



MLAS Standing Committee Midterm Meeting

Time: Tuesday 19 April 2016, 09.00-17.00

Venue: Riande Granada Hotel, Sala 02 and Sala 01, Panama City, Panama

Participants:

MLAS SC Members:

Alim Garga, Barbara Schleihagen, Jukka Relander, Marian Koren, Mariann Schjeide, Marijana Mišetić, Silvia Stasselová, Randa Al Chidiac, Alicia Ocaso, José-Maria Nogales Herrera

Other observers:

Ana Maria Sanllorenti, Antonio Martin Román, Adriana Cybelle Ferrari, Claudiane Weber, Claudia Patricia Cuevas Saavedra, M. Gabriela Pradenas Bobadilla, Marisol Goyeneche Reina, David Ricardo Ramírez Ordoñez, Lovania Garmendia-Bonilla, José María Nogales Herrera, José Pablo Eduarte-Salazar, Jeffrey Roberto Zúñiga Arias, Miguel Viciado Valdes, María Angela Romero de Arévalo, Saúl Armendáriz Sánchez, Minerva Castro Escamilla, Damaris Tejedor, Eliécer Del Cid, Lilian Maura Tejada, Gustavo Von Bischoffhausen Henriod, Gabriela Francese Ianes, Dorcas Bowler, Marsha M. Major, Glenford Barrera, Ion Cacho, Viviene Kerr-Williams, Jollette Russell, Taina Tranquille, Luc Steve Honore, Selwyn John Rodulfo, Juliet Pauline Glenn-Callender, Jorge Octavio Ruiz Vaca, Wiebke Dalhoff

BSLA trainers:

Adriana Maria Betancur, Dwaymian Brissette, Elmelinda Lara, Ingrid Bon, Jonathan Ernesto Menjivar Pleitez

IFLA President Elect, Governing Board, General Secretary Designate and HQ:

Glòria Pérez-Salmerón, Gerald Leitner, Fiona Bradley, Loida Garcia-Febo

Apologies:

Janice R. Lachance, Judy Brooker, Kelly Moore, Maria Coter, Michael Dowling, Niclas Lindberg, Pascal Sanz, Sabine Stummeyer, Susan Haigh



1. Welcome and Opening (*Barbara Schleihagen, chair*)

The chair Barbara Schleihagen opened the midterm meeting and welcomed all participants, members of the Standing Committee and all observers, members of the LAC associations and IFLA officers, in all 51 persons. She invited them to take the simultaneous translation equipment and to participate actively and contribute to the discussion.

She especially welcomed Glòria Pérez-Salmerón, IFLA president-elect, and Gerald Leitner, IFLA Secretary General Designate, who are active SC participants.

Barbara introduced the agenda and explained that after the lunch time the meeting would continue with only the SC members in the smaller room next door, while the observers would move to another room to the midterm meeting of the LAC Section. She thanked Marijana for covering for Kelly as MLAS secretary, and writing minutes on this occasion.

She invited the participants to introduce themselves and their associations.

2. Apologies for absence (*Marijana Mišetić, temporarily covering Kelly Moore, secretary*)

The secretary received 10 apologies for absence (see above).

3. Approval of the agenda

The agenda was approved as it was proposed. Barbara also asked for some flexibility due to the fact that some participants had multiple duties in MLAS and LAC meetings.

4. Approval of the minutes of the meetings on Saturday, 15 August and Thursday, 20 August 2015 in Cape Town, South Africa

The minutes were approved without changes and with thanks to the secretary Kelly Moore.

5. MLAS annual report 2015 (*Barbara Schleihagen*)

Barbara ran briefly through the MLAS annual report 2015. She emphasized IFLA Strategic Directions and Key Initiatives, and the ways in which every IFLA Section can contribute to them. She explained that the annual report is a framework for all IFLA Sections. It fosters our communication and deals with the plans and outputs of our actions.



The MLAS annual report 2015 identifies the following as the main objectives in the Section's Action Plan: capacity building for SC members, support to IFLA's international and national advocacy initiatives, support to BSLA activities, and broader dissemination of section information.

These objectives were reached through various projects and activities: the joint MLAS and Greek Librarians Association conference in March 2015 in Athens; the MLAS session on *With one voice: your role in building and streamlining (inter)national advocacy* at the 2015 WLIC in Cape Town; lobbying at national and international levels on IFLA priority issues; producing MLAS Guidelines on Communication; and trying to increase MLAS social media presence.

