



Letter from the Chair

Hello Social Sciences Libraries Section!

I hope to see you all at the upcoming IFLA World Library and Information Congress in Helsinki, Finland! Our Social Science Libraries Standing Committee has organized an exciting conference program on Thursday, August 16, from 10:45 a.m. -12:45 p.m., entitled "Empowering Library Users to Solve Problems: Our Stories." We hope you will come to hear your library colleagues from six different countries share their stories and case studies related to how they used data to drive change in their libraries. Please also stop by our Social Science Libraries Standing Committee poster during the poster sessions. Our poster will highlight the work of our section and the importance of social sciences libraries.

The Social Science Libraries Section has had a busy year. The section's work to create a new Special Interest Group (SIG), Religions in Dialogue (RELINDIAL), has been moving forward thanks to the efforts of standing committee members Odile Dupont and Lynne Rudasill. They have worked very hard to make this new SIG a reality. The SIG will have its first meeting in Helsinki on Monday, August 13, 4:00-6:00. If you are interested in participating, please attend this inaugural meeting to learn more.

Social Science Libraries Standing Committee members, Maria Elena Dorta-Duque and Lynne Rudasill, have begun work editing a new book highlighting the papers presented at our 2011 satellite conference in Havana, Cuba. Dorta-Duque and Rudasill, the chairs of the satellite conference, invited several satellite conference presenters to write book chapters expanding on the themes covered in the satellite conference. The book, tentatively entitled, "Open

Access and Digital Libraries: Social Science Libraries in Action." will hopefully be published by the end of 2012.

When in Helsinki, please join us at the Social Science Libraries Standing Committee meetings (see schedule in Newsletter) as we plan our future projects and programs and begin to prepare for the IFLA World Library and Information Congress in Singapore in 2013. Even if you are not a member of the Standing Committee, we welcome you and encourage you to attend our meetings.

Liz Cooper

See you in Helsinki!

*Chair, Social Science Libraries
Standing Committee*



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IFLA World Library and Information Congress

78th IFLA General Conference and Assembly

11-17 August 2012, Helsinki, Finland

Social Science Libraries Section

Session 203

Thursday 16 August 2012 10.45 – 12.45

Room: Session Room 4

Congress track 3: Users driving access and services.

<http://conference.ifla.org/ifla78/session-203>

Empowering library users to solve problems: our stories

... a two-hour program on Thursday 16 August 2012, offered in cooperation with the [Law Libraries Section](#) and the [Government Libraries Section](#).

As social scientists we are interested in data gathering and its impact. The **six presentations** for this program relate to results of qualitative and quantitative assessments and examples of how libraries have used these assessments to answer the needs of users. Specifically we will offer case studies/papers that show the impact of gathering data and how the data gathering process led to changed or improved services. Our focus is not on how data was gathered – but how that data was used to empower users. Program papers include descriptions of interventions/changes made after data was collected, attempts to understand how users use information and stories of how data gathering led to new services, etc. Questions and discussion will follow.

- **Desk statistics under a microscope = improved library services** by SUSAN GARDNER ARCHAMBAULT (Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles, California, USA)
- **Was wir von unseren Nutzern lernen können – und wie** by SEBASTIAN NIX (Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin für Sozialforschung, Bibliothek und wissenschaftliche Information, Berlin, Germany)
- **How to be competitive in the educational & cultural landscape: the challenge of the Carol I Central University Library in Bucharest, Romania - case study** by MIREILLE RADOI (Carol I Central University Library, Bucharest, Romania)
- **Libraries supporting national development goals in Namibia** by ELLEN NAMHILA (University of Namibia, Windhoek, Namibia) and RITVA NISKALA (Namibia Library and Archives Service, Ministry of Education, Windhoek, Namibia)
- **Empowering library users, establishing channel of communication for service quality expectations of trainers from government Administrative Training Institute (ATI) libraries in India** MANOJ KULKARNI (Yashwantrao Chavan Academy of Development Administration (YAHSADA), Pune, India) and NEELA J. DESHPANDE (University of Pune, Pune, India)
- **Giving them what they need, more simply: empowering students through internet specific subject websites** by DOUG SUAREZ (Brock University, St. Catharines, Ontario, Canada)

RELINDIAL



The Social Science Libraries Section is the Sponsor of the New Special Interest Group (SIG)

