

**Minutes of the first Reading Section Standing Committee Meeting  
Berlin, August 2, 2003**

**Present: SC Members:**

John Cole; Jérémie Desjardins; Mariétou Diongue Diop; Elke Dreisbach; Gwynneth Evans (secretary); Adele Fasick; Ivar Haug; Jan Martine; Catharina Stenberg (Chair); Briony Train; Maria Vedenyapina; Maureen White; Alec Williams

**Corresponding Members:**

Elsa Ramirez

**Absent with regrets:**

Shirley Fitzgibbons; Bonnie Kunzel

**Visitors:**

Marie-Manuela Cruzeiro; Rania El-Ayat; Rob Sarjant ; Danielle Bouhajib ; Ndeyo Magatte Diop ; Zahra Seifkashani ; Barry Wiebenga ; Eric Weber ; Dramane Konate; Ould Bock Ahmedou Ould Sidina; Marina Novikova; Dato Zawiyah Baba; Qunqing Huang; Mamat Wan Ali Wan; Richard Papile; Al Kagan

1. Introduction of Members and Visitors

After a welcome from the Chair, the members and visitors each introduced themselves. The Section members were pleased to welcome the visitors from a wide number of countries and library settings.

2. Approval of the Agenda

With the addition of discussion of the conference programme for Buenos Aires, the agenda was approved (printed in the July 2003 Newsletter).

3. Minutes of the meetings in Glasgow

The minutes of the two meetings in Glasgow, published in the no. 15 issue (Dec. 2002) of the Newsletter, were approved.

4. Report from the Chair

Catharina Stenberg, the Chair, made her report as follows:

The IFLA Section on Reading has a special responsibility: to give ideas for promoting reading through libraries throughout the world and, at the same time, to use these ideas on the spread of reading to open doors to new interests in learning, other personal experiences, entertainment, active citizenship and more.

At the Glasgow Conference in 2002, the Reading Section chose as its theme: “New Book Policies”. It is an important theme in the sense of quality. Countries with a formally reading and book policy have chosen – normally at the government level – to make books

and reading active instruments to create equality of access to culture and to deepen democracy.

The different aims and approaches to this question were illustrated by papers from Bob Usherwood and J. Eric Davies (UK), Florence Ponce/Françoise Lerouge, (France), Birgitta Modigh (Sweden) and Mariétou Ndongue Diop (Senegal).

The Glasgow Workshop looked at outstanding examples for the promotion of reading with papers from John Cole and Maria Vedenyapina (USA and the Russian Federation) J. Eric Davies and Briony Train (UK).

Catharina Stenberg then explained the call for paper process for identifying and choosing the papers for the Berlin session on “the Impact of the Internet on Reading and Libraries”. The three speakers, Qunqing Huang, Elsa Ramirez and Zahra Seifkashini, were identified and acknowledged. Their papers are already on the IFLANET site for Conference papers. Catharina Stenberg linked this year’s theme with the importance of universal and equitable access to information, ideas and works of the imagination for all peoples, communities and organizations for their social, educational, cultural, democratic and economic well-being, a value endorsed at the first brainstorming session in Glasgow by the IFLA community.

Catharina Stenberg thanked the officers and members for the roles they had played in contributing to the fulfilling of the Strategic Plan for 2002-03.

## 5. Report from the Secretary-Treasurer

Gwynneth Evans first made a report on the first meeting of the Coordinating Board (CB) on Division VII Education and Training, of which the Reading Section is a member. In summary, the IFLA Governing Board and Headquarters have been busy this past year in following up on the Brainstorming Session held by Kay Raseroka in Glasgow and in increasing opportunities for professional development for colleagues in the developing world and advocacy. The World Summit on the Information Society has been emphasized at both the multilateral level and the national levels, because it provides an opportunity for libraries to make known the role they play and can play in the Information Society.

The Green Paper on meeting IFLA priorities and on the future of IFLA activities was published in the Journal and comments were invited. There will be changes to the Conference from 2004 on, because there will be a professional conference planner and the time of the conference will be shortened. Sections will be encouraged to partner with other Sections if they wish to have more than two hours for their programme.

At the Berlin conference, Kay Raseroka is convening a second meeting to which each Section should send at least one but preferably two representatives. As the meeting takes

place at the same time as the Open Session, it was agreed that Gwynneth Evans and Briony Train would represent the group.

Ivar Haug added that he thought it was important to begin thinking about the Conference in Norway in 2005 and the possibility of having a Pre-Conference Seminar with some other sections, such as School Libraries and Information Centres and/or Library Services to Children.

