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**Bureau of the Intergovernmental Council  
for the Information for All Programme  
(Twenty-first Meeting)**

28 February 2013  
09:30 a.m.- 12:30 p.m – 2:30 - 5:30 p.m.- Room XVI

**Final Report**

## Introduction

The twenty-first session of the Bureau of the Intergovernmental Council for the Information for All Programme (IFAP) was held in Room XVI, UNESCO House, Paris, Bonvin Building, on 28 February 2013.

The following Members of the Bureau participated:

Chair-person	Mr. Evgeny Kuzmin	Russian Federation
Vice-Chairpersons	Mr. Dietrich Schüller	Austria
	Mr. Sonny Coloma	The Philippines
	Mr. Eric Nurse and Ms. Chafica Haddad	Grenada
Members	Mr Mohamed Sheya	United Republic of Tanzania
	H.E. Mrs. Sanita Pavluta-Deslandes, and Ms. Una Kepite for Mr. Andrejs Vasiljevs	Latvia
	Mr. Omar Al Shanfari and Mr Saif Hamad Albusaidi	Oman
Rapporteur	Ms. Juliana Angulo Morales and Mr Francisco Gutierrez for Ms. Sonia Sarmiento	Colombia

Apologies were received from the Representative of Latvia as well as from the Rapporteur (Colombia) who was represented by Ms. Juliana Angulo Morales and Mr. Francisco Gutierrez

The Director-General of UNESCO was represented by Mr. Jānis Kārklīņš, Assistant Director-General for Communication and Information. A number of observers representing Member States also attended the meeting.

### Item - 1 Opening

On confirmation of the quorum (Austria, Colombia, Grenada, Latvia, Oman, Russian Federation, Tanzania and The Philippines), the meeting was opened by the IFAP Chair. The Chair in his remarks welcomed the newly designated Representative of Grenada and acknowledged the presence of observers from the Permanent Delegations to UNESCO of Belgium and Peru. He congratulated Bureau Members and the Secretariat on the successful organization of the IFAP Special Event held on 27 February 2013 in the frame of the World Summit on the Information Society + 10 Review meeting, and shared the numerous messages of appreciation that he had received on behalf of IFAP members and partners.

In recapping various activities organized in the framework of IFAP since the 20<sup>th</sup> IFAP Bureau held on 4 April 2012, he drew attention to the growing body of evidence of IFAP's increasing global visibility, presence and impact. In particular, he cited the participation of some 140 countries in IFAP activities organized since 2008. However, he called upon the Bureau members, Members States and the Secretariat to continue their efforts of promoting the work of the IFAP as many

decision-makers, even in countries benefitting from IFAP seemed to be oblivious to the strides made by the Program.

In his words of welcome ADG/CI reflected on the activities undertaken by IFAP Bureau and the Secretariat since the last IFAP Bureau meeting and highlighted their importance, intensity and impact notwithstanding the considerable constraints of financial and human resources faced by the Organization. Attention was drawn by ADG/CI to the achievements in the areas of Information Ethics and Information Preservation. The extensive consultations with Member States had resulted in a report “UNESCO and the ethical dimension of the Information Society” adopted by the Executive Board at its 190<sup>th</sup> session. The C10 Action Line study “Current and emerging ethical and societal challenges of the information society” was well received at the WSIS + 10 Review Event and specific text on the ethical issues had been integrated into the final recommendations adopted at this Event.

Information Preservation, was another high point in the year of activities which built on the work of the Moscow Conference on Digital Preservation which had yielded a declaration and served to stimulate other actions that culminated in UNESCO international conference “The Memory of the World in the Digital Age: Digitization and Preservation”, organized in Vancouver with the support of governments, the private sector, academia, professional bodies and other stakeholders.

ADG/CI informed the Bureau that CI Sector received some US \$1.2 million from the Director-General’s Emergency Fund. A significant portion of these funds was being utilized to reinforce IFAP activities in Africa and the Caribbean. Forthcoming activities, such as the “First Regional Latin American and Caribbean Consultation on Open Access to Scientific Information and Research”, a capacity-building workshop for policy-makers being organized in Kingston Jamaica from 4-8 March and in which approximately 27 GRULAC countries would be participating was also mentioned.