**Librarians interested in world cultures, come join our first meeting, Monday 13
August 2012, Session Room 6, from 4:00 PM to 6:00 PM**

RELINDIAL (Religious Libraries in Dialogue)

**The IFLA Professional Committee approved the new SIG in April 2012
as a vehicle to promote dialogue between cultures.**

The proposed activities are:

- Identify religious heritage in the form of library collections available online
- List digital resources in the service of religious thoughts
- Initiate an international cooperation for sharing experiences
- Working on indexing languages for the evolution of the WEB can take into account the complexities of religious issues
- Cooperate with the IFLA Children and Young Adults Section for a shared experience that removes barriers and builds religious tolerance at an early age

Two lectures will also be offered during this First Meeting:

- **IDEO serving intercultural Islam-Christian dialogue [thanks to FRBR]**
Brother RENÉ-VINCENT DU GRANDLAUNAY o.p. (Dominicans Institute of Oriental Studies, Cairo, Egypt)
- **GlobeTheoLib: online theological resources for education and ecumenical dialogue [a free platform]**
AMÉLIE VALLOTTON (Globethics, Geneva, Switzerland)



**Submitted by
Odile Dupont
Convener IFLA Social
Science Libraries SIG
RELINDIAL**

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Catholic University of Paris
Executive manager for the promotion and the
libraries network
Chair of the European Theological Library
Association

RELINDIAL

La Section des Bibliothèques en Sciences Sociales
est le Commanditaire du Groupe d'intérêt Spécial
Nouvelle (SIG)



Bibliothécaires curieux des cultures du monde, venez vous joindre à notre première réunion, le lundi 13 août 2012, « Session room 6 », de 16h à 18h.

RELINDIAL (Bibliothèques Religieuse dans le Dialogue)

Le professionnel de l'IFLA Comité a approuvé le nouveau SIG en Avril 2012
comme un véhicule pour promouvoir le dialogue entre les cultures.

Les activités proposées sont les suivantes:

- Répertorier le patrimoine religieux accessible en ligne
- Répertorier les ressources numériques au service des pensées religieuses
- Initier une coopération internationale pour un partage des expériences
- Travailler sur les langages d'indexation pour que les évolutions du Web puissent prendre en compte la complexité des problématiques religieuses
- Coopérer avec le groupe des « Sisters libraries », de la section IFLA des bibliothèques pour enfants et jeunes adultes, pour un partage d'expérience qui fasse tomber des barrières dès le plus jeune âge

Deux conférences seront également proposés au cours de cette première réunion:

- **L'IDEO au service du dialogue interculturel islamo-chrétien [grâce au FRBR]**
Frère RENÉ-VINCENT DU GRANDLAUNAY o.p. (Institut Dominicain d'études orientales, Le Caire, Egypte)
- **GlobeTheoLib: Ressources théologiques en ligne pour la formation et le dialogue oecuménique [une plateforme gratuite]**
AMÉLIE VALLOTTON (Globethics, Geneva, Switzerland)



Odile Dupont
Responsable du SIG - IFLA
RELINDIAL
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Draft Agenda: Helsinki, Finland 2012

Social Science Libraries Standing Committee Meetings

Saturday 11 August 2012 Standing Committee Meeting 1 (9.45-11.45) Room 203
Tuesday 14 August 2012 Standing Committee Meeting 2 (16.45-18.00) Room 206

