



Report by IFLA President Donna Scheeder

The presidential agenda for 2016 focused on two major areas: the call to action and the critical role of libraries in achieving the 2030 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

In 2016 as President of IFLA I delivered the Call to Action throughout the World. I am pleased to report to you that the 2016 association year saw enormous progress on answering the call to action. IFLA membership and librarians all over the world have embraced the challenges to libraries and our profession and are answering with innovative services and a passionate commitment to meeting the needs of their communities.

As President of IFLA it is important to me to bring the call to action to you directly. I was honoured to be asked to speak at national meetings in Germany, Sweden, China, Cuba, Mexico, the United States, Canada and India. These visits allowed me to see amazing work to transform libraries all over the world, in many cases without an infusion of new monetary resources and to personally meet and thank my colleagues in these countries who are unable to come to the IFLA Congress.

The Call to Action: Building the Change Agenda for the Information Profession was the theme of the first President's meeting held in Toronto in April. A diverse group of speakers including Don Tapscott, author of the Blockchain Revolution, discussed the continually accelerating pace of change in society and innovative solutions and ideas employed by librarians from all parts of the world. Attendees all agreed that our profession is rooted in a common value system and mission but the way we accomplish our mission differs and is dependent on what our communities need.

As President, I also continued my mission to rally the global library community to seize the opportunity presented by the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). IFLA successfully advocated at the United Nations in 2015 to have access to information included. In 2016 library professionals needed to seize the opportunity to have libraries included as part of national development plans. Not only was this an important part of my presidential message at the national conferences but I was able to deliver it to political decision makers at the World E-parliament meeting in Korea and at the Global Forum on World Culture held in Bali.

Helping librarians and library associations gain the advocacy skills needed to make this happen became the major focus of the IFLA advocacy program. Workshops were held in Europe, Latin America, Africa and Asia. As a result, participants from more than 73 countries are carrying out awareness-raising and advocacy activities to show the important role libraries play in development, and to ensure libraries are included in the national development plans created to achieve the goals in the UN 2030 Agenda.

As President, I also represented the Board of Directors at the first ever Building Strong Library Associations (BSLA) Global Meeting, hosted by IFLA in partnership with the Philippine Librarians Association (PLAI). The meeting highlighted the stories, challenges and successes from associations that have participated in the programme since the expansion of the programme to a regional model since 2014 across Africa, Asia Oceania, and Latin America and the Caribbean. Strong library associations are needed to answer any call to action and I asked the leaders present to make concrete plans to collaborate and to work to advance the library field, and to support IFLA's global advocacy work.

However, no 2016 achievement may be as important to the future of IFLA and its members as the development of the IFLA Global Libraries Legacy Grant and its acceptance by Global Libraries. I am proud to have been a part of the leadership team that is making the dream to transform libraries and IFLA itself and to have a strong IFLA presence in every region a reality.

Finally, while my role as President makes me one of the more visible members of IFLA's leadership, the IFLA Governing Board has played a key role in guaranteeing that IFLA is successful and is delivering value to its members. The Governing Board continues to provide important strategic direction and groups of Governing Board members have provided oversight and critical input to the achievement of IFLA strategic initiatives. A major achievement of the IFLA Governing Board in 2016 was the selection of Gerald Leitner as the new Secretary General. I am happy to say this selection was met with great enthusiasm by the IFLA membership at the 2016 World Library and Information Congress (WLIC).

I am grateful for all the support I have received as President from both staff and members and I look forward to continuing to serve in 2017.

Donna Scheeder

President 2015-2017