Barbara emphasized the capacity building activities for SC members and the advocacy guidelines as the very basis of all our plans. She invited SC members to inform about international advocacy activities of their associations. The discussion that followed involved several colleagues who highlighted their individual efforts and the efforts of their associations. Alicia Ocaso reported on the meeting *Libraries: motors for change* and the agreement signed with the blind community as its outcome. Silvia Stasselová participated in organization of the *Colloquium of library and information experts of the Visegrád Group*. Randa Al Chidiac reported on the joint efforts of the Arabian league. She was invited to Qatar, where she delivered a one-day training on BSLA and IFLA.

After the discussion, SC members approved the MLAS annual report 2015.

6. IFLA Governing Board meetings report (Glòria Pérez-Salmerón, Barbara Schleihagen)

Barbara gave a brief summary of IFLA Governing Board meetings in 2015. She explained that IFLA Governing Board meets at least three times a year. The main concerns of these meetings are to discuss all the important issues in order to decide on further actions. The MLAS chair is an *ex officio* member of the IFLA Governing Board.

Barbara invited IFLA President-Elect Glòria Pérez-Salmerón to inform the participants about the news at IFLA. Glòria explained that *The IFLA Trend Report* inspired much work at IFLA, especially the work on the Strategic Plan and Strategic Directions, to be progressed through a set of Key Initiatives and activities. IFLA is a large organization with many members and the role of Governing Board is not only to decide on IFLA's activities, but also to enable IFLA's members to agree on how to work at the level of the various professional units. She concluded that it is very important to continue to build capacities and follow the Key Initiatives.

Loida Garcia-Febo, a member of IFLA Governing Board and ALP Chair, focused on the Strategic Direction 4: *Capacity Building through professional training*. It concentrates on the promotion of the UN 2030 Agenda and includes also the IFLA leadership and BSLA programmes. It is very important that these activities continue to be organized in various regions in order to strengthen IFLA's presence at the global level and to improve the skills and enhance abilities of IFLA's members to advocate effectively for libraries.

Fiona Bradley explained that IFLA has a number of programmes, among which there is also a leadership programme. We constantly have to pay attention to the actions that should lead us in the future considering the emerging topics like open data, government data, access to information,



and other big issues. Only in that way we can provide better guidance and toolkits. She spoke about Strategic Direction 3: *Cultural Heritage* and its aim to safeguard cultural heritage and various special collections around the world. She invited the participants to register their special collections on the IFLA website, explaining that the confidentiality of data will be protected.

Ingrid Bon, as a member of Literacy and Reading Section, concluded that IFLA must insist on position statements on these important topics since they are both a part of the IFLA strategy and useful political instruments with governments.

Marian Koren suggested that every library association should bear in mind the international and national issues that are important to them and should continue to work with them with the MLAS support.

7. IFLA Presidency report:

7a. President's Meeting report, 4-6 April 2016 in Toronto, Canada

Loida Garcia-Febo briefly reported on the IFLA President's Meeting *Call to Action: building the change agenda for the information profession*, held in Toronto (4-6 April 2016) which she attended. After each panel there was a very good discussion on all topics. The presentations are available on the website of the conference (<http://www.librarystrategiesintl.com/program.html>).

7b. President-elect activities (Glòria Pérez-Salmerón)

President-Elect Glòria Pérez-Salmerón informed about her programme and preparations for her mandate. Her idea is to intensify collaboration with New Professionals Special Interest Group in order to work on the change of mindset. Glòria believes that IFLA's mission is clear and ambitious: empowering libraries to enable their user communities to have equitable access to information. Her motto will be *Libraries: drivers of change* and will focus on the positive change and positive transformation of society under the impact of libraries. She hopes that young people will help her to lead the discussion and also to produce her abstract in all official languages of IFLA. Glòria expressed her delight about the meetings in Panama City.

Barbara also expressed her enthusiasm about the fantastic development by which there will be a new president from a Spanish speaking country. According to her, IFLA was very successful in the last ten years, with the great Secretary General Jennefer Nicholson, and also thanks to the work of Fiona Bradley, Stuart Hamilton and all other IFLA HQ staff.

But as all growing institutions, IFLA needs a new development and a new structure, and has to analyse all its external and internal moments. Therefore Barbara invited Gerald Leitner, the Secretary General Designate to announce some of his plans regarding the challenges and emerging issues for libraries and IFLA.



