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Keynote Address to the 65th IFLA Council and General Conference, Bangkok, Thailand, 23 August 1999

Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn.

Abstract

A peaceful life and the prosperity of mankind depend on the proper use of knowledge and information. Tremendous advances have been made in library resources and collection and management have been achieved through progress in book publishing, and computer and telecommunications technology for generating and disseminating information. However users at large are still in need of motivation, inspiration, and education for the careful selection and proper use of knowledge and information. The international library and information professionals at the 65th Council and General Conference of IFLA, can assist users obtain the right information for the benefit of society.

Presidential Address, IFLA Bangkok Conference, August 1999

Deschamps, Christine.

Abstract

The author covers her role in the changes at IFLA Headquarters, particularly in the search for the Secretary General. She also surveys her activities on behalf of IFLA during the past year, including her worldwide programme of visits and her efforts at defining priorities with related organizations. These consist of professional training for the new information specialist; training courses for librarians from developing countries; standardization in cataloguing, metadata and international bibliographic formats; and negotiations which could lead to smoother relationships between the publishing community and the library community.

Reaching the Information Gateways: An Unfinished Task

Panyarachun, Anand.

Abstract

With a staggering number of books and written materials coming from the press, libraries all over the world have to find alternative ways of coping with the information deluge, while keeping in view the demands of their clientele. If a library intends to serve as a change agent, it has to change its role from being a mere depository of books to a reservoir of knowledge which is essential for an individual to make informed judgments. A wealth of information is available via various modes of information and data processing. Some of us have crossed over the information gateways, while many others are still struggling to access information. We must be aware that the current trend in the information era increasingly marginalizes the have-nots. There must be an honest sensitivity of all concerned, particularly policy makers, to the needs of the unreached, or the continued marginalization will widen the gap and seriously affect national development efforts and a nation's place in the international arena. Apart from the obvious demands to improve the physical infrastructures, efforts must be made to promote the willingness of children and adults to use information technology systems with confidence and enthusiasm. This calls for intensive education and training. Libraries must make it their mission to reach the currently unreached population, thus contributing to develop an egalitarian society. Most importantly, the ultimate goal of libraries is to turn data and information into knowledge, and to ensure that such knowledge serves as a source of wisdom.

Library Networks in the Learning Society

Vejjajiva, Abhisit.

Abstract

Using the background of the financial crisis which impacted Asian countries for the past two years, the author illustrates some fundamental weaknesses in their societies which may have helped caused the crisis. He stresses that educational reform for human development should become more important in a number of countries because only those who can learn and adapt can survive with the changes brought about by globalization. A greater variety of sources of information at home, at the workplace and in the community should be made available. To support these sources, networks must be created to broaden opportunities for all people, to economize through shared resources, and to address the problem of inequality. Governments must create the right incentives for the private sector to support this task.