

**16th SCECSAL MEETING
KAMPALA, UGANDA**

COUNTRY REPORT

**SOUTH AFRICA
(July 2004)**

16TH STANDING CONFERENCE OF EASTERN, CENTRAL AND SOUTHERN AFRICAN LIBRARY AND INFORMATION ASSOCIATIONS

SOUTH AFRICA COUNTRY REPORT 2002-2004

Mr Robert Moropa
President
Library and Information Association of South Africa (LIASA)

INTRODUCTION:

The LIASA National Office is currently in a restructuring phase. The Carnegie Corporation of New York awarded a grant for the establishment of a Centre for Information Career Development. The LIASA leadership has a challenging task of establishing this exciting new project. LIASA is in the process of appointing the Project Coordinator (PC). The main function of the incumbent of this position will be to establish a Centre for Information Career Development (CICD) project and to co-ordinate and manage its activities. One of the main responsibilities of the PC is to reach out to Library Associations in sub-Saharan countries.

Another event which LIASA is looking forward to and which is already being planned, is the World Library and Information Congress: 73rd International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) General Conference and Council 2007 (WLIC/IFLA 2007), which LIASA will be hosting. The opportunity to host this prestigious international event will bring many new opportunities for LIASA, the LIS sector and the entire country. It will be held at the International Convention Centre in Durban, South Africa.

MEMBERSHIP:

The total paid up membership in September 1999 comprised 916 members. There has been an annual increase in the total membership since then. The Association welcomed 230 new members in 2000 and 397 who joined in 2001. The total paid up membership in September 2002 was 1595, of which 547 were new members. The total paid up membership in September 2003 was 1705, of which 528 were new members. The most recent membership figures for 2004 (June 2004) indicate that the Association has 1625 paid up members of which 422 are new members. The September 2004 figures will show an increase. This is the period, when many members renew membership – the period prior and during conference. The issue of members not renewing their membership remains a concern for the LIASA leadership. The leadership has thus devised a number of action plans to address the issue. The Association has a membership strategy which is currently being implemented to encourage all the structures within LIASA to actively recruit new members and to encourage current members to renew. A National Membership Recruitment Campaign was held during April and May 2004, and it was decided that it will be held on an annual basis.

REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL AND EXCO:

Since the 2000 elections, elections were held again in 2002. Yet again it is time for elections. The Representative Council and Executive Committee for 2004-2006 will be announced at the 7th Annual LIASA Conference to be held in Polokwane Limpopo, from 27 September to 1 October 2004. The new Committees will assume office on 1 October 2004. The next two years will be exciting and challenging for the newly elected members of the LIASA leadership.

BRANCHES AND INTEREST GROUPS:

The ten branches of LIASA are holding elections before the National Elections. Branch Executive Committees are also being elected for a 2-year period. All new Branch Exco's will have their first meeting at the 7th Annual LIASA Conference in September. Decision-making and discussions around the Branch Constitution and other matters will take place to familiarise new portfolio holders of their different tasks.

Apart from the nine existing Interest Groups, a new interest group was established at the 6th Annual Conference in 2003. The Library and Information Communication Technology will table its Constitution at the 2004 Conference. All LIASA members are looking forward to see the growth of this interest group, which has already drawn a number of members. All interest groups are actively involved on Branch level as well, with established sub-committees in most regions of the ten Branches. Pre-Conference Workshops for Interest Groups are usually being held on the Monday prior to commencement of the Annual LIASA Conference.

COMMUNICATION AND MARKETING:

Significant progress in the area of communications has been made since its development in 2001 and thereafter, and achievements include:

- Regular updates on events to Representative Council members, including lists of contact details of the different committees, library heads of academic institutions, LIS schools in South Africa and metro and provincial libraries
- Regular postings on Listservs, eg LIASAonline sponsored by Sabinet Online, SABINEWS, AFLIB-L, IFLANET. These announcements are reaching more and more members, especially in rural areas where internet access is now being established
- Quarterly issues of *LIASA-IN-TOUCH* are being published
- Bi-annual publishing of the *South African Journal of Libraries and Information Science*
- A new LIASA website was launched in March 2004
- A website for the 14th SCECSAL Conference 2002 is still available, which include the conference proceedings

The LIASAonline listserv is running very smoothly and all members of LIASA worldwide have access to all announcements being made within the LIS sector. It is very popular in announcing events being held by Branches and Interest Groups, and even international members are making use of the listserv to announce conferences and other international events pertaining to LIS.