Gerald spoke about three global facts that affect human lives, society in general and libraries as well. They are: the rapid development of information and media market, the current economic crisis, and the globalization of trade and trade agreements. These are very important challenges that affect libraries and library associations all over the world on all levels (local, national, global). That's why we need global answers and global activities. As possible answers he suggests: first of all, global discussion on the libraries, their activities and their future; then joint forces and strategies; and finally, global decisions and actions. We need to create an action plan also based on discussions with IFLA membership and we have to make it all together. We'll have to stick together in the coming years, and it is also a big challenge for IFLA.

A question was raised as to how libraries can document what they really mean to the society, and how decision makers can understand that investing in libraries has positive impact on the society. Jukka Relander asked Gerald whether IFLA had data on the economic value of libraries. Gerald replied that IFLA still lacks real and comprehensive data on that topic. Mariann Schjeide mentioned a survey on the economic value of libraries conducted in Norway and England. Marian and Fiona noted that the IFLA Statistics and Evaluation Section collects data on the topic to make the case.

Claudia Patricia Cuevas Saavedra reminded that libraries collect data and have statistics that serve different purposes, one of which is to help create strategies. IFLA has a great impact on the libraries on the global level and on national library associations as well. The topic of the economic value of libraries and investing in libraries will certainly become more and more important in the coming years.

8. IFLA advocacy issues updates:

8a. Advocacy Programme (IAP) (Fiona Bradley)

This agenda item was taken off the agenda at the request of Fiona Bradley.

8b. UN 2030 Development Agenda (update from IFLA and from SC members on actions taken in their countries) (Fiona Bradley and all SC members)

Fiona spoke about strategic measures and indicators to measure the progress towards IFLA's targets and priorities (reading and literacy, access to information, preservation of cultural heritage, and capacity building). Indicators should provide a more holistic approach and should be created in cooperation with other organizations interested in common goals (e. g. UN Statistical Commission). International advocacy is important, not only to promote libraries within the UN 2030 development agenda on the global level but also on the national level, because it helps to define the goals in national development documents and plans and also to create national measures and indicators for promoting equitable access to information and knowledge and for providing a sustainable long-term information environment.



Barbara reported on the situation in Germany and ways in which German libraries contribute to sustainable development issue and copyright issue. The German Library Association is engaged in consultations with the government in order to raise the importance of libraries in the national plan.

According to Mariann Schjeide, the biggest challenge in Norway is, surprisingly enough, the digital divide. Norwegian society is rich and inclusive and Norwegians can afford expensive electronic devices. Nevertheless, by buying the devices they don't get the digital competences in the package. Other groups which need particular attention and support are immigrants and refugees. For all of them, government recognizes that libraries are the best place to learn how to participate digitally.

Silvia informed about the visit of the UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon to Bratislava University Library which holds a valuable special collection – Bašagić's collection of Islamic manuscripts. His visit was an opportunity for Slovak politicians to raise awareness about the importance of libraries for national and global culture.

Alicia reported on a cluster of professional associations in Uruguay that engaged in a social dialogue and participate in a huge project of social care.

Jukka informed that Finnish librarians are engaged in lobbying because of a new library law in Finland. Libraries are considered active, relevant, and important institutions in the Finnish society. Their good reputation was proved recently, during the Europe's migration crisis, when migrants who entered the country were given library cards together with their migrant documents.

Alim Garga informed about the advocacy campaign in Cameroon, supported extensively by media, by which they tried to change the governmental perception of libraries and the general perception of libraries in Cameroonian society as well. That's why Fiona's visit had great importance to Cameroonian librarians. The future plan is to spread the campaign to all African Francophone countries.

A question was raised as to what other opportunities IFLA could develop to support initiatives and an advocacy agenda for African libraries. Silvia said that libraries as publishers could be one of the possible answers to increase book production in Africa, and noted that the IFLA Section on Acquisition and Collection Development will organize an IFLA satellite conference, *Libraries as Publishers: building a global community*, in August 2016.

8c. Global Libraries Data Atlas (Fiona Bradley)

According to Gerald, library associations should focus on two points: the data that they already collect, and the data that they don't collect but would be useful to have. Fiona made a presentation of the Global Libraries Data Atlas (<https://www.glatlas.org/>).