As it was not possible, due to prior commitments for ADG/CI to be present for the entire Bureau meeting, the Bureau decided to benefit from his presence by having an exchange on matters covered under various Agenda items such as the preparation of the C/4 and C/5 documents and efforts underway to restructure the Organization to more effectively deliver in UNESCO’s mandated fields of competence. In particular, the Bureau requested ADG/CI’s clarification on the circulating reports which suggested that consideration was being given to transferring various functions of the CI Sector’s Knowledge Society Division to other sectors of the Organization. The Chair and several Bureau members expressed at length their opposition to any diminution of the roles and functions of the CI Sector (Austria, Grenada, Russian Federation and Tanzania).

Specific attention was given to the future of the Memory of the World (MOW) Programme. The Bureau questioned the ability of the Culture Sector, to manage the full-breadth and scope of the MOW Programme. In their expert views, the MOW Programme is far more than the preservation of documentary heritage. It has also proven its pertinence in promoting the key dimensions of knowledge transmission, in developing capacity building initiatives and in strengthening other important aspects of IFAP's priorities. Therefore, the Bureau insisted on the fact that the MOW Programme is not within the competencies of the Culture Sector, and such a transfer would in their view compromise the MOW's Programme current efficiency, impact and future prospects.

ADG/CI thanked the Bureau for their support and while acknowledging their desire to be informed of the final organizational structure, content and functions envisaged in the C/4 and C/5 documents, pointed out that the situation was an evolving one. Various options were still being explored internally and through the various discussions that the Director-General was having with Member States. Grenada was of the view that the CI Sector was actively engaged in and a good promoter and example of transversal cooperation as evidenced by the recent WSIS + 10 Review Event and so should be strengthened.

In this regard, it was the unanimous position of the Bureau that any reform which resulted in the transfer and reduction of the Programmes of the CI Sector or reduction of the IFAP priorities was inadmissible. Furthermore, the IFAP Chair underlined the high regard in which IFAP and its ongoing work was held by its international partner organizations as well as various eminent individuals, citing notable persons such as Mr Adama Samassekou, who had praised IFAP for its contribution to the humanizing of the global information society. In addition, from his vantage point as the President of 2003 WSIS and his ongoing membership in various international ICT for development initiatives and forums, Mr Samassekou was particularly well-placed to assess IFAP's significance and contributions. The Bureau therefore agreed that the Chair would send on its behalf a communique to the Director-General to outline its views and to highlight the dangers that UNESCO could face in implementing such a proposal.

The Bureau requested ADG/CI to convey to the Director-General their position concerning the dismantling of the current functions of the CI Sector. Rather, it was the Bureau's view that the CI Sector should be maintained and further strengthened.

ADG/CI thanked the Bureau members for their support and while acknowledging their desire to be informed of the final organizational structure, content and functions envisaged in the C/4 and C/5 documents, pointed out that the situation was an evolving one. Various options were still being explored internally and through the various discussions that the Director-General was having with

Member States. He reassured the Bureau that the reform being implemented was aimed at increasing efficiency, reducing existing redundancies, enhancing transversal work between UNESCO's Sectors and modernizing the Organization to respond effectively to the emerging challenges.

Given IFAP's role as an Intergovernmental advisory body, it was the Bureau's view that IFAP should be closely involved in any consultations on the future of the CI Sector. ADG/CI thanked the Bureau for its views and promised to convey these to the Director-General.

### **Item2 - Adoption of the Agenda**

The Chairperson invited comments and proposals regarding the proposed Agenda of the meeting. Austria took the floor to suggest further cooperation with NGOs and professional bodies, in particular by including their presence in IFAP council and bureau meetings.

There were no amendments to the Agenda and it was adopted unanimously by the Bureau.

### **Item – 3 Adoption of the report of the 20<sup>th</sup> IFAP Bureau**

The Chairperson invited comments and proposals regarding the report of the 20<sup>th</sup> IFAP Bureau, it was approved without amendments.