The recommendations of the Social Responsibilities Committee chaired by Al Kagan have been accepted by the Governing Board, amended with additions and sent for implementation to various Sections. The Reading Section was asked to promote literacy programming. The guidelines *Library-based Literacy Programs: Some Practical Suggestions* assist in meeting this recommendation. The English version has been published and will be disseminated at this Berlin conference. The Spanish guidelines are printed in the no. 16 issue of the Newsletter and are on the web site at: <http://www.ifla.org/VII/s33/sr.htm>. The French version has just been completed and will be mounted at the same address. It is important for Section members to promote these guidelines and to find means of using and evaluating them (workshops, presentations etc)

Another recommendation involving the Reading Section is the development of a research program on rural library development in coordination with national library agencies. The focus should be on empowerment of local authorities to process information required by the community in comprehensible formats for diverse rural populations. The tentative theme for Buenos Aires on rural library literacy programmes and the presentation by the Centres de lectures et des activités culturelles support the general theme. These examples do not address the issue of a research programme, however.

Finally, the Secretary General on behalf of the Governing Board has written to the Section Officers to announce that a review of each Section, in light of the mission, objectives, values, and priorities of IFLA, is to be undertaken by the members by 2007.

The Section budget has been used this year to publish copies of the English version of the guidelines (distributed to each member) and to assist with some of the expenses of a conference speaker. The Section is very appreciative of the work and support of the Center for the Book at the Library of Congress in publishing and distributing the Newsletter.

## 6. Reports of the Information Officer and the Newsletter

John Cole reported that there had been two issues of the Newsletter. There is French and Spanish in the latest July 03 issue and information on the UNESCO Decade of Literacy (2003-2012), as well as papers from three persons who submitted proposals to speak in Berlin. The deadlines for the next two issues are: October 15 and May 15.

Adele Fasick said that the guidelines in Spanish were on the web site, and the French version would be up soon. She announced that Briony Train would become Information

Officer. Adele Fasick will continue to be involved with the Section. The Section site is at: <http://www.ifla.org/VII/s33/sr.htm>. The IFLA listserv can also be very useful for keeping abreast of developments.

## 7. Programme for Berlin

As noted, the Section had a call for papers on the theme of the “Impact of the Internet on Reading and Libraries”. 17 proposals were received and reviewed by a team of three; Catharina Stenberg, Adele Fasick and John Cole. Three speakers were chosen for the Open Session on October 6, 2003. They are: Qunqing Huang “Reading Outside the Library: How the Internet has Affected Reading in China”; Elsa Ramirez “ The Impact of the Internet on the Reading Practices of the University Community: the Case of the Autonomous National University of Mexico (UNAM); and Zahra Seifkashani “How the Internet Can Influence the Iranian Readers”. These papers are published in the conference papers for Berlin. Three other papers were printed in the Newsletter.

## 8. Presentation in French by the Centres de lecture et des activités culturelles (CLAC)

Danielle Bouhajeb introduced the Agence intergouvernementale de la Francophonie’s Institut francophone des nouvelles technologies de l’information et de la formation (INTIF) and gave its mission.

L’INTIF a pour objectif de favoriser l’appropriation et l’usage des technologies de l’information dans l’espace francophone. Sa mission principale est de permettre à tous les pays francophones de devenir des acteurs dans le domaine de l’information, en conduisant des actions de coopération autour de trois grands axes : la mise en œuvre de l’insertion de la Francophonie dans la société de l’information, le partage de l’information et de la documentation, la maîtrise des technologies éducatives et la formation à distance.

INTIF’s role is to promote the acquisition and use of ICTs in Francophone countries and areas. Its primary mission is to support all Francophone countries in becoming involved stakeholders in information and in cooperating among themselves around three major axes: the implementation of the French presence in the Information society; the sharing of information and documentation; and the mastery of educational technologies and distance learning.

She then introduced Eric Weber who coordinates the CLAC programme. He reported that: Depuis 1985, l’Agence intergouvernementale de la Francophonie a créé plus de 200 centres de lecture et d’animation culturelle dans 18 pays d’Afrique et de l’océan Indien. Dans des régions où les moyens d’information et de communication sont rares et souvent vacillants, les usagers fréquentent les centres pour s’instruire, s’informer ou se divertir.

Since 1985, the Intergovernmental Agency for the Francophonie has created more than 200 Reading and Animation Centres in 18 countries in Africa and the Indian Ocean. In areas where Information and Communications Technologies are rare and often unstable,

users go to the Centres to learn, to find the information they need themselves and to entertain themselves and have fun.