The Global Libraries initiative is financed by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation in order to provide access to information through technology in public libraries. The Global Libraries Data Atlas is designed to be a global data hub and advocacy tool for libraries. The Atlas was developed as a pilot project to collect and display data on libraries around the world. At the moment the data refers to 17 countries. The Atlas is supported by IFLA, ALA (Public Library Association) and the University of



Washington. The expected partners of the Global Libraries Data Atlas are ministerial bodies and agencies responsible for public libraries. All library associations are strongly encouraged to become involved in the pilot project to expand the atlas. Marian informed that in Europe the data were collected on several levels: on the level of EBLIDA, NAPLE, and Public Libraries 2020 programme.

In the discussion Barbara explained that in Germany it was considered useful to collect data especially about users, but they still lack the impact figures. Marian added that data collecting should refer to various areas, such as activities, digital skills, understanding of users' needs, and marketing. Marijana described the situation in Croatia. Croatian public libraries do collect the data on various activities, as the National Institute of Statistics, National Library and Ministry of Culture also do, but still lack deeper sense of how to make better use of the collected data (not to be collected only for the sake of collecting). Also in Croatia libraries still need an acceptable method to prove and document how various library activities can turn into positive impact on the Croatian society.

SC members thanked Fiona for her presentation and showed interest to learn more about the Global Libraries Data Atlas by signing up for its website.

8d. E-Books (*Barbara Schleihagen*)

Barbara made a short introduction about the IFLA e-Lending workshop organized in February. Detailed country reports, impacts of models, IFLA e-Book principles, plans and timeline were sent to SC members as a part of the MLAS midterm meeting materials.

Jukka, representing EBLIDA at this workshop, explained that the situation is most critical at the moment. There are a lot of things going on and we have to be active, because librarians are the guardians of people's rights. He thinks that we should be better informed in order to react and plan actions. He reminded SC members that the limitations in favour of libraries are essential for access to information and knowledge.

Barbara suggested watching out for more information on the IFLA website, since IFLA is engaged in the e-Lending survey in order to collect data that could illustrate the situation on the global level. She also informed that in May 2016 the e-Lending group would meet EU authorities and discuss the issue.

9. MLAS Communications update:

9a. MLAS Information Coordinator's report (*Michael Dowling*)

Since Michael unfortunately couldn't come, Barbara initiated a discussion repeating that we should do more about MLAS social media presence.



Jukka replied that there are too many announcements so that one has to prioritize. According to Mariann, it is easier to communicate using Facebook and it would be easy if we could have some information regarding our activities on Facebook, although she agrees that it is true that we are all overcrowded with information.

Antonio Martin Román emphasized the power and potential of videos and images and transversal social networks. Gloria argued that IFLA wants a useful web that could spread different messages to various audiences.

According to David Ricardo Ramírez Ordoñez, social media are useful because they don't represent one platform, and that's why they can be used by diverse population. He wouldn't opt for only one tool.

Dwaymian Brissette supported David's comments on the diverse nature of users and their communication through diverse platforms but emphasized the need to use social media because of the main imperative of our time, and it is connectivity.

LAC SC members agreed that social media were very useful while organizing these meetings. They consider social media to be a platform for communication with IFLA. For them, social media are very important because their reality is, as they stated, far from that of the European countries. They expect IFLA representatives to start communication on the central level. Then they need someone to resend information as Alicia did for these meetings in Panama, sending issues and agendas so that everybody was informed. Social media proved to be the best way to communicate with their colleagues.

9b. MLAS Blog (*Jukka Relander*)

It was agreed that Jukka will no longer develop a blog, as the communication will move to Facebook and Twitter.

9c. MLAS Facebook and Twitter (*Barbara for Niclas Lindberg*)

After the launch of MLAS presence on social media platforms last summer, Barbara will ask Niclas and Mariann to continue to work on it.

9d. Communications checklist for library associations (*Marian Koren*)

Since running a library association is not an easy job, especially if you are a volunteer, Marian stressed that MLAS is concerned about how to help library associations in their work. IFLA produced a number of different guidelines, but the lack of some basic assumptions on communication is felt in the everyday work of library associations. Communication is crucial to the success of every library association as it enables library associations to define strategies and plans,



develop skills and build capacities. Communication is essential for dealing with various target groups (membership, stakeholders, sponsors, general public).

A special type of communication is related to advocacy. There's no advocacy without communication, and advocacy cannot rely only on personal skills. That's why library associations develop various tools for communication and advocacy. MLAS engaged in creating a communication checklist for each occasion library associations encounter (training, meetings, activities, tasks). Marian and other colleagues will continue their work on communication checklist for library associations.