### **Item – 4 Review of the recommendations of the 7<sup>th</sup> IFAP Council and the 20<sup>th</sup> IFAP Bureau**

The Bureau expressed satisfaction with the efforts undertaken to implement the recommendations of the Council and Bureau.

### **Item 5 – Review of major IFAP activities by the IFAP Bureau and the Secretariat**

The IFAP Chair spoke of the various achievements made at the International Conference on Media and Information Literacy for Knowledge Societies organized in Moscow from 24 – 28 June 2012 at which some 130 experts from 40 countries had participated. Event outcomes included the "Moscow Declaration on Media and Information Literacy" which contained recommendation for fostering information literate societies, as well as conference proceedings. The event was undertaken by IFAP in close cooperation with IFLA and the Secretariat with the financial support of the Government of the Russian Federation. Further details of the event can be found on-line on the websites of UNESCO and the Russian National IFAP Committee.

The Secretariat made mention of the important role played by the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) in co-organizing the international expert panel “Internet Ethics and Internet Governance: identity, design, data and preservation”, organized at the 7th Internet Governance Forum in Baku, Azerbaijan. UNECA had also partnered with IFAP to organize an expert panel on Information Ethics in Nairobi, Kenya at the 6th IGF. Similar cooperation was therefore envisaged for the upcoming 8th IGF in Bali, Indonesia. The Secretariat encouraged other Working Groups to partner with WSIS Action Line Coordinators to organize events related to their priority areas in Indonesia so as to enhance their visibility and outreach.

#### **Item 6 - Reports by the IFAP Bureau Chair and Members of the IFAP Working Groups (written) on their respective activities**

The IFAP Chair in his capacity as Chair of the Working Group on Multilingualism presented an oral report of the major activities undertaken since the last Bureau. The Chair informed the meeting that in the framework of cooperation with the MAAYA network, he had authored one chapter in the publication “Net.Lang: Towards a multilingual cyberspace”. A number of internationally renowned experts had contributed to this book which was published in English and French. The Chair provided an update on the activities of the Centre for Multilingualism which was established in Yakutsk, Russian Federation, as a result of the First International Conference on Linguistic and Cultural Diversity in Cyberspace organized in Yakutsk in 2008. The Centre was playing a major role in preserving local languages, the teaching of foreign and local languages and contributing to research and policy work. A number of papers were presented by the Centre’s faculty members during the Third International Symposium on Multilingualism in Cyberspace organized in Paris by MAAYA from 21 – 23 November 2013. IFAP was also closely involved in the organization of this event and the IFAP Chair had also participated as a member of the International Scientific Committee. Reference was also made to of the Working Group’s contribution to the IFAP Special Event at WSIS+10 meeting.

The full-text of the written report submitted by the Information Ethics Working Group’s chair (Latvia) is available on the IFAP website. Key activities undertaken included the international panel entitled “Information Ethics and Internet Governance – Identity, design, data and preservation”, organized jointly with the Secretariat on 6 November, 2012 in Baku, Azerbaijan during the 7th Internet Governance Forum (IGF); The IFAP - COMEST event “Cyber and Information Ethics: Fostering and enabling freedom on the Internet”, organized in Geneva on 16 May 2012 during the WSIS Forum; the special report “Current and emerging ethical and societal challenges of the information society” presented at the WSIS + 10 Review within the framework of the WSIS C10 Action Line and the adoption at the 190th session of the Executive Board of the strategy document “UNESCO and the ethical dimensions of the information society”.

The written report submitted by the chair of the Working Group on Information Preservation (Austria) is available on-line and details their activities. These include contributing to the preparation of the international UNESCO conference “The Memory of the World in the Digital Age: Digitization and Preservation”, organized in Vancouver from 26-28 September 2012, and in which several members participated in the international scientific and steering committees and organized conference sessions. The Working Group also provided inputs to the C/4 and C/5 preparatory processes and the discussions around the reform of UNESCO’s internal structure. In particular they have underscored the need to keep the Memory of the World Programme within the CI Sector given its critical role in supporting the sharing and transmission of knowledge from generation to generation.

