

**General Resolutions of the 63rd Council and General Conference**  
**August 31 - September 5, 1997**  
**Copenhagen Denmark**

**3. COUNCIL RESOLUTION**

I. At present, IFLA has five working languages. This greatly facilitates the exchanges and cooperation between the libraries of different countries as well as the promotion of access to documentation the world over. If Chinese can be added to the working languages of IFLA, this will be immensely beneficial to IFLA and to the librarians in China and other countries.

II. The resolution we are recommending is based on the following considerations:

- 1) The Chinese language is one of the working languages of the UN;
- 2) Chinese is one of the languages used by the largest number of people in the world, an average of one person among four uses Chinese;
- 3) In China alone, there are no less than 600,000 persons working in libraries and information centres. They are very keen to have exchanges with their counterparts throughout the world, however, the great majority of them are handicapped by the language barrier;
- 4) The 1996 62nd IFLA Beijing Conference proves that there is no problem to include Chinese as a working language of IFLA.

III. The following are the advantages of including Chinese as a working language:

- 1) As a professional international organization, IFLA will thus have a wider basis;
- 2) It will facilitate the 600,000 Chinese librarians to cooperate with the international library community;
- 3) A predicted increase of at least 200 delegates from China;
- 4) The difficulties thereby brought to IFLA Headquarters and the organizing committee of the host country in translation and simultaneous interpretation, etc., can be met by the registration fees of the 200 participants;
- 5) China can give necessary assistance in, for instance, simultaneous interpretation.

IV. We hope that our reasonable recommendation will meet the understanding and support of the IFLA Executive Board, Council and its members.

We deem that this shall be a significant action adopted on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of IFLA.

Signed by:

Liu Xangsheng, China Society for Library Science; Stephen Sam, Macao Library and Information Management Association; Jane Chen, Guangxi State Library, Shirley Quanhong Huang, Guangxi State Library; Sun Liping, National Library of China. Ma Yuanhiang, Shanghai Library, Wang-Li Lo, Shanghai Administrative College Library. Jan S.G. Hu, Taiwan University; Teresa Wang Chang, Bureau of International Exchange of Publications, Ellen Hao-yung Liu, National Chung Hsing University, Berdiga Rieva, Karakhstan National Library, Wu Che-fu, National Palace Museum; Grace Cheng, Hospital Authority Ho Library, Cheng-gong Zhu, Tsinghua University Library, Lily Lecskes, Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian, Washington DC, USA; Leena Siitonen, Catholic University of Avila, Spain;

Marta Terry, Biblioteca Nacional Jose Marti, Havana, Cuba

#### **4. COUNCIL RESOLUTION**

The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) is a non-governmental international association representing libraries and librarians in 145 countries throughout the world. At its General Conference in Copenhagen from 31st August - 5th September 1997, which was attended by over 2.500 delegates, IFLA General Conference discussed the situation in the public libraries in four municipalities in France, which have been subject to the censorship of books and periodicals by the local authorities and where the neutrality and impartiality of librarians has been seriously questioned. The pressure on librarians has been so strong that some have been forced to change their jobs.

IFLA strongly supports the UNESCO Public Library Manifesto which states that:

"The public library, the local gateway to knowledge, provides a basic condition for lifelong learning, independent decision-making and cultural development of the individual and social groups."

"Collections and services should not be subject to any form of ideological, political or religious censorship, nor commercial pressures."

IFLA views these developments in the French municipalities with grave concern, as a serious infringement of the Manifesto, and urges:

- that all municipalities in France firmly support the principles of the UNESCO Public Library Manifesto
- that the French government takes urgent measures to guarantee the ability of public libraries and librarians to act in accordance with the Manifesto
- that the Deputies and Senators of the French Parliament enact legislation that will confirm the right of public librarians to provide collections and services free of ideological, political and religious censorship and which will support the impartiality of librarians.

IFLA General Conference expresses its strong support for the right of librarians to develop services which provide free and unfettered access to information and knowledge and which reflect the plurality and diversity of society and will continue to work actively on their behalf.

Proposed and approved by all officers of Division III:

- Libraries Serving the General Public

Sissel Nilsen, Chair

Philip Gill, Secretary Section of Public Libraries

Marie-Martine Tomitch, Secretary General of Association of General Librarians