More information is available in the materials prepared for the MLAS midterm meeting under the item 9d.

10. MLAS Finance update (*Marian Koren*)

Marian reported that there is no new information regarding MLAS finances.

11. Special Interest Groups updates:

11a. New Professionals Special Interest Group (*written report by Maria Violeta Bertolini*)

The report was noted with thanks.

11b. Women, Information and Libraries Special Interest Group (*written report by Mathilde Koskas*)

The report was noted with thanks.

12. Plans for MLAS Session at IFLA conference, 13-19 August 2016 in Columbus, United States (*Barbara Schleihagen*)

Barbara informed SC members that she discussed a programme with Kelly and Fiona. A draft programme can be found in the materials.

The programme will focus on UN sustainable development goals. Fiona can give introduction and then representatives of several library associations can discuss how they contributed to sustainable development goals. So far the contribution of Cameroon (Alim Garga) and Russia (Irina Gayshun) has been agreed.



During the discussion it was suggested that Alicia and Mariann speak about the contribution of their countries and their library associations, and also a colleague from Jamaica could give examples of what is happening in their area. It was agreed that Barbara would send an updated draft, with other contributions as well.

13. Plans for MLAS Session at IFLA conference, August 2017, Wroclaw, Poland (*all SC members*)

The idea was to develop the programme in collaboration with other groups. During the discussion the following topics were proposed: solidarity, refugees (with Public Libraries Section), multiculturalism, libraries and civil society, freedom of expression and weakening of civil society, legal challenges of civil society. The topic will be further discussed at the section meeting in August. Jukka agreed to write a draft programme as basis for this discussion.

14. Plans for MLAS satellite meeting at IFLA conference, August 2017, Wroclaw, Poland (*all SC members*)

Barbara informed SC members about the possibilities to organize a MLAS satellite meeting at IFLA conference in Wroclaw (August 2017). The Polish National Committee compiled a list of institution offering to host such meetings. If SC members are willing to organize it, a prompt action is required and we should apply right now.

After the discussion it was decided that MLAS would not organize a satellite meeting at IFLA conference in Wroclaw (August 2017).

15. Plans for midterm meeting in 2017: venue and programme

Gerald is busy developing a programme for the discussion of a common vision for the libraries in which MLAS should play a prominent role. Still there is no decision about the venue.

During the discussion Marian emphasized the importance of the eight UN Millennium Development Goals. She emphasized the role of libraries in achieving these goals focusing on the people and their needs, and putting them at the forefront of library action. For libraries that implies looking at their activities from the point of view of users. She also suggested that MLAS should engage in training members how to deal with and develop a common vision of libraries as drivers of positive social change.

16. MLAS action plan 2015-2016 (*Barbara Schleihagen*)

MLAS action plan 2015-2016 focuses on the following objectives: broader dissemination of section information, support to BSLA activities, capacity building for SC members, support to IFLA's international and national advocacy initiatives. In order to achieve these objectives, SC members



will: participate in BSLA training, try to increase social media presence, organize a midterm meeting in Panama City and a session in Columbus, and engage in lobbying at national and international levels on IFLA priority issues (reading and literacy, access to information, preservation of cultural heritage, and capacity building). The MLAS Action plan also defines main tasks, responsibilities and timeline.

After the discussion Barbara invited SC members to send her an e-mail if they wanted to include also other activities in the plan.

17. Any other business

Referring to IFLA's document on public lending right, which mentions remuneration for lending in public libraries, Alicia informed SC members that public lending right worries LAC SC members. In Latin America free lending is sacred. Barbara replied that she would take note that remuneration for lending in public libraries is a problem for some countries, although IFLA document implies that the government, and not the library, provides for the remuneration. She will contact the chair of CLM and discuss the matter with him.

Randa reminded SC members of the situation with the library associations in the Middle East. It is known that there are restrictions in organizing the library associations in some countries but what bothers her even more is that the existing library associations are inactive or not active enough. Marian suggested that IFLA should find at least one contact person for a country or for a region and work also with national libraries in dealing with similar problems. Silvia said that IFLA should also think about a position of IFLA ambassadors, who could also help.

18. Closing remarks (*Barbara Schleihagen*)

The chair thanked all members for their active participation in discussions, and Marijana for the minutes. She closed the meeting at 16:45 hrs.

For the minutes:

Barbara Schleihagen, chair

Marijana Mišetić, acting secretary