In its written report (also available on-line), the IFAP Working Group on Media and Information Literacy chaired by the Philippines, presented the outcomes of the International conference on Media and Information Literacy for Knowledge societies organized in Moscow from 24 -28 June 2012, as well as national initiatives organized in the Philippines under the purview of the Ministry of Education. A number of initiatives such as a regional training for librarians in ASEAN countries and a media development capacity-building programme in Myanmar, which will be launched shortly, were presented.

The Information Access Working Group Chair (Oman) focused its presentation on the Free and Open Source Software Conference (FOSSC-Oman' 2013) held in Muscat, from 18-19 February 2013. The event was jointly organized with the Communication and Information Research Center (CIRC) at Sultan Qaboos University (SQU) and the Information Technology Authority (ITA). The event attracted international and regional experts and provided an opportunity to present IFAP’s work and recommendations. As a follow-up to this event further training events are planned that would build on the 45 trainings already conducted in Oman as well as the establishment of a Regional FOSS Centre. Ongoing efforts to support the implementation of the e-accessibility policy adopted by the Government of Oman as well as plans for an international e-accessibility conference to be organized in concert with IFAP and the Secretariat were presented. These efforts will be undertaken in close cooperation with the Information Technology Authority of Oman. The presentation of this Working Group is also available on-line.

The Information for Development Working Group chaired by Tanzania appraised the Bureau in its oral report of the steps it was taking to mobilize potential partners and donors. Through these partnerships it was their intention to establish projects, organize conferences and undertake capacity-building activities in Africa both at the national and regional levels. Appreciation was expressed for the contact details of national experts that had been received. The Working Group Chair indicated he would be shortly contacting these experts to involve them in these efforts.

At the 7th IFAP Council the Secretariat was requested to invite Member States to nominate national experts to participate in the activities of the IFAP Working Groups. In response to the Circular Letter sent by ADG/CI to Member States and National Commission nominations were received from some 18 Member States. Following an examination of the candidates the Bureau unanimously accepted all proposed nominees.

Several Bureau members intervened to express their support to IFAP, as well as to insist in the importance of allocating adequate resources from the 37 C/4 and 37 C/5 in order to ensure the continuity of the Programme.

#### **Item 7 - IFAP activities planned for 2013 and prospects inspired by the IFAP Thematic Debates and the WSIS + 10 Events**

The IFAP Chair announced that the International conference “Internet and Socio-Cultural Transformations in Information Society” will be held in Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk Region, Russian Federation from 8–12 September, 2013, within the framework of the Russian chairmanship of the Intergovernmental Council of the UNESCO Information for All Programme. He further explained that all in-country costs for experts invited to the Sakhalin Event would be covered. To ensure that the necessary pool of expertise was available to provide the desired inter-disciplinary and global perspectives on the far-reaching technological changes being witnessed, some 450 requests for nominations had been sent out to UNESCO Delegations, UNESCO National Commissions, as well as relevant Intergovernmental and professional bodies. The IFAP Chair called on Bureau Members to use their respective networks to promote the event in their regions and to assist with the identification and nomination of experts. The representative of the Philippines expressed his commitment to the success of the Sakhalin event and in particular to providing support for participants from the Asia-Pacific region.

The Philippines shared with the Bureau the ongoing work aimed at building cooperative linkages between the research activities in Media and Information Literacy being conducted at Hong Kong University and the Working Group on Information Literacy. The Philippines was of the opinion that the Bureau should seek to leverage the numerous international experts that had participated in the WSIS + 10 Review by associating them to the activities of the Working Groups.

The representative of Austria emphasized the need to have the four projects, previously submitted for inclusion in the 36C/5 to be considered for inclusion in the work areas to be undertaken in the 37 C/4 and 37 C/5. The rapid deterioration of the digital media on which critical information was stored meant that the time window for taking action was narrowing and urgent interventions were therefore required. Efforts to secure Regular Programme funding and to mobilize extra-budgetary resources for this purpose should be pursued.