1. Convene Meeting (Cooper)
 - a. Welcome and Introduction Members and Guests
 - b. Apologies from those not attending
2. Adopt Agenda (Cooper)
3. Review and Approve Minutes of the Standing Committee Meetings in San Juan, Puerto Rico (Meetings of 13 and 18 August 2011 (Dorta-Duque)
 - Matters arising from these Minutes
4. Report from Division Leadership Meeting (Cooper & Rudasill)
5. IFLA HQ/PC Report (?) (Rudasill)
6. Financial Report - Treasurer (Cooper & Rudasill)
 - a. Changes to Funding Structures (Rudasill)
 - b. Section Funds (Cooper)
 - c. Project Funds (?)
7. Helsinki SSLSC Program 2012 **Empowering library users to solve problems: our stories** <http://conference.ifla.org/ifla78/session-203> (Cooper & Dorta-Duque)
 - a. Need a Few People to Count Attendees at Program (Cooper)
 - b. How Will We Vote on the Best Paper to Submit? (Email) (Cooper)
 - c. SSLSC Poster Session Aug 13-14 Exhibit Hall 12.00 – 14.00 (Dorta-Duque)
8. SIG (RELINDIAL) Report/Update (Dupont & Rudasill)
9. Information Coordinator Updates & New Information Coordinator Needed (Wilda)
10. SC Annual Review and Strategic Plan (Cooper)
 - a. Current Projects: Cuba Book Project (Rudasill & Dorta-Duque)
11. Call for New Standing Committee Members in October 2012 (Cooper)
 - a. Current SC: 15 Members, 3 with Terms Expiring 2013
 - b. Maria (First Term, Expires 2013-Needs to be Re-nominated)
 - c. Wilda (Second Term, Expires 2013-Cannot be Re-nominated for SSLSC)
 - d. Lynne (2ndTerm, Expires 2013-Cannot be Re-nominated for SSLSC)
 - e. Ideas for New Members? **We Need 10-20 SC Members**
12. Plan Singapore, 17 – 23 August, 2013 Program – Congress Theme **“Future Libraries: Infinite Possibilities”**
 - a. Do We Need a Program Committee?
 - b. Ideas for Program? (See Puerto Rico Minutes)
 - c. Deadline for 2013 Satellite was March 2012, (We Decided No SC Members in Region, too Difficult - Perhaps Try in **2014** (Location?))
13. Other Business
 - a. Paper Collaborations?
 - b. Projects?
 - c. Better Committee Communications?
 - d. Can Everyone Access the Google Site for Sharing Docs?
 - e. Should We Try Some Form of Regular Communication in Addition to Email?
14. Program Ideas for 2014, Site (TBD ... **to be Announced at Closing Session 2012**)



**Call for New
Social Science
Libraries
Standing
Committee
Members!**

Would you or your colleagues be interested in joining the IFLA Social Science Libraries Standing Committee?

Participating as a standing committee member is a great way to meet and learn from social science librarians from around the world.

Please consider joining!

The call for nominations to join the committee for the August 2013-August 2017 term will be issued in October 2012 and will close February 2013. The call for new members is only issued every two years, so if you are interested, please apply this year!

You will find more information about the nomination process on the IFLA website in October, but contact me, Liz Cooper, Social Science Libraries Standing Committee Chair, now with any questions or for more information (lizinatl@gmail.com).

I can help you navigate the nomination process. Serving on the committee is a great way to get involved in IFLA!



Cuba revisited: Libraries in 2001 and 2011

By Patricia A. Wand
University Librarian Emerita and
Adjunct Professor
American University

Cuba in 2011 looked different than it did in 2001. *Social Sciences Libraries: A Bridge to Knowledge for Sustainable Development*, an IFLA Satellite Conference sponsored by IFLA Social Sciences Libraries Section in Havana, Cuba, in August 2011 attracted librarians from all over the world. Many of us wanted to see the Cuban library scene while we learned from one another about library and digital projects in various countries.

My first Cuban visit was ten years before, in May 2001 when seven delegates of the American Library

Association (ALA) and IFLA participated in a Caribbean regional library conference in Havana. ALA delegates in 2001 also met with officers of ASCUBI, the Cuban National Association of Librarians, to sign a Memorandum of Understanding between American and Cuban librarians. These memorable exchanges lead to ongoing relations with Cuban librarians and laid the groundwork for Cuban librarians to attend the IFLA conference in Boston later that year in August 2001.

During my second visit to Cuba in 2011 I was keenly alert for changes that had occurred in the past decade. Indeed, I was not disappointed to discover a number of differences.

The first difference became apparent even before arriving in Havana; namely, the relative ease with which we were able to travel out of the U.S. to Cuba. We were on a charter flight arranged by Marazul, the same agent that assisted us in 2001, but getting through the airports both in Miami and Havana was much easier with better signage, on-time flights, simpler visa processes and smooth flows through customs.

The first morning of the Satellite Conference, when I walked into the Biblioteca Nacional (National

Library) the first thing that struck me was major improvements in the interior of the building compared to what I saw ten years ago. The improvements were still underway but much had been accomplished as the building was being prepared to celebrate a major anniversary in late 2011.

