

May 28, 1996

At the invitation of IPA President Fernando Guedes, IFLA Secretary General Leo Voogt represented IFLA at the 25th Congress of the International Publishers Association in Barcelona from 22-26 April. The Congress celebrated the 100th anniversary of IPA and attracted around 800 publishers from all over the world. The Organizing Committee had produced an impressive professional programme, featuring a broad range of developments within the publishing field, copyright being one of the most important issues.

The formal Opening and Closing Sessions rightly attracted enormous press attention. During the Opening both His Majesty, King Juan Carlos of Spain and widely acclaimed scholar and novelist Umberto Eco spoke. The surprise guest for the Closing Session was Salman Rushdie, who delivered an impressive lecture on the future of the novel and the strains on creative writing, urging publishers to be more responsible in publishing new fiction.

IPA and IFLA dialogue on copyright to be formalised in Beijing, China

A draft IFLA statement on "*Libraries, Copyright and the Electronic Environment*" had attracted wide interest in the publishing community. It resulted in an IPA position paper by Carol Risher, that was accepted by IPA's Executive Council and has been formally brought to the attention of the IFLA Executive Board. It is expected that IFLA's Beijing Conference will see the start of a first formal dialogue between IFLA and IPA in this crucial area which affects both our fields.

April 23: UNESCO World Book Day

April 23 is the traditional Feast Day of Saint George or San Jordi in Catalunya, it is a Feast Day celebrated with books and roses. It also has great literary significance as the day when many writers were born or died, for example: William Shakespeare (England), Manuel Mejia Vallejo (Colombia), Maurice Druon (France), Vladimir Nabokov (Russia), Joseph Pla (Catalunya). It is therefore most fitting that UNESCO recently announced April 23 as the official World Book Day. The first celebration of this took place during the IPA Congress and was an enormous success: Publishers, books, and roses could be seen everywhere when one passed through the streets of Barcelona.

Barcelona Revisited

Once back in Barcelona, Leo Voogt used the opportunity to visit several members of the Organizing Committee of the successful IFLA 1993 General Conference. He also met with the current President of FESABID and the Col.legi Oficial de Bibliotecaris-Documentalistes de Catalunya, Ms Carme Mayol Fernandez and was invited to assist in launching the Col.legi's Web page (not surprisingly well-linked to IFLA's Web page). Mr. Voogt also visit the Biblioteca Nacional de Catalunya, where the second phase of an impressive renovation project had recently been completed. He also used the opportunity to meet with two Standing Committee members from Barcelona, Ms. V. Panyella (National Libraries) and Ms. A. Bailac Puigdellivol (Public Libraries). Lluís Bagunya, formerly involved in the Barcelona Organizing Committee and now the librarian of the Picasso Museum, bridged the gap between work and pleasure.