Plans for the preparation of an international conference on Information Ethics to be held in Riga were presented by the Working Group on Information Ethics. The event will be carried out with the support of the Foreign Ministry, the Ministry of Environment, the UNESCO National Commission for Latvia and the Secretariat. The event has been planned for 16 and 17 October 2013.

The Bureau also called on the Secretariat to support the publication of World Reports, policy briefs and analytical studies within each of the IFAP priority areas. The Secretariat while acknowledging the importance and significant contribution that these reports made to policy-makers, particularly developing countries, reminded the Bureau that the cost of the last such report, "Towards Knowledge Societies", was over US\$ 1 Million. Furthermore, Member States had requested UNESCO to cease the preparation of such reports. Austria underscored the critical role that World Reports played in enabling UNESCO to undertake informed action in the priority areas which Member States had given it a mandate. Accordingly, it was necessary in Austria's view, to investigate low cost approaches to fulfilling this requirement. The Secretariat pointed to a number of research reports, in the IFAP priority areas, such as the Action Line Reports prepared by UNESCO and presented at the WSIS + 10 Review Event as tangible examples of the Organization's commitment to affordable, quality research, that ensures a sound basis for its actions. The rapid evolutions in the various fields covered by UNESCO when considered against the time required for the validation and preparation of World Reports as well as the clearly expressed wish of Member States militated against the development of this type of report. Notwithstanding the explanations of the Secretariat the IFAP Chair and Austria reiterated that the elaboration of global reports in the IFAP priority areas should be considered.

Mr John Crowley, Secretary of UNESCO's World Commission on the Ethics of Scientific Knowledge and Technology (COMEST), presented an overview of cooperation between the IFAP and COMEST Secretariats. Work in the area of information ethics and the recommendations arising from the C10 Action Line study "Current and emerging ethical and societal challenges of the information society" presented at the WSIS + 10 Review Event were highlighted. A number of opportunities for strengthening cooperation between COMEST and IFAP and increasing their involvement in each other's statutory meetings, standard setting work and the preparation of annual workplan were welcomed and explored with the Bureau. Concrete aspects discussed included: participation of IFAP at the upcoming Ordinary Session of COMEST that would be held in Bratislava, Slovak Republic on 28 and 29 May; for IFAP to participate as panelists in the conference on "Emerging Ethical Issues in Science and Technology", that would be held in Bratislava from 30 - 31 May, 2013; and the involvement of the SHS Sector and COMEST in contributing to the substantive content of the international conference on "Internet and Socio-Cultural Transformations in Information Society", to be held in the Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk Region in

September; as well as participation of COMEST and the SHS Sector in the October Riga Conference.

#### **Item 8 – Discussion of the IFAP review and the preparation of the report to be submitted to the 191st session of UNESCO’s Executive Board**

The Secretariat indicated that the review process had been a successful one based on the UNESCO criteria with some 52 Member States providing responses to the survey questionnaire. Most countries had expressed support for IFAP and its work with fewer than ten countries indicating an opposing view. The IFAP Report was still under preparation but once finalized would be available to all Member States; it would also be presented to the 191<sup>st</sup> session of the Executive Board. The IFAP Review would serve to inform the decision-making process of the Executive Board on the future of the Programme. The IFAP Chair expressed regret that while IFAP had benefitted from the participation of various leading experts with first-hand knowledge of IFAP’s impact and contribution, their viewpoints had not however been reflected in the official responses submitted by some Member States.

One Observer (Peru) while emphasizing the importance, impact and value of IFAP’s interventions throughout Latin America expressed concern over the possible lower level of awareness of this work amongst key decision makers. The Observer was of the view that many of the decisions to be taken on the future of the Programme would be made by Delegations unaware of these tangible impacts. It was therefore essential in their view for IFAP to also organize in addition to its national and international events debates and activities at UNESCO’s Headquarters specifically aimed at reaching this important group of stakeholders.