There were many excellent papers during the conference but one of the most memorable for me was by Dra. Nuria Perez Matos of the Biblioteca Nacional de Cuba Jose Marti. Her presentation *The Cuban Library System* focused on Cuba's new Law 271 passed in 2009 stating national library policies. She explained the progress libraries have made in developing public policies guiding their operations, collection development and services; and the steps libraries are taking toward sharing resources and best practices among themselves.

It resonated with me immediately. When we were in Cuba in May 2001 to sign the Memorandum of Understanding between ALA and ASCUBI we discussed the need for Cuban libraries to organize themselves and pursue public policy to support their collection development and service functions. Our focus then was particularly on encouraging a

clear distinction between libraries and the so-called "Independent Libraries" supported by the U.S. State Department. With no collection development policies in place, the libraries were vulnerable to allegations of censorship.

When I spoke with Dra. Nuria after her presentation, she said she and other librarians worked for over two years to pass Law 271 and now she is working to implement it. She feels like a librarian AND an attorney. She and others want libraries to develop through peer pressure, learning from one another rather than through mandates from the top. I was reminded of conversations in 2001 with Cuban librarians who were inquiring of us about the value of professional associations.

Another fascinating paper was delivered by Jianxiong Ge, Library Director at Fujan University, Shanjiah, who talked about the challenges of creating a comprehensive, digitized collection of classic Chinese books. Early Chinese books were printed with wood blocks, each carved a little differently, and each Chinese character represents one word instead of one letter in a word. There is no standard agreement about what each character means nor exactly how

it is written. He illustrated how a simple character can morph into many meanings depending on how it is drawn.

Tours and excursions took us to various parts of Havana and I saw physical improvements to buildings, streets and roads. While many buildings are left wanting paint and upkeep, others, particularly in Old Town Havana, have been restored and are in much better condition than they were ten years ago. I sensed a more hopeful attitude among the Cubans in 2011 than in 2001. Their biggest concern in 2011 seemed to be whether the government was going to choose a single currency or leave them languishing between the traditional peso and the recently introduced "convertible peso," also called the dollar.

A visit to the Biblioteca Publica Ruben Martinez Villena (Public Library of the Province of Havana) was encouraging. Compared to what we saw in 2001 the library was better organized, had more users and staff seemed more engaged. The reading rooms were busy with both children and adults; a couple of computers were available for monitored use by readers. Both Gretel Lobelle, Directora, and Adrian Guerra, the children's librarian, spoke about active programs. Sr. Guerra

explained several impressive children's programs, including a WikiClub and a publicly accessible list of book reviews written by children after they read favorite books.

All the public libraries in the country – over 300 – are very engaged with their communities. I remember seeing this in 2001 when we visited seven neighborhood libraries in and around Havana.

We Americans who are accustomed to an astonishing variety of foods could not help but notice that we were served the same lunch menu every day: ham and cheese sandwiches on tiny rolls plus two baked sweets and a bottle of water. Some days' sweets were tastier than others. After a few days, I realized I was seeing almost no vegetables and fruits at any meals.

Cuba continues to astound me for what it has accomplished through its system of community libraries in support of literacy and education; namely a 95% literacy rate and a nation of scholars, artists, performers and authors. Unfortunately, in Cuba as in the U.S., funding never suffices to support the ambitious aspirations of librarians and library users.

<http://www.patwand.info/www.patwand.info/Gallery.html> for more Cuba!

A Day Trip in Cuba



By Patricia A. Wand
University Librarian Emerita and Adjunct
Professor American University
Pictures by Pat Wand and Wilda Newman

Previous to leaving Washington D.C. to attend the IFLA Satellite Conference in Havana, Cuba, in August 2011, I inquired of a knowledgeable Cuban scholar for suggestions about how to travel out of Havana on a day trip to see some countryside. He suggested a side trip to Matanza and Veradero and, via email to a friend in Havana, he found a driver with a vintage car for hire. For US\$100 Leonardo promised to drive me to those cities on Sunday afternoon.

I put the word out among conference attendees that I had hired a car and



suddenly there were eight of us

wanting to take this side trip. So I called Leonardo on his cell phone from the **Hotel Nacional** where we were staying and asked if he had a friend with a car to accommodate all eight of us. He did and we agreed to meet at 2:15 pm in front of the hotel.