The Minister of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology has been approached to formally declared the 2nd week of March of each year as South African Library Week, as an annual government calendar event. We are still awaiting response to this request, and trust that it will be favourable. This year's Library Week celebrations with the theme: "1994-2004: Libraries in a Decade of Democracy" was hosted by the Western Cape Branch in Cape Town. To celebrate 10 years of democracy, a competition was launched in which the top ten bestsellers of the decade by South African writers, have been nominated. We are proud to announce these top ten bestsellers in winning order:

1. Country of my skull by Antjie Krog
2. Long Walk to Freedom by Nelson Mandela
3. Disgrace by J M Coetzee ^
4. A place called Vatmaar by AHM Scholtz (also in Afrikaans)
5. The Day Gogo went to vote by Elinor Sisulu (also in Xhosa)
6. Beyond the miracle by Allister Sparks
7. Triomf by Marlene van Niekerk
8. Madonna of Excelsior by Zakes Mda
9. Madiba Magic: Nelson Mandela's favourite stories for children
10. Change of tongue by Antjie Krog

A number of these ten books have been donated to LIASA by the authors/ publishers, and will be issued to libraries countrywide. All libraries participated in the celebrations with excitement, with the National Theme as directive.

An announcement has just been made that South African Library Week 2005 will be celebrated during 14 - 18 March 2005 with the theme " Libraries: opening the doors of learning and culture to all".

The publication with the title ***South African Journal of Libraries and Information Science*** is published bi-annually by LIASA, and has drawn a number of people in the LIS sector to publish their research papers. Subscription of this publication is open for everybody interested in the LIS, and not only for

members of LIASA. People interested in subscribing to the Journal at US\$ 110.00, can contact the LIASA National Office in Pretoria, South Africa, by sending an e-mail to liasa@liasa.org.za.

The 5th Annual LIASA Conference was held in Port Elizabeth in the Eastern Cape in 2002. The conference drawn a surprising 763 number of delegates. The theme of this Conference was "The revitalization of libraries for the 21st Century". It was attended by a number of international speakers, including the former Secretary General of IFLA, Mr Ross Shimmons and his wife Pat.

In 2003 the 6th Annual LIASA Conference was hosted by the North West Province in Rustenburg. The Conference with the theme "Tsoga o itirele : Libraries as agents of change" was attended by 775 delegates. A number of international speakers, one of which was the President of the American Library Association, Ms Carla Haydn attended the conference.

The 7th Annual LIASA Conference will be held in Polokwane, Limpopo Province from 27 September to 1 October 2004." Everybody is looking forward to this event with the theme: "Libraries and Democracy : The Vital Link", to continue celebrating 10 years of democracy. If you look at the grow in number attending the LIASA conferences, we are expecting to have a much larger number of delegates. The keynote speaker at the conference is Mr Alex Byrne, President Elect of IFLA.

The following awards are being granted on an annual basis. Announcement of the winners and recognition is being given at the Annual General Meeting on the last day of each LIASA Conference:

SABINET Online sponsored four awards for the following categories:

- Academic librarian of the
- School librarian of the year
- Public librarian of the year
- Support Staff member of the year

RELATIONS WITH OTHER LIBRARY ASSOCIATIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Relations with other library associations and partnerships, include the following:

1. IFLA

The former IFLA President, Ms Christine Deschamps, visited South Africa in March 2003. During her stay she paid a visit to Kwazulu Natal, where she met with Ms Ellen Tise, former President of LIASA and Chairperson of WLIC/IFLA 2007, and Ms Nohra Moerat, National PRO. Ms Deschamps was taken on a tour of the ICC, where WLIC/IFLA 2007 will be hosted. Back in Pretoria, she was taken on a tour to the University of Pretoria, the National Library of South Africa and also met with Dr Graham Dominy, Chief Director National Archives of South Africa, Department of Arts and Culture. She also visited the Gauteng South Branch of LIASA, where she was taken on a visit to the French Institute of South Africa and had a meeting at Alliance Francaise of South Africa.

As mentioned in the Introduction, LIASA was honoured in winning the bid to host the 73rd WCIC/IFLA Conference in 2007. A National Advisory Council (NAC) has been selected with Ms Ellen Tise, former President of LIASA, as the Chairperson. The first meeting of the NAC was held in Durban on Friday 14 May 2004. Arrangements for the conference are going well and the conference is being advertised world wide. LIASA hopes to draw a large number of delegates to this very important event in the history of LIASA.

2. SCECSAL

The 15th SCECSAL meeting which was held in Johannesburg, South Africa, was attended by 415 delegates from Associate Members of SCECSAL, including delegates from Finland, Canada, Sweden, United States of America and Australia. Ms Christine Deschamps, then President of IFLA, was a guest speaker at the conference. A number of keynote speakers from Associate Members and other international associations have been invited to the conference. Ms Kay Raseroka, current President of IFLA, delivered the keynote address on the first day of conference.

The President of LIASA, Mr Robert Moropa, is the Chairperson for the 16th SCECSAL conference being held in Kampala, Uganda from 5 – 9 July 2004. Mr Moropa is being sponsored by the Department of Arts and Culture to attend the conference.