#### **Item 9 - Financial situation of IFAP**

In the context of questions raised by the Bureau concerning the financial situation of IFAP over the course of the period covered by the IFAP Strategic Plan (2008 – 2013), the Secretariat reported that IFAP had received some US\$ 776,000 from the Regular Programme for the holding of statutory meetings and activities. During the current biennium, as earlier indicated by ADG/CI, IFAP had received financial support through the Director-General’s Multi-donor Emergency Fund to reinforce its activities in Africa and the Caribbean. Contributions of US\$ 230,000 had been received from Spain – this Spanish contribution was left over funds from another project and redirected to the IFAP Special Account with that Government’s authorization - and US\$100,000 from China – received through five annual contributions of US\$ 20,000 - to the IFAP Special Account. The Russian Federation had also reported providing direct funding of some US\$ 400,000 to support IFAP activities organized in 2010 and 2011. The IFAP Chair informed the Bureau that the Russian Federation had made additional direct funding contributions to IFAP with a further US\$

150,000 provided in support of activities undertaken in 2012 and that at least an additional US\$ 150, 000 had been earmarked for activities in 2013.

With regards to the IFAP Special Account, the Secretariat indicated that the balance on this account at 31 December, 2012 was US\$ 148,050.11. A contribution of US\$54,528.20 was received from the Swiss Government – following the approval of the IFAP Chair - in support of the organization of the WSIS + 10 Review Event. The funds were received in the IFAP Special Account to facilitate the timely administration of this financial contribution. This contribution was being liquidated to cover the various WSIS + 10 related expenses.

The Bureau agreed to renew the contract of the Hungarian Institute maintaining the IFAP Observatory for the period June 2013 to June 2014. In line with the earlier decision to gradually phase out the IFAP contribution to this activity the amount of the contract was reduced to US\$ 17,000. Austria emphasized the need to enhance the visibility and impact of the IFAP Observatory as well as its coherence and contribution to the activities of the IFAP Working Groups. In this regard, the Secretariat was requested by the Bureau to include in future contracts an obligation for the Hungarian Institute operating the Observatory to regularly liaise the Working Group Chairs.

The sum of US\$26,000 was approved for the preparation of a report to be launched at UNESCO's 37th General Conference that would highlight the activities and achievements made during the implementation of the IFAP Strategic Plan (2008 -2013).

The Bureau requested an update from the Secretariat on the projects authorized for implementation at its 20<sup>th</sup> meeting. The Secretariat explained that there was no quorum when the decision regarding the allocation of funds was made. In addition, as no responses were received to the subsequent e-mail appeals made by the IFAP Chair, it was not possible for the Secretariat to initiate actions funded from the IFAP Special Account without written instructions from the Bureau or the IFAP Chair. Subsequently, the Bureau briefly discussed some of the proposals presented at its 20th meeting and agreed to approve funding in the amount of US\$20,000 to support the global project initiated by the Secretariat and the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) to support the development and testing of Information Literacy Indicators.

The Bureau also approved the application of an additional 10% of these amounts to cover Programme Support costs related to these three activities.

The Bureau emphasized the importance of having the Secretariat include information on the in-kind contributions made by Member States to IFAP in the financial reports. However, it was recognized that the enumeration and reporting of such contributions was solely at the discretion of Member States and that UNESCO could only certify amounts passed through its administrative channels.

## **Item 10 – Visibility of IFAP**

The IFAP Chair called on all Member States of the Bureau as well as the Secretariat to raise the visibility of IFAP within their regions and amongst all UNESCO Delegations.

Grenada and Tanzania were of the view that while CI actively informed Permanent Delegations through information meetings and other channels about its activities, it was not always clear that some aspects of this work was conducted in the framework of IFAP. As many Member States associated IFAP only with the biennial statutory Council meetings, this gave the impression that nothing was happening. On the other hand, Latvia felt that communication of activities undertaken by IFAP was adequate, but that given the large amount of information received daily by Delegations, only those interested in IFAP were receptive to its communications. Austria felt that bureaucratic procedures prevented direct communication between the Council and Member States which effectively meant that IFAP could only readily communicate internally to its network members.