Leonardo drove a 1955 blue Buick; Rafael had a 1949 blue and black Chevy. The cars appeared road-worthy and we all piled in, noting the absence of seatbelts and air conditioning. We kept the windows rolled down for whatever breeze we



could get in the hot tropical climate. I wondered what held the cars together (perhaps baling wire and duct tape?) but they reliably cruised along about 35 miles per hour.

On the way to Veradero along the northern coast we saw farms - bananas, sugar, papaya, cotton - and people selling produce on the roadside, oil wells built by Canadians, oil wells and refineries built by Chinese, rum factories, assembly plants, military schools and a training school for Chinese translators. The drive to Veradero, a tourist resort built with help from Spain, took two hours.

Veradero is a long, narrow peninsula that juts out from northeast Cuba into the blue Caribbean, offering beautiful

beaches on both sides of the single



road that runs its length. Elaborate homes, a golf course and many simpler accommodations attract Cubans as well as expatriates who come to enjoy the fresh breezes, the gorgeous soft sand and the warm, refreshing water. Over a million Canadians and unknown numbers of Europeans now find their way to vacation in Cuba each year.

Leonardo found a popular beach where we could take off our shoes and walk in the sand and the water. It was magical to be splashing in the warm Caribbean waters while thinking about how geographically close we were to Miami - only 90 miles - and yet how politically inaccessible Cuba is for U.S. citizens.



After the refreshing respite from the hot, steamy weather we headed back to Havana. We stopped in Matanza, a working-class town with an ambiance all its own. In the central square, Plaza de la Libertad, are statues of a Native American woman escaping

slavery and Jose Marti, Cuba's Poet Laureate.



Across the street from the plaza square was a biblioteca (library) with a plaque saying it was the site of a pre-conference seminar on 15 -18 August 1994 before the IFLA Conference. On the front of the 19th century Romanesque building were the words "Casino Espana" (Spanish Casino) chiseled above the grand entrance. Obviously this building had been re-purposed as a library after the 1959 Revolution but now sadly the building was in transition again. We peered

inside and could see the remains of wooden shelving with a few books, a grand staircase, and leaves of paper strewn across the floor. There was no glass in the windows and the birds



flew in and out. Yet, even in its dilapidated condition the building maintained its elegance.

For dinner we inquired about the location of "comida tipica" (typical Cuban food) and Leonard found "El Horno" Restaurant near the plaza where all ten of us, including the two drivers, ate for US\$41. Maria, the

owner, served us fried plantain, rice with beans and a choice of pork or fish; a simple, Cuban meal. She was honored to be serving North Americans and we were honored to participate in her livelihood.



We drove back to Havana after dark, exhausted yet proud of ourselves. It was exhilarating to have wandered away from Havana, going into unknown territory and traveling in vintage cars whose reliability caused some trepidation. We'd had a short but grand adventure that introduced us to a slice of ordinary Cuban life.



Odile Dupont Convener RELINDIAL

IFLA SIG RELINDIAL: Current Activities

Since our last Newsletter we received very good news from Lynne Rudasill and the Professional Committee of IFLA with the approval of RELINDIAL as a new Special Interest Group (SIG) on 2 April 2012.

This good news came together with numerous activities to make RELINDIAL known all over the world. The project was presented at the following meetings.

From **1-4 November 2011** COCTI (Conference of the Catholic Theological Institutions) met www.fiuc.org/cms/COCTI in Pune, India. The theme was "Doing Theology in the context of Religious, Cultural and Ideological Pluralism." Odile Dupont spoke about the role of the Christian Libraries in the information world today and invited the present deans to send their librarians to

the next IFLA congress, to join the SSLSC SIG RELINDIAL. She presented the special tools developed by the librarians to serve theological research.

From **10-14 April 2012** ForATL (Forum of Asian Theological Libraries) met. <http://www.foratl.org/> for the 6th ForATL workshop and consultation. A speech was given entitled "From the library to the libraries network : RELINDIAL." Our Asian colleagues were quite interested in the project and look forward to joining RELINDIAL in Singapore.