Eric Weber explained that the programme was supported by the Agence but that each community delivered it according to local needs. He noted that the programme has been developed in 18 countries, where there are nationals responsible for its implementation, and that 14 more countries are asking for it. In most countries there is still need for more local Centres. He observed that the programme fulfills both professional and political roles, as it addresses the issues of literacy and national development, in Southern countries where the rates of illiteracy are high and there are many national languages. He asked his colleagues from Burkina Faso and Mauritania to describe the CLAC activity in their countries.

Messrs. Sidina and Konate reported that in the communities, the CLAC are tied to national development goals and that they have 4 roles. They provide support for: education and training through access to collections of books (generally, 3000 to 8000 volumes, with a lending collection that moves from place to place of about 500 volumes) and serve the young people in school; access to the Internet for information and communication; the promotion of cultural activities with emphasis on the value and importance of local traditions and popular forms of art, music, theatre etc; and community development. The CLACs are directed by a committee of seven, including the mayor. The staff of three (optimally) promotes interest in all spheres of knowledge and work with partners – donors and ngos – to ensure a lively programme of games, theatre, contests etc. They train, provide collections and services and manage the Centre so that rural peoples are part of the Information and Communications society and their right to access to information is upheld. .

Eric Weber believes that there is no other example of such a cooperative, multi-national programme. He said that evaluations had found that, for example, the children using the CLAC were doing very much better in school (2 to 3 times better). In the case of Senegal, the CLAC has been instrumental in promoting health and training in looking after infants. The rate of mortality has declined. The CLAC model has produced impacts that can be measured.

Another issue that was raised was the issue of donated books. It is important for libraries to have policies on gifts because, without them, they can receive materials that are inappropriate to the community (and national) needs.

There followed a discussion about the evaluation of the impact of reading. The progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) of 2001 was mentioned as an initiative of the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (<http://www.iea.nl/iea/hq/>). This topic is of interest as the theme for next year's conference takes shape.

Zawiyah Baba, National Librarian of Malaysia, gave a short introduction to the role of her institution in the promotion of reading. There is a national reading campaign and people read from home, library or school and indicate their favourite book. The National

Library has a data base on literacy and reading. Mrs. Baba offered to translate the guidelines into Malaysian.

Al Kagan came to present the final report of the Social Responsibilities Committee and to ask if the Section members had questions about the recommendations (noted above).

#### 9. Programme for Buenos Aires

The theme for Buenos Aires (August 22-27, 2004) is "LIBRARIES: Tools for Education and Development". It is clear that the Section members wish to discuss issues of interest and pertinence to the host country and region. From the presentations and discussion, the Standing Committee members were invited to reflect on possible topics and partner Sections.

#### 10. Elections

The Chair asked John Cole to take over. He asked for nominations for the office of Chair. Gwynneth Evans' name was put forward by Adele Fasick and seconded by Alec Williams. There being no further nomination, the Chair will be Gwynneth Evans. The call for nominations for Secretary followed. Alec Williams' name was put forward by Adele Fasick and seconded by Briony Train. As there were no further nominations, Alec Williams will be Secretary. These appointments last for two years and it is expected that the officers will be present at the next two conferences. As mentioned previously, Briony Train has agreed to act as Information Officer.

#### 11. Language

While the issue of language was not officially on the agenda, it became clear during the meeting that there was real concern and interest that the Reading Section use more than one of the official IFLA languages. Much of the meeting was conducted in both English and French with members of the Committee acting as Interpreters. It also became evident that the Committee wishes to work as one group. The question of translation (of written documents like minutes) was not finalized.

#### 12. Adjournment

After a full and interesting meeting, the group went to a Chinese Restaurant near the Congress Centre, where John Cole had kindly made a reservation and invited all present to join the members.

Written by **Gwynneth Evans**  
September, 2003

Reading Section homepage: <http://www.ifla.org/VII/s33/sr.htm>

**Minutes of the Second Meeting of the Standing Committee on Reading  
Berlin, August 8, 2003  
8:00-10:00 a.m.**

**Present: SC Members:**

John Cole; J r mie Desjardins; Mari tou Diongue Diop; Gwynneth Evans (secretary); Adele Fasick; Ivar Haug; Jan Martine; Catharina Stenberg (Chair); Briony Train; Maureen White; Alec Williams

**Absent with regrets:**

Elke Dreisbach; Shirley Fitzgibbons; Bonnie Kunzel

**Visitors:**

Danielle Bouhajeb ; Zahra Seifkashani ; Barry Wiebenga ; Dramane Konate; Ould Bock Ahmedou Ould Sidina; Qunqing Huang.