In response to the request by the Council to increase the visibility of IFAP's national-level activities, the Secretariat presented a proposal to the Bureau for its consideration. This plan called for the provision of each National IFAP Committee with a web-presence to facilitate their visibility and to enhance communication and cooperation with IFAP network members and other stakeholders. Content such as reports, news items, audiovisuals and the contact details of the IFAP network members would be included on the website. Sample websites and a video of IFAP activities in Grenada were presented to illustrate this concept. The websites would be maintained by UNESCO however it would be the responsibility of each National IFAP Committee, IFAP Focal Point or UNESCO National Commission to provide the Secretariat with the content. The Secretariat also proposed similar enhancements to the webpages of the IFAP Working Groups. The Bureau approved the Secretariat's proposal and agreed to promote this in their respective countries and regions.

## **Item 11 – Cooperation with National IFAP Committees**

Ongoing activities and collaborative efforts between the Secretariat and UNESCO Field Offices aimed at strengthening or creating new National IFAP Committees in Grenada, Iran, Mongolia, Paraguay, Trinidad & Tobago, Uruguay and Zambia were presented.

## **Item 12 – Discussion of preparations for the 37th General Conference of UNESCO**

At its 7th session, the IFAP Council endorsed the IFLA Media and Information Literacy Recommendations for submission to the 37th session of UNESCO's General Conference for its

consideration and possible adoption. However several Member States expressed the reserve that there was no international agreement designating information literacy as a basic human right.

Accordingly, the Secretariat sought the advice of UNESCO's Office of Legal Affairs. The matter was subsequently referred to the Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights (OHCHR). In the joint, written opinion received from Mr. Frank La Rue, Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression and Mr. Kishore Singh, Special Rapporteur on the right to education, the OHCHR indicated that there was at this time no international human right instrument which recognized information literacy as a human right.

Following a debate, the Bureau agreed that the text of the IFLA Media and Information Literacy Recommendations could not be presented for adoption in its current form. It was therefore necessary for the Bureau to consult with IFLA on amending this text. The Bureau decided that the representative of the Philippines in his capacity as Chair of the Working Group on Information Literacy would undertake the necessary discussions with the Chairperson of IFLA's Information Literacy Standing Committee and report to the Bureau on the outcomes. The Bureau through a coalition of interested Member States would seek to introduce the finalized text for inclusion in the Agenda of UNESCO 37th General Conference.

A color publication in English and French highlighting the achievements made during the implementation of the IFAP Strategic Plan (2008 - 2012) will be distributed to all UNESCO Delegations attending the 37th General Conference.

The Secretariat and Bureau will prepare the statutory report on IFAP's activities conducted during the 36th biennium. The report will be presented to the 192nd session of UNESCO's Executive Board for transmission to the 37th General Conference.

### **Item 13 – Miscellaneous**

The Secretariat presented the UNESCO Global Report "Opening new avenues for empowerment: ICTs to access information and knowledge for persons with disabilities", to the Bureau. A brief presentation of the report's findings was then made by the lead author, Mr. Axel Leblois, President and Executive Director of the Global Initiative for Inclusive ICTs (G3ict). In his presentation, Mr Leblois chronicled the progress made since the adoption of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2006. He also drew attention to the importance of national statistics on disabilities as an impetus for policy reform, particularly their role in making inequities visible. Although current digital interfaces made it possible for practically all disabilities to be accommodated many persons were not accessing these solutions. Awareness-raising of policy-makers and stakeholders was therefore an important element for ensuring the elimination of

barriers to equitable access. A number of prospects for collaboration with G3ict were identified and will be pursued under the leadership of the Information Access Working Group.

An overview of the volunteer and internship programmes of UNESCO and the opportunities they offer both for reinforcing the Secretariat and enhancing IFAP's activities at the national level was presented. The IFAP Chair encouraged the Bureau to raise awareness of these Programme and to encourage the identification of potential interns and volunteers.

#### **Item 14 – Closure**

The IFAP Chair again underscored the importance of maintaining the integrity of the CI Sector and for strengthening its function. The Bureau thanked the Secretariat for its ongoing contributions to the work of IFAP. There being no further matters to discuss, the Chair closed the meeting at 6:15 p.m.