ASIA AND OCEANIA SECTION
ANNUAL REPORT 2002

SCOPE STATEMENT
The goal of the Regional Section of Asia and Oceania (RSAO) is to represent the Asia and Oceania region within the IFLA divisional structure and promote the interests of countries in the region to meet the objectives of IFLA. The Committee carries out its responsibilities by facilitating and developing activities that assist the development of library and information services and the library profession in the region.

MEMBERSHIP
In 2002, the Section had 343 members. It was the third largest section out of a total of 37 sections of IFLA and was outranked only by the University Libraries Section and the Information Technology Section.

STANDING COMMITTEE 2001/2003
The Regional Section Committee Asia and Oceania (RSCAO) had 11 members from 10 countries as follows:
Ms. Rashidah Begum bt. Fazal Mohamed, Malaysia (Chair/Treasurer)
Gary Gorman, New Zealand (Secretary)
Ms. Hilda Nassar, Lebanon (Information Coordinator)
Ms. Aree Chuenwattana, Thailand (Member)
Ms. Kalpana Dasgupta, India (Member)
P.E. Harrison Perera, Sri Lanka (Member)
Abbas Hori , Iran, Islamic Republic of (Member)
R. Ramachandran, Singapore (Member)
Ms. Elizabeth C. Reade Fong, Fiji (Member)
Ms. Sun Liping, China (Member)
Zhu Qiang, China (Member)
Special Advisers 2001/2003
Russell Bowden, Sri Lanka
Ms. Olga P. Fetodova, Russian Federation
Ms. Amelia McKenzie,Australia
Shawky M.A.Salem, Egypt
Ms. Maria Lao Sunthara, Thailand

Ex-Officio 2001/2003
Ms. Pensri Guaysuwan (Regional Manager, Asia and Oceania)

ACTIVITIES

Meetings
The Mid-Conference Meeting was held in, Beijing, 7 - 9 March 2002 and was hosted by the National Library of China. It was attended by Ms. Rashidah Begum, Gary Gorman, Ms. Hilda Nassar, Harrison Perera, Lai Yeen Pong (representing R. Ramachandran), Ms. Elizabeth Reade Fong, Ms. Sun Liping, Ms. Aree Chuenwattana, Zhu Qiang, and Ms. Kalpana Dasgupta, This attendance of 91% of the SC members was very encouraging as all except one member were represented. Our colleagues from China also took the opportunity of this meeting to arrange a half day seminar at the Peking University Library in Beijing. Members of the Committee spoke on the topic of IFLA and digital libraries. About 70 librarians from the local community attended the Seminar.

The next 2 meetings were held during the annual conference in Glasgow. They were attended by Ms. Rashidah Begum, Gary Gorman, Ms Hilda Nassar, Harrison Perera , R. Ramachandran, Ms. Sun Liping, Ms. Aree Chuenwattana, and Ms. Kalpana Dasgupta. The 8 members who were present at the Conference meetings represented 73% of the SC members. More than 20 other IFLA participants from within and outside the Asia/Oceania countries attended the Conference meetings as observers.

The Chair and Secretary of the Section also attended Division VIII Coordinating Board meetings held during the Conference as well as the ALP Advisory Committee meeting at Uppsala University Library, 10-15 October 2002 to evaluate the ALP projects and plan the activities for the coming two years.

The Chair of the Section in her position as Chair of the Division VIII Coordinating Board also attended the IFLA Professional Committee and Governing Board meetings held in March, August and December. The results of deliberations during these meetings
are presented to you in this report.

Strategic Plan 2001 - 2003
The Strategic Plan for the Section was consolidated taking into consideration the needs of the region and the concerns and professional priorities of IFLA headquarters. The plan focuses on human resource development, developing and strengthening the roles and infrastructure of Library Associations, promoting standards, guidelines and best practice, and sharing of information and increased collaboration with other IFLA entities. The final plan that was ratified at the first meeting of the SC is as follows:
Goal 1
To provide opportunities for regionally-based education and training in library and information management skills, with emphasis on Information and Communication Technology (ICT) developments.