3. **COMLA**

Mr Morris Mabasa represented LIASA at the COMLA Council Meeting and COMLA/CILIP Pre-IFLA seminar held in London on 14-16 August 2002. The theme of the seminar was "Connecting Citizens and Governance for a Civil Society : A Role for Librarians". Mr Mabasa expressed his gratitude for the opportunity not only for the privilege to improve his knowledge, but also to network with colleagues from Bangladesh, Barbados, Botswana, Ghana, India, Jamaica, Kenya, Malawi, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, Sierra Leone, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Trinidad & Tobago, Uganda and the United Kingdom. At the COMLA Council meeting, Dr Joseph Uta from Malawi was elected as President.

4. **SOUTH AFRICAN LIBRARY LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME (SALLP)**

The South African Library Leadership Project is a partnership project between LIASA and the Mortenson Center for International Library Programs at the University of Illinois, Urbana Champaign, and is funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. The original grant has been extended by a further six months and \$50 000.00 for a third group of SA librarians to participate in this training programme.

The primary and distinct goal of the Programme is to develop leadership qualities in current and future managers of academic, public/community, and national library services. The objectives of the Programme are: -

- § To develop leadership qualities
- § To refine communication and advocacy skills
- § To highlight current best practices and future trends in the management of library services
- § To learn about change management and organizational structures

Throughout the Project, participants will develop their IT skills as a tool in the LIS field and enhance their training and presentation skills.

It is envisaged that by the end of the Project, a total of twenty five library professionals will have participated herein. The first round focused on managers who have demonstrated their vision for the future of the profession in South Africa and are actively working in innovative ways to improve library services in the country. The second round encouraged applications from professionals who are not yet senior managers but who are poised to move into these positions. The Selection for the third round is being made from nominations received from the 10 LIASA branches, interest groups and/or local conference arrangement committees of professionals who are also deemed middle management at their institutions.

This initiative has certainly made a difference to the LIS in South Africa.

5. **WORLD LIBRARY PARTNERSHIP (WLP)**

In March 2002, the World Library Partnership (WLP) (a US based non-profit organisation which sends volunteers to South Africa to work in rural school libraries) established its regional office within the infrastructure of the LIASA National Office. Miss Maggie Hite, the Regional Co-ordinator for South Africa, is managing the WLP SA programs. Thus far several programs have been put into place in Kwazulu Natal and Limpopo provinces. This continues to be an important partnership and we hope to establish similar partnerships in the future.

Another important aspect of the WLP programs is the development of the LLYNC (Library Leadership Youth Network Committees) in schools and community libraries. LLYNC is aimed at supporting the promotion and sustenance of libraries through library work assistance, networking, youth mentorship and empowerment, outreach and participation in civil society. WLP recruited Bally Monchonyane, library youth volunteer from the local township library, Saulsville, for Library Internship and now, in 2004, he is the Program Assistant Intern. He is also co-ordinating the LLYNC program which has 14 of these

committees in Kwazulu Natal and Limpopo provinces as well as Saulsville Library in Pretoria. In January 2004 WLP launched the annual LLYNC-Oberlin Program in partnership with the Oberlin College from USA, which sends their students to mentor and work with the local learners in reading promotion through various school, library and community activities. LIASA is very proud to have a partnership like this, and foresees a great future for the World Library Partnership.

ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF 2003-2004

June/July 2002	1 st Round SALLP candidates to University of Illinois, USA for 8 weeks training
September 2002	5 th Annual LIASA Conference and elections, Port Elizabeth
March 2003	South African Library Week held in Kuruman, Northern Cape – Theme: “Your Right to Read”
June 2003	Mortensen Centre of University of Illinois, USA visit LIASA and libraries of 1 st round SALLP candidates
July 2003	2 nd Round SALLP candidates to University of Illinois, USA
August 2003	Visit by Ms Rookaya Bawa, President of the Carnegie Corporation of New York
September 2003	6 th Annual LIASA Conference, Rustenburg Executive Director and Professional Officer of LIASA resigned
October 2003	Appointment of Acting Office Manager to fulfil Executive Director tasks
March 2004	- New LIASA Website launched 1 March 2004 - Minister of Energy, Sport, Arts & Culture announced NaCLIS (National Council for Libraries and Information Services) Committee (most of them are members of LIASA) - Launch of South African Library Week in Cape Town. Theme: “Libraries in a Decade of Democracy”
April 2004	Carnegie announced grant awarded for establishment of CICD
June 2004	Appointment of Project Co-ordinator for CICD project and Acting Office Manager for LIASA (names to be announced 2 July 2004)
July 2004	Mortensen Centre of University of Illinois, USA visit LIASA and libraries of 2 nd round SALLP candidates

CONCLUSION:

All of the above achievements wouldn't have been possible without the generous grants awarded by partners of LIASA and sponsors. Special thanks are hereby extended to the Department of Arts and Culture and our regular sponsors, the hard work and commitment of LIASA staff members and all office bearers from the Representative Council, Branch Committees, Interest Groups Committees, volunteers and our many members and supporters

Robert Moropa
PRESIDENT: LIASA
24 June 2004