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DRAFT RESOLUTION

Submitted by **GERMANY**

International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) Manifesto for libraries serving persons with print disabilities

The General Conference,

1. Recognizing that having access to knowledge and information is essential for social inclusion, employment as well as cultural and political participation,
2. Recognizing that the achievement of UNESCO's vision of Knowledge Societies is dependent on building the capacity of all human beings to participate actively and effectively in emerging Knowledge Societies,
3. Recalling the Declaration of Principles of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) and in particular Action Lines C2, C3, C7, and C8 of the Geneva Plan of Action,
4. Recalling articles 9, 21 and 24 of the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with a Disability* which state that persons with disabilities have a right to access information and knowledge,
5. Noting that the adoption of the *United Nations Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons Who Are Blind, Visually Impaired, or Otherwise Print Disabled* provides the necessary legal framework for international sharing and cooperation in creating access to information,

6. Recognizing that libraries, publishers and information service providers play a pivotal role in making information accessible, in particular in providing books, knowledge and information in accessible formats,
7. Further noting that the growing availability of digital information and the use of digital technologies, including the emergence of eBooks, provide an opportunity for the print disabled to participate in Knowledge Societies at the same time, cost and quality as other members of society,
8. Commends IFLA for its efforts in developing the Manifesto for Libraries Serving Persons with Print Disabilities;
9. Invites Member States to endorse the Manifesto for Libraries Serving Persons with Print Disabilities;
10. Further invites Member States to take The IFLA Manifesto for Libraries Serving Persons with Print Disabilities into consideration during the planning of future strategies, policies, and initiatives.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

1. Having access to information is a basic human right. Its realization is essential for the social, cultural and economic integration into society of every human being. However, visually impaired people and those not able to read often do not have access to information. The World Blind Union estimates that there are more than 160 million visually impaired people in the world who cannot read from print. In addition there is an even greater number of persons who cannot read print because of other disabilities. However, only between 5-10% of all information is available in alternative accessible formats, such as audio, braille or digital text. With the wide availability of the Internet, delivery and making use of technology to read digital content will further develop in the forthcoming years.
2. The IFLA Manifesto for Libraries Serving Persons with Print Disabilities sets out the mission and core actions of governments, libraries and information providers in making their information and services accessible for all. It stresses the urgent need for libraries and information service providers to be aware that persons with print disabilities run a high risk of educational, social and cultural exclusion. Many of their customers are in need of alternative formats to access the knowledge and information they provide. It is therefore important to offer integrated library and information services, including collections, equipment and facilities to meet the needs of persons with print disabilities.
3. The IFLA Manifesto for Libraries Serving Persons with Print Disabilities appeals to library and information service providers to actively reach out to print disabled clients, consult expert groups on accessibility and start building accessible services where the complete value chain from finding the right material to reading the information is unbroken and leads to equitable access for everyone.
4. The IFLA Manifesto for Libraries Serving Persons with Print Disabilities calls for the setting up of special training programs for library and information workers within formal library and study programs. Such programs would raise awareness of the needs of the print disabled and the best ways of accommodating these needs, including expert knowledge on the accessibility of information and websites.
5. The IFLA Manifesto for Libraries Serving Persons with Print Disabilities can provide the foundation for ensuring that all human beings, including those with a print disability have the skills and means to participate equitably in Knowledge Societies by outlining actions for multistakeholder collaborations between governments, private sector and civil society

organizations, librarians, educators and other stakeholders in developed and developing countries.

6. The IFLA Manifesto is *inter alia* based upon the Declaration of Principles of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) and the Geneva Plan of Action. The Manifesto was prepared by IFLA's Section on Libraries Serving Persons with Print Disabilities, comprising 80 library organizations worldwide in collaboration with many other organizations from around the world such as schools, transcribers, producers, and brokers that provide accessible reading materials to persons with print disabilities. The Manifesto was endorsed by the IFLA Governing Board on 4 April 2012.
7. IFLA has a long history of partnership with UNESCO, and continues to work with UNESCO to build human resources and institutional capacity for Knowledge Societies. These capacity building efforts include providing media and information literacy competencies for citizens, delivering training for teachers and media and information specialists, strengthening the role of libraries and librarians and developing guidelines for national policies. Three previous Manifestos are worth noting for the influence they have had on the library world: The UNESCO/IFLA Public Library Manifesto, the UNESCO/IFLA School Library Manifesto and the UNESCO/IFLA Multicultural Library Manifesto.

Appendix

Manifesto for libraries serving persons with print disabilities to improve and promote accessible library and information services to persons with a visual impairment or any other print disability

Lack of access to information is the biggest barrier for persons with a print disability to fully and effectively participate in all aspects of society.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (especially articles 9, 21 and 24) states that print disabled people have the right to equal access to books, knowledge and information at the same time, cost and quality as everyone else.

There are over 161 million blind and partially sighted people in the world and this number is growing. There are even more people with other print disabilities who cannot effectively read print because of a physical, perceptual, developmental, cognitive, or learning disability. Together this makes up a very large number of people who cannot read a conventional book, magazine or website. Less than 5% of all published materials and reportedly less than 20% of websites are accessible to this target group.

Libraries are a community's "portal" to information, knowledge and leisure, and their services need to be made accessible for all. Content and technology providers are essential partners in developing these inclusive information and leisure reading services. They should do so by making good use of the emerging possibilities of digitised publishing and delivery.

Statements

The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) promotes the right of people with a print disability to equitable access to all library and information services and supports international and territorial legislation that fights disability discrimination.

1. IFLA recommends that all library and information providers, as part of their core services, put in place services, collections, equipment and facilities, which will assist individual users with a print disability to access and use resources that meet their particular needs for information.
2. IFLA encourages library and information service providers to consult individuals with a disability, and groups representing them, in the planning, development and ongoing delivery of services.
3. IFLA acknowledges that the best services are provided by professionals who are aware of the needs of, and service options for, people with a print disability. Therefore IFLA encourages all library and information services to ensure that staff are adequately trained and available to work with users with a print disability, and supports career-long professional development and formal library and information studies programs, which will facilitate the strengthening of equitable library and information services to people with a print disability.
4. IFLA supports efforts to improve access to resources by people with a print disability through service agreements, referrals and sharing of resources between library and information services; and between these and other organizations specialising in services targeted for people with a print disability.
5. Therefore IFLA encourages the establishment and development of an international network of libraries of accessible materials.
6. IFLA supports efforts to ensure that copyright legislation enables equal access by people with a print disability to information from all libraries and information providers

7. In addition to meeting legislative requirements, IFLA encourages the observation of universal design principles, guidelines and standards to ensure that library and information services, collections, technologies, equipment and facilities meet the identified needs of users with a print disability.

Implementing

To promote the implementation of the statements in this document, IFLA encourages:

- Decision-makers at international, national and local levels to continuously develop and execute action plans for library and information services to persons with a print disability;
- Decision-makers at international, national and local levels to include in their action plans mechanisms for (self) monitoring the progress made on the implementation;
- All funding bodies to adequately resource library and information services for person with a print disability.

Endorsed by the Governing Board of IFLA, Den Haag, The Netherlands, 4 April 2012.