Actions
1. To select candidates and identify institutions for up to one month's in-service training in collaboration with the Advancement of Librarianship Programme (ALP).
2. To select candidates and identify host institutions for information technology training in collaboration with ALP.
3. To increase the number of recipients receiving in-service training by 25 per cent.
4. To increase the number of recipients receiving IT training by 25 per cent.
5. To organize a minimum of 2 workshops on digital libraries

Goal 2
To enable and encourage Regional Section members to take part in the work of IFLA, and work together with other IFLA Sections and Core Activities to achieve RSCAO objectives in the region.

Actions
1. To identify relevant IFLA Sections for potential collaborative activities.
2. To develop joint activities with a minimum of 2 Sections.
3. To assign RSCAO members as liaison persons with relevant Sections.

Goal 3
To assist in strengthening the effectiveness of library associations in the region.

Actions
1. To facilitate 2 workshops on sharing experiences in library association development.
2. To facilitate networking between 2 existing associations in the region with countries planning to develop associations.

Goal 4
To promote high quality library and information management (LIM) standards and guidelines among countries in the region.

Actions
1. To encourage awareness of existing LIM standards.
2. To facilitate development of national level LIM standards and guidelines
3. To undertake or sponsor the translation of relevant LIM standards and guidelines for a minimum of 2 countries in the region.
4. To facilitate a minimum of 1 workshop or seminar on public library guidelines.

Goal 5
To disseminate and communicate information on library and information management relevant to the region.

Actions
1. To produce the RSAO Newsletter twice per year
2. To update the RSAO brochure
3. To develop and manage an Asia/Oceania listserv
4. To update the RSAO video
5. To improve the communication function of the RSAO website

Training and travel awards
The Committee received 69 applications for the ALP Scholarships in Information Technology (IT) and In-service Training Attachments. Ms. Juharat Nokkaew from Thailand, Ms. Pradnya Yogesh from Mahindra British Telecom Ltd., India, and Ms. Wynn Lei Lei Than from Yezin Agricultural University, Myanmar, received the IT

scholarships, while Ms. Iris Operario from the International Rice Research Institute, Philippines, Ms. Pornthip Somrit from Silpakorn University Library, Thailand, and Ms. Sabitri Baral from Tribhuvan University Library, Nepal, were selected for the in-service training attachments.

In addition to the ALP guidelines, the selections were made based on the quality of the application, and priority was given to applicants without previous training opportunities and from countries where the libraries are not well developed. The recipients also represented a reasonable geographic spread.

The Information Technology program was for the time organized by a new training provider. The program had previously been held in Thailand and India, but due to the increased costs of the providers and the changing needs of library and information professionals, it was agreed that a new provider be identified. The Committee looked at various proposals and the proposal of the School of Information Management at Victoria University of Wellington was accepted. Six participants (including 3 of the 2001 IT scholarship recipients) from India, Sri Lanka, Thailand, China and Myanmar attended the 1 month program which was held from 11 November - 6 December 2002. Besides learning about how IT has made substantial impacts on the services and processes in the areas of collection management, customer, technical, and management services, the participants took part extensively in seminars and classroom work. The program also included visits to 'best-practice' institutions in New Zealand.

Institutions from the region that hosted the in-service training attachments were National Library of Malaysia, Hong Kong University Libraries, and Hong Kong University of Science and Technology Library.

The ALP scholarships have not only provided valuable opportunities to library and information personnel to travel to countries and be exposed to modern and progressive libraries but also helped them acquire new skills. Participants have taken back with them new ideas and practices to implement in their work place, renewed motivation, and established useful contacts with professionals in the host country.

