of National Libraries (CDNL); www.cdnl.info
- The International Council for Scientific and Technical Information (ICSTI); www.icsti.org