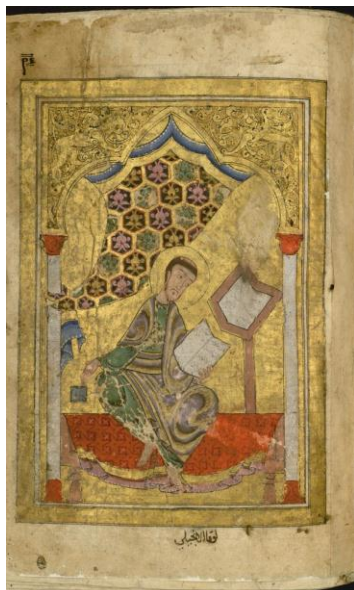
On **15 April 2012** ABIE (Asociación de Bibliotecarios de la Iglesia en España) Spain, <http://www.abie.es> met in Madrid. The activities of the libraries of the Catholic University of Paris were presented as required. RELINDIAL, as the fruit of the numerous activities of seven years of networking was introduced.

On **27-30 June 2012** ATLA (American Theological Library Association) www.atla.com 2012 Annual Conference, Scottsdale, Arizona, USA took place. We participated in the ATLA Interfaith Panel in which the "New SIG IFLA RELINDIAL" was introduced. Contacts have already been made with associations interested in joining us.

On **9 July 2012** a meeting with Christiane Baryla, the Chair of IFLA-PAC was held to consider future collaborations.

Other activities are proceeding that include:

- Identify a logo;
- Create an edition of a flier.



During our meeting on Monday 13th of August, one of the numerous wishes would be to gather images as testimonies of the dialogue between the cultures of the world.

As an example, here is a picture of the Coptic-Arabic manuscript 1, 1250, of the Catholic University of Paris, in which a Christian Gospel is illustrated in the Persian Islamic style:

The Evangelist Luke

Draft Agenda for the first RELINDIAL Meeting, Monday 13 August, 2012 IFLA WLIC 78 Helsinki, Finland 16.00h-18.00h (4:00pm-6:00pm) Room 6

1. Presentation of RELINDIAL
2. Lecture from Brother René-Vincent du Grandlaunay, o.p. : IDEO serving intercultural Islamo - Christian dialogue
IDEO (Institut Dominicain d'Etudes Orientales), is a Christian library, opened in Cairo, Egypt, after World War II, to facilitate the dialogue between Christians and Muslims. The idea was to develop a library to know the Arabic-Muslim culture. This library is now the greater library on that topic in the region, and Muslim students study in it. To facilitate cataloguing Islamic texts, the librarian is working with the FRBR standards developed by IFLA, well adapted to the study of Quran in which the texts are linked together.
Brother René-Vincent du Grandlaunay, o.p is a Dominican. He studied Arabic, as he was touched by Arabic human being culture. He is also interested in cataloguing standards to serve his library.
3. Lecture from Amélie Vallotton: GlobeTheoLib: Online theological resources for education and ecumenical dialogue:
"GlobeTheoLib www.globethics.net/gtl is a global digital library on Theology and Ecumenism. It is an initiative of Globethics.net and the World Council of Churches, through its programme on Ecumenical Theological Education (ETE). It was launched in September 2011. With its digital library, GlobeTheoLib is trying to address the issue of the digital gap in the field of Theology and Ecumenism. The following presentation aims at explaining the main goals, procedures, features and scope of content as well as the institutional structure of GlobeTheoLib."
"Amélie Vallotton Preisig is senior associate for Globethics.net. She has been working as Programme Executive for the Globethics.net Libraries from 2009 to 2012. As such she actively participated in the creation of GlobeTheoLib. She is a professional librarian with a previous master in Philosophy. She now works for Alliance Sud, Lausanne/Switzerland as an Information Specialist and is also a Committee Member of FAIFE/IFLA.
4. Round table of the attendees
5. Proposed activities for the SIG
6. Who wants to volunteer? The first needs are a secretary, a web manager and persons in charge of working groups.
7. Proposal of other meetings, in Helsinki, to pursue with volunteers for the SIG project
8. WLIC79 Singapore: brainstorming for a session
9. WLIC80 Europe: brainstorming for an offsite meeting





IFLA WLIC 2013
SINGAPORE

IFLA World Library and Information Congress

79th IFLA General Conference and Assembly

17-23 August 2013, Singapore

Congress theme: Future Libraries: Infinite Possibilities



Singapore



en.wikipedia.org



Singapore, officially the Republic of Singapore, is a Southeast Asian city-state off the southern tip of the Malay Peninsula, 137 kilometres north of the equator. Wikipedia

SOCIAL SCIENCE LIBRARIES SECTION

<http://www.ifla.org/en/social-science-libraries>

Communication – MEMBERS CHECK IT OUT!