The Committee was asked to assist ALP in reviewing applications for the Danida Grants to attend the IFLA 2002 Conference in Glasgow as the response from librarians from Asia and Oceania was overwhelming. There were about 250 applications from 27 countries in the region. Using the criteria of work experience, involvement in local library association, education, motivation and age, the Committee was able to shortlist a smaller group for further selection. Besides attending the Conference in Glasgow, one of the grantees, Nguyen Huu Nghia , from Vietnam was selected to attend a 4-week in service training at the London School of Oriental and African Studies.

Projects
The Section continued to be involved in many projects. The overall objectives have been to provide training in current professional practices in areas that are relevant to the region. Focus has also been on projects that have an impact well beyond the project and

long after the project is over. We have also tried to achieve this sustainability through a train-the-trainer approach and the production of training materials.

The Indian Library Association with the co-operation of IFLA RSAO conducted 2 *Training Workshops on the Electronic Library* in New Delhi, 14-19 January 2002, and in Mumbai, 24-31 January 2002. These workshops provided an introduction to the electronic library, and, for those who were already familiar with the concept, they learnt new ways of implementing the electronic library. Alan Hopkinson of Middlesex University in London, and Ms. Mirna Willer, Chair of the Permanent UNIMARC Committee, conducted these workshops which were attended by 60 participants. We are grateful to IFLA for securing funding from the US National Commission on Libraries and Information Science to cover the travel and accommodation expenses for the two experts.

The ALP sponsored *Workshop on LIS Curriculum in the Arab Countries* was held in Lebanon, 24-26 June 2002. Over 50 educators teaching library and information science, and librarians from Lebanon and the Arab countries including Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Egypt, Morocco, Syria, Jordan, United Arab Emirates, Iraq and Sudan attended the workshop. As a result of the sharing of experiences and discussions, and understanding of the methodology for developing new programs and evaluating existing ones, workshop participants learnt how create a curricula that was relevant to region and conformed with IFLA and other international standards. One of the outcomes of this Workshop has been the development of new undergraduate and postgraduate curricula in information management in 2 Lebanese universities. An Arabic language manual of curriculum development and evaluation is being prepared. The creation of a regional focal point/clearinghouse for LIS teaching materials in Arabic and Arab expertise in the field is also being explored.

Another ALP sponsored project on *Mekong Regional Network for LIS Training* has also made good progress. More than 200 educators, and library staff from Thailand, Viet Nam, Laos and Cambodia have been involved in focus groups, and workshops to identify the local training needs so that locally-tailored training programs and materials can be developed.   As a results of this project a Greater Mekong Sub-region(GMS) regional training centre is being developed at Mahasarakham University in Thailand and new programs in library and information science are being developed in Vietnam and National University of Laos.

RSCAO approved two new project proposals this year. These were *Information Management Curriculum Development in Viet Nam* from NACESTID in Viet Nam, and the second was a sub-regional seminar on pubic library services in the ASEAN/Asia region on *Changes and Challenges of Public Library Services to Bridge the Digital Divide,* from the Penang State Public Library Corporation in Malaysia.
The Section also received funding from IFLA for the following 3 projects to be carried out in 2003:
1. Chinese translation of the *IFLA/UNESCO School Library Guidelines* by the National Library of China.

2. Update of the video *Librarianship on the Move*   by RSCAO.
3. Publication of the *Pacific Islands Library Directory* by University of Guam.

68th IFLA Council and General Conference, Glasgow
There was a very large presence form Asia and Oceania at the Conference. Four hundred and forty one participants from 32 countries in Asia and Oceania region attended the Conference as and constituted 17% of the full-time participants of IFLA 2002. China had the largest delegation with 111 participants followed by Korea, Japan, Australia and Malaysia. This big presence is a very clear indication of the value of the Conference to librarians from our region.

