

borrowing on average 20.65 volumes. Sanwan has held this honor for the last 7 consecutive years. The people of Taitung City go to libraries the most, with each citizen visiting an average of 5.55 times every year. Over 80% of people in Taipei and Keelung have library cards, which is the highest percentage in Taiwan. The people in Lienchiang County own the most books; the average is 10.98 volumes per person which is the highest in Taiwan.



*Opening Remarks from Administrative Deputy Minister of Ministry of Education, Teng-Chiao Lin.*

The MOE announced the information on public reading engagement and reading interest in Taiwan for 2020, as well as the most borrowed books in national public libraries. The report also analyzed the public's reading engagement and commended the top performing and the top improving cities based on multiple indicators, thereby helping to highlight the government's long-term efforts and achievements in reading promotion. In order to continuously cultivate and foster an atmosphere of "loving to read" for the public, books appear to be the spiritual food of the whole population during the epidemic prevention period, and the MOE will invite city and county libraries to recommend people who actively participate in library reading events and who are passionate about reading to share the good books they have read before and to express happiness and warm feelings about reading that can act as a benchmark for encouraging the public to learn more and build a society of active readers. It is certain

that in the future, the MOE will continue to support libraries to enrich their resources, and to assist their creative services so as to ensure the sustainable development of libraries. Such support is definitely a strong back-up force for libraries to improve and enhance their service quality and effectiveness. The MOE will continue to collaborate with counties and cities in maintaining and promoting the development of our nation's public library business, and move forward with the goal of enhancing the reading literacy of the citizens and the quality of library services, which will fulfill the goal of strengthening the nation's soft power.



*NCL Director-General Tseng delivers a presentation for "2020 Annual Report on Reading Atmosphere and Reading Engagement in Taiwan".*

## ■ NCL and Mexican Trade Services Documentation and Cultural Office Collaborate to Help the Public Read and Explore Ancient Mayan Culture

On January 9, 2021, National Central Library and the Mexican Trade Services Documentation and Cultural Office cohosted a new book event called A New Reading Horizon: A Look at Ancient City in Mayan Culture through The Legends of Chiapas, Mexico. It was held at National Central Library. Even though the COVID-19 pandemic has made it difficult to travel abroad, through this book publication event, the public can explore the ancient

indigenous culture of the Mayans and Mexico over the last thousand years.

NCL Director-General Shu-hsien Tseng stated in her remarks that NCL is very willing to work with various institutions as a bridge platform between books and readers. A book publication event is incredibly meaningful in the dissemination of a new book. She thanked Mr. Torres for his sustained support and encouragement of NCL's events over the years. She hopes that this new book event can awaken people in Taiwan to attach more importance to their own local cultural heritage. The book can also deepen cultural exchange and learning between Taiwan and Mexico. Readers young and old who attend library events can expand their horizons to include a multicultural and international perspective. Lastly, Director-General Tseng read a passage from the book and explained that this passage can be used in teaching events in libraries or in schools.



*NCL Director-General Tseng speaks at the new book event and shares her insights from reading the new publication *The Legend of Chiapas, Mexico*.*

When the Mexican Trade Services Documentation and Cultural Office Head Mr. Martin Torres Gutierrez Rubio spoke, he expressed his thanks for the many times NCL and his office have collaborated over the years. They have put together many exhibitions and events to help the people of Taiwan better understand Mexican culture. He also introduced local customs from Mexico to help those attending the event have a greater understanding of the country of Mexico.



*Head of Mexico Office in Taiwan Mr. Martin Torres introduces Mexico.*

The NGO Steps in San Cristobal founder Amy Huang introduced the story content of the new book, the cultural background, the conditions in Chiapas, Mexico, and the legends of the indigenous people of Mexico. The Legend of Chiapas, Mexico was thought up, written, and published by her organization. The group actively helps the Mayan people who live in Chiapas to preserve their culture and legends, and to improve their self-identity and pride in their culture. They also aim to provide free educational resources to the many local children who are unable to go to school. During the meeting she mentioned that she once gifted some books on local legends to a village. The children there came to greet her in splendid attire. For many of them this was the first book they ever possessed. This new publication can help the Taiwan public more deeply understand the thousand-year culture of the Mayans in Mexico, as well as experience the love and support that these indigenous people have toward nature.



*STEPS founder Amy Huang introduces Chiapas, Mexico..*