IFLA Secretary General Visits Taiwan for Exchanges

International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) Secretary General Jennefer Nicholson visited Taiwan on October 14 to 16, at the invitation of the National Central Library (NCL).

On October 15, Ms. Nicholson presented a talk at the NCL on the IFLA organization, professional sections, strategic development plan for 2010 to 2015, major events in 2010, and more active regional participation. She also fielded questions and engaged in an exchange of views. The participants asked how Taiwan could be more involved in the IFLA organization and annual conference, as well as how to attract, foster and encourage new professionals to participate in international activities.

Ms. Nicholson served as Executive Director of the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) from 1999 to the end of 2005 and has held her current position since September 2008. She also has been a standing member of the IFLA Management of Library Associations Section and Education and Training Section. She is strongly committed to the values and professional concerns shared locally and globally by those in the library sector.

IFLA Secretary General Jennefer Nicholson presents a copy of the "1991-2008 Unique acquisitions by the Koninklijke Bibliotheek during the Directorship of Wim van Drimmelen," to the NCL, represented by Director-general Karl Min Ku.

40 Years of Science Education in Taiwan

The National Central Library (NCL) held the "40 Years of Science Education in Taiwan Symposium" on morning October 8 in conjunction with the planning committee for the 40th anniversary of Science Monthly, National Chengchi University,

and National Changhua University of Education. The symposium was joined by leading members of Taiwan's scientific community, technology industry, and educational and cultural circles. Academia Sinica Vice President Dr. Chao-Han Liu moderated the symposium. Speakers included Prof. Chian Chi-jung, Chairman Bruce C.H. Cheng, and Mr. Tsai Chi-chung. They spoke on the topic of "A Dialogue among Three Worlds," in which they discussed hopes for Taiwan's scientific development in three areas, as well as looked at how scientific education can foster the civic environment needed by society over the next 20 years.

In his opening address, NCL Director-general Karl Min Ku noted the inextricable relationship between libraries and science and technology. Whenever humanity makes a major technological breakthrough it affects the library industry, to the point even of bringing libraries to a life-or-death crossroads. For example, the development of search engine has made it easier to collect information, while at the same time it has fragmented knowledge. In this context, libraries must play the role of knowledge integrators and consider ways to peacefully coexist and harmoniously develop with search engines to support the ongoing progress of academics and research.

Prof. Lin Hsiao-hsin, chair of the Science Monthly 40th anniversary planning committee, noted that although the government has committed extensive resources for science education in Taiwan over the years, there remain many places for improvement in this area. Therefore, the main purpose of holding the symposium is to provide a forum for private-sector direction and consideration of science education from the perspective of social development in Taiwan. Prof. Lin noted that the symposium program and selection of speakers and hosts all were carefully planned to present new angles, envision new horizons for science education, and encourage broader public understanding of and concern for the status of and problems facing science education in Taiwan.

Prof. Chian Chi-jung of National Chengchi University noted that modern society is awash with "illiteracy" and "rational blindness." In the past, illiteracy referred to the inability to read. Today is means the inability to think logically, and even the inability to discuss the problems facing human society. "Rational blindness" means the inability to rationally analyze and consider things