The Section's Open Session was on *Information Literacy: Building Skills for Lifelong Learning*. Five presentations were made by speakers from Sri Lanka, Thailand, China, and Malaysia. SIDA sponsored one of the speakers, Ms. Li Jingxia from Wuhan Library China. The Section also contributed a speaker for the Division VIII open session which had the theme *Cultural Divide: Impact on Information Society*. Wu Jianzhong from Shanghai Library, China spoke on the *Library's Role In Bridging The Digital Divide: The Case Of Community Libraries In Shanghai*. Both these sessions had good attendance, which ranged from 80 -100 for the former and 200- 250 for the latter.

Another Section activity was a workshop on *Application Of Metadata In Library And Information Services*. This workshop was facilitated by Dan Dorner from the Victoria University of Wellington in New Zealand and Steve Knight from the National Library of New Zealand. Participants examined why and how metadata is used in libraries and information centers and were also introduced to a range of metadata standards such as Dublin Core and the Encoded Archival Description. Fifteen participants attended this workshop.

The Section co-operated with the Roundtable on the Management of Library Associations on a workshop on   *Current Issues And Activities Of Library Associations In Developing Countries*. Speakers from the Congress of Southeast Asian Librarians (CONSAL),   Information Consortium of Kazakhstan Libraries, and the Indian Library Association shared their experiences. An additional informal presentation was done by a representative from the Myanmar Library Association. There were about 35 participants at this workshop.
SC members also participated actively in the brainstorming session with Kay Raseroka, president-elect of IFLA.

Listserv
One of the major milestone in the history of RSCAO took place this year when the listserv RSCAO-L was created. This electronic messaging system which started with 23 names expanded to more than 200 names by the end of 2002. RSCAO-L functions as an avenue to disseminate information on library and information-related activities such as projects, conferences and seminars within and outside the region. It is also a channel to promote contact, communication and dialogue between RSCAO members and librarians and information professionals in the region.

Countries in Asia and Oceania

In December the Governing Board approved the geographic coverage of the Asia & Oceania Section to include the following 62 countries:

Afghanistan, American Samoa, Australia, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, China, East Timor, Fiji, French Polynesia, Guam, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Israel, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kiribati, Korea (Democratic People's Republic of), Korea (Republic of), Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao (People's Democratic Republic), Lebanon, Malaysia, Maldives, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Mongolia, Myanmar, Nauru, Nepal, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Niue, Oman, Pakistan, Palau, Palestinian Authority, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Qatar, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Tonga, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, United Arab Emirates, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Viet Nam, and Yemen.

Publications

Two issues of the *IFLA RSAO Newsletter* were published. About 800 print copies were distributed. The newsletter was awarded the IFLA *Best Newsletter Award* for the year 2002. It was selected for its professional production, excellent coverage of news about the Section, library programs and activities throughout the region and IFLA in general, and its timeliness. The award is a recognition of the priority we have given to disseminating information through the region through the print and electronic media I would like to congratulate Pensri for her commitment and tireless efforts in editing and producing the *Newsletter*. All issues of the *Newsletter* since December 1999 are archived online.

Liaison with other entities

Commendable efforts were made by the Section to establish contacts and develop collaborative activities with IFLA Sections that are most relevant to our objectives and our current strategic plan. At IFLA Glasgow several SC members attended other SC meetings. In addition RSCAO members have been regularly in contact with other Sections throughout the year to seek their participation in projects in the region as advisers, resource persons, speakers and facilitators.

Conclusion

I would like to thank all RSCAO members, for the dedication and commitment with which they have carried out their responsibilities, the Special Advisers for sharing with us the wisdom of their experiences, and the Regional Manager for providing a stable and solid base for our operations. Our thanks also to IFLA and ALP for all the support they have given to our activities, and to all library and information professionals in and outside the region who have been part of our community.

Report prepared by Ms. Rashidah Begum bt. Fazal Mohamed, Chair 2001/2003
IFLA Regional Standing Committee for Asia And Oceania

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Asia and Oceania Section: http://www.ifla.org/VII/s26/index.htm