

Report on the GIOPS Program at the IFLA 2009 Conference in Milan, Italy

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1. Introduction

The IFLA 2009 Conference (World Library and Information Congress: 75th IFLA General Conference and Assembly) was held on August 23–27, 2009 at the Fiera Milano Convention Centre (MIC) in Milan, Italy.

The Government Information and Official Publications Section (GIOPS) program was held from 11:45 to 13:45 on August 26, under the title of “Government Publications as Cultural Heritage: Preserving the Past, Keeping Up with the Present, Embracing the Future.” The program was chaired by Ms. Jackie Druery, who is also the outgoing chair of GIOPS.

All the presentations at the program dealt with the challenges of managing and archiving digital government information. The speakers particularly stressed on the issues of policies and legislation concerning the management of and access to government information and official publications.

Papers presented at the program are available in their entirety at the IFLA website.

2. Presentations and papers

Five presentations by six speakers representing five countries—USA, Botswana, India, China, and Libya—were delivered at the program. Given below are brief descriptions of the papers in the order of their presentation.

- Judy Mansfield and Beacher Wiggins presented a paper titled “Transformation of the U.S. International Exchange Service: Project Report.” They discussed the challenges faced by the International Exchange Service as well as the progress in government websites and e-government. They also provided information on new programs including an international project for the exchange of electronic government information. Their paper is available at <http://www.ifla.org/files/hq/papers/ifla75/175-mansfield-en.pdf>.
- Violet Radiporo’s (University of Botswana, Gaborone, Botswana) paper “Botswana Government Publications: Turning the Pages of Culture,” concerned current issues pertaining to the management of and access to government information in Botswana. She suggested solutions, including the establishment of the “National Information Center,” to support online initiatives to increase the availability of government information. Her paper is available at <http://www.ifla.org/files/hq/papers/ifla75/175-radiporo-en.pdf>.
- Paramajeet K. Walia (University of Delhi, Delhi, India) discussed her detailed analysis of government websites in India and highlighted the imbalance in the creation and management of the websites with respect to different regions and subject matter. Her paper,

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“Access to Government Information in India in the Digital Environment,” is available at <http://www.ifla.org/files/hq/papers/ifla75/175-walia-en.pdf>.

- Jin Xuemei (Shenzhen Science and Technology Library, Shenzhen, China) introduced recent developments in the public availability of government information in the People’s Republic of China, including the national-level regulation passed in 2008, which designates national archives and public libraries as “public access points” to government information. She also pointed out the challenges in enforcing such regulation for public libraries. Her paper, “Providing Government Information and Services in the Chinese Public Library,” is available at <http://www.ifla.org/files/hq/papers/ifla75/175-xuemei-en.pdf>.
- Ramadan Elaieess (University of Garyounis, Benghazi, Libya) was unable to attend the program, but his paper “General Guidelines for Design of a Low-Cost Digital Library for Special Library Users in Developing Countries and the Arabic Speaking World” is available at <http://www.ifla.org/files/hq/papers/ifla75/175-elaieess-en.pdf>

Photos from the IFLA 2009 Conference



Conference venue: Fiera Milano Convention Centre



Opening greetings by Prof. Mauro Guerrini, President of the Italian National Committee, IFLA 2009



Presentation by Dr. Walia at the GIOPS program



Presenters and the Chair (Ms. Druery) at the end of the GIOPS program