1. Introductions

As all the members and visitors had spent time together during the conference, the introductions were short.

2. Agenda

The agenda was approved as sent (and published in the July 2003 Newsletter).

3. Debriefing on the Open Session

The session attracted about 170 delegates. There was simultaneous translation (SI), a circumstance that pleased the Section, but members did not know in advance. As the Section is keen to promote the use of several IFLA languages, officers will try to persuade staff to give us SI. The Power Point was useful as well. The guidelines on Library-based Literacy Programs was distributed at the session and in a number of different venues throughout the Conference.

The theme of the session was considered to be timely and fascinating. It was suggested that the Section, which also published 3 articles in the July Newsletter, continue to consider the theme and its relevance to the overall mission of supporting literacy, reading and lifelong learning.

4. Discussion of the Programmes at Oslo and Buenos Aires

As Ivar Haug had suggested that the Section consider working with another Section on a pre-conference Seminar in 2005, he had invited Gwynneth Evans to speak with members

of the School and Children's Services sections. Gwynneth Evans met with Anne Clyde, new chair of the School Libraries Section, and both agreed that it would be very timely and useful to have a joint pre-conference seminar.

This recommendation was approved by the members. The chairs will communicate to develop a theme for discussion by the officers and members. They appreciate the support of the Norwegian members of the two sections in making this happen and in acting as liaisons in following up on the possibility that the Minister of Education might be interested in supporting such a conference.

For the Buenos Aires conference, it was agreed that the general theme would be: "Libraries, Languages and Literacy: Linking Continents through Reading Promotion Programmes". This broad theme fits in with the conference theme: LIBRARIES: Tools for Education and Development and President Kay Raseroka's theme of lifelong learning.

The objective is to demonstrate how countries in the North and South or within countries in the developing world work together to support development in local communities. The emphasis will be on programmes that have been in place for some time, for which issues of planning, management, accountability and evaluation can be assessed by the presenters, as well as the panel of experts and the audience. The intent would be to share knowledge, so that further research or the application of the model in different settings might be considered.

Following on some of the discussion of the first meeting, the Section would involve another section and introduce the sense of evaluation or assessment of the experience of programmes from different parts of the world. A panel of experts would be looking for lessons learned; accountability in the management and sustainability of the programmes; impact of the programme on indicators for human development (e.g. school achievement, fewer deaths etc).

It was agreed that there would be a Call for Papers. The Committee will be composed of Briony Train (chair), Catharina Stenberg and Jérémie Desjardins. Elsa Ramirez will liaise with her Latin American colleagues and ensure participation from the region.

## 5. Development of the Strategic Plan for 2004

As there was little time to discuss the four sections of the Strategic Plan, it was agreed that John Cole and Gwynneth Evans would make suggestions for the update and send a DRAFT out to members for comment.

## 6. Section Projects

Members put forward ideas for research and for increasing the usefulness of toolkits to support reading promotion. It was agreed that the Section would try to expand the research methodology and results of the work done by Briony Train in 2001-02 by



finding researchers in the Spanish-speaking world and the Russian Federation to run the survey and to analyse the results. Gwynneth Evans agreed to talk to Elsa Ramirez and Maria Vedenyapina and to see whether some money might be available.

The members also discussed the possibility of identifying the major occasions and celebrations that take place nationally and internationally (e.g. International Literacy Day, World Book Day) and to gather information on how these days are celebrated, what works and does not work, what partnerships have been profitable, how to involve the community, the media and get the attention of decision-makers and funders/donors etc. The objective would be to produce a toolkit of ideas and suggestions that have been successful from different parts of the world, diverse cultures and traditions, so as to share knowledge and increase the sense of collective participation in these events.

The committee to coordinate this activity will be Maureen White, Mariétou Diongue Diop, and Alec Williams.

#### 7. Links with other IFLA Activities

Briony Train and Gwynneth Evans reported briefly in the second brainstorming session where each division was asked to come up with ideas and actions that would address IFLA's priorities and its values. There were also two tables to discuss Indigenous Knowledge and Advocacy as over-arching concerns for the next few years. A report of the session will be published.

#### 8. Adjournment and Thanks

The Chair thanked all members, but especially Adele Fasick for her considerable work and contribution over many years. The Section hopes that she will continue her interest and involvement. John Cole spoke on behalf of the whole Section to thank Catharina Stenberg for her work as chair, her contribution to the promotion of the Section and its membership and her interest in its programming. She too agreed to continue her participation.

Written by **Gwynneth Evans**  
September 2003

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