WLIC Congress: 78th IFLA General Conference and Assembly 11–16 August 2012 Section Conference Notices:

- Saturday, 11 August – Caucuses (See Main [IFLA Program](#) for your Specific Country or Region)
- Bring this Newsletter with you to our Committee Meetings
- Social Science Libraries Standing Committee Meetings:
 - Saturday 11 August 2012 Standing Committee Meeting 1 (9.45-12.15) Room 203
 - Tuesday 14 August 2012 Standing Committee Meeting 2 (16.45-18.00) Room 206
- Social Science Libraries Section [Poster Session](#), “Empowering Social Science Libraries & Librarians” No. 40 Monday/Tuesday 12.00-14.00 (Liz, Maria, Wilda) Exhibition Center
- SSLSC SIG RELINDIAL First Meeting Monday 13 August (16.00-18.00) Room 6
- Social Science Libraries Section Program, “Empowering library users to solve problems: our stories,” Thursday, 16 August 10.45–12.45, Room 4

Human rights action plan survey kicks off

By: CATHERINE SASMAN

A SURVEY for the development of a National Human Rights Action Plan (NHRAP) starts today to identify the gaps in the Namibian human rights protection regime and provide specific measures on how these gaps can be addressed.

This is the first survey of its kind in Namibia. Ombudsman John Walters says the human rights plan should be aligned to the two other national plans – the successive national development plans, and Vision 2030 – to ensure a human rights approach to development.

The five-month-long survey under the auspices of the **Ombudsman's Office will be conducted by the Human Rights and Documentation Centre of the University of Namibia.**

"The development of a NHRAP is not my invention; it is rather a duty of the State flowing from its international treaty obligations," said Walters.

These treaties are the Vienna Declaration that calls for an action plan on human rights, the Durban Declaration that urges States to elaborate action plans in collaboration with national human rights institutions, and the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development that requires measurable outcomes on gender equity. Deputy Minister of Justice Tommy Nambahu says Government fully supports human rights for all, but acknowledges that there has never been one comprehensive, all-inclusive document that clearly sets out monitoring measures of the implementation of those rights.

He urges that the survey be done in an objective and impartial manner with the full cooperation of those approached for participation in the baseline study.

"We must not be seen to be embarking upon a fault-finding crusade and where our criticism is warranted, such criticism must be constructive, cordial and home-brewed. It must be taken in the spirit of building and reconciling our nation on the one hand and making it possible for both the human rights practitioners and Government to find and work with each other in an amicable and non-adversarial manner," said Nambahu.

The survey will be headed by the director of the Human Rights Documentation Centre, John Nakuta, and Professor Pempelani Mufune, also from Unam, with a team of human rights lawyers and social scientists – Francois Bangamwabo, Kandali Nuugwedha, Petrina Dwusu-Afrijie, Michael Conteh, Lukas

Nantanga, Clement Daniels, Herbert Jauch, Katja Paereli and **Chiku Mchombu.**

They will be assisted by 65 enumerators drawn from students from the Unam law faculty and other experienced enumerators. Nakuta said the study will capture existing government initiatives and assess their effectiveness, and identify, in the spirit of "candid honesty", the areas in which Namibia has not yet met its international human rights obligations.

He said it would be informed by a human-rights-based approach to development.

"Development without respecting, protecting and fulfilling human rights is a fallacy," said Nakuta. "National development plans must be informed by human rights standards."

The themes to be covered include gauging the understanding of human rights; poverty, unemployment and inequality; access to justice; access to information; minority rights; corruption because Government under law is duty bound to close leakages of State funding; detainees and prisoners' rights; migrants and refugees; selected economic, social and cultural rights; as well as environmental rights and related issues.

Deputy Minister Nambahu suggested that the survey should also consider the private sector dealings with its workforce, and not just the "poor politicians" upon whom "all guns are pointed".

Contributed by Chiku Mchombu, Social Science Libraries Standing Committee Member, first published in [The Namibian](#) [Emphasis added.]





**Social Science Libraries Standing Committee
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