

National Central Library

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Spotlights

■ Director-general Visits Russia to Strengthen Ties

NCL Director-general Tseng Shu hsien visited Russia from August 28 to September 5, accompanied by three library directors. They visited libraries, as well as many famous Chinese studies institutes and strengthened ties with them.



The Signing of Cooperation Agreement between Taiwan and Russia.

On August 29 they visited the Moscow State University's Institute of Asian and African Studies, which is one of the main places Russian sinologists are trained. From August 31 to September 2, they saw the Institute of Far Eastern Studies and the Institute of Oriental Studies at the Russian Academy of Sciences, as well as the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts located in St. Petersburg. Each institute has

different areas of emphasis, yet they all have long histories, exquisite collections, and talented scholars.

NCL has enjoyed a publication exchange with these institutes for some time, and many researchers there have come to Taiwan on grants from the Center for Chinese Studies. As such, NCL's representatives were favored with cordial hospitality. During the trip, NCL continuously emphasized the different grants available to scholars and invited those interested to come to Taiwan for research or study.

The greatest benefit from the trip was the cooperative agreement that NCL signed with the Institute of Oriental Studies at the Russian Academy of Science. Both parties are looking forward to closer interactions and exchanges. The other institutes all expressed a desire to work together with NCL and chances are likely that after this opportunity to meet in person many great cultural exchanges will take place between the two countries.

August 30, 2011 was an important day culturally for Taiwan and Russia. With an inviting atmosphere and many dignitaries in attendance, National Central Library donated 263 children's books published in Taiwan to the Russian State Children's Library. After the donation, both parties formally signed a cooperative agreement.

The donation ceremony was conducted by the Taiwan representative to Russia Chen Chun-hsien. NCL Director-general Tseng Shu hsien presented the books to Galina A. Kislovskaya, the director of the Russian State Children's Library. Representative Chen emphasized in his remarks that Russia is a country that places high

emphasis on reading.

The donation helps promote culture exchange between the two countries. Director Kislovskaya expressed appreciation for the donation and for the First Lady of Taiwan's willingness to read to children in the library in 2010. He believes these acts help Russian children better understand foreign countries and help broaden their vision. Because of this, the donated books will be shared with other Russian libraries. Director-general Tseng stated that both Russia and Taiwan have an abundance of quality children's literature and that with assistance from publishers, these books can be shared with more readers. Also, there is much to learn from each other in promoting reading.



Director-general Alexander Visly, the Russia State Library, presents publications to Director-general Tseng Shu hsien, NCL.

NCL Director-general Tseng Shu hsien and staff toured the Russian State Library on August 31, 2011. They were given a warm welcome by the executive director Victor V. Fedorov and head of the library Alexander I. Visly. The group toured the library's Oriental

Manuscripts Center, Periodical Reading Room, E-resources Area, and Manuscript Department. The magnificent and elegant facilities, as well as the rich collection and professional staff were impressive.

NCL has had a long and rewarding exchange relationship with the Russian State Library. On December 6, 2010 a formal cooperative agreement was signed. During the visit, both parties discussed plans on how to carry out the agreement, especially how to work together in a way that will benefit both libraries and meet needs on both sides.

As this was the first visit to Russia by NCL staff, they were assisted by the Taiwan Economic and Cultural Office (TECO) there in arranging meetings. TECO manager Chen Mei-fen accompanied them in their visits to ensure everything proceeded smoothly. Indeed, it was a successful trip in cultural diplomacy.



Director-general Tseng (center) and NCL's staff take a group photo with Director Fedorov (fourth from right).

On September 2, 2011, Director-general Tseng visited National Library of Russia in

St. Petersburg with selected NCL staff as a way to strengthen relations with this important library in Russia. The library's director Anton V. Likhomanov and assistant director Irina L. Lynden personally welcomed the group and arranged a discussion with them regarding copyright issues and deposit services for e-publications, and the digitization of ancient books. Three years ago, the Russian Federation enacted a new copyright law that resulted in many challenges to libraries. Director-general Tseng shared information regarding NCL's E-Publication Platform System (EPS), its ability to deposit e-books and manage copyrights.



Director-general Tseng presents publications to Director-general Anton Likhomanov (second from right) National Library of Russia

Mr. Likhomanov expressed a desire learning more about it and the experience NCL has gained in creating it. Director-general Tseng immediately invited him to visit Taiwan to gain first-hand experience on Taiwan's developments in library science. She also discussed NCL's union catalog system for ancient Chinese books and asked the National Library of Russia to participate in the project. After hearing of NCL's

innovative services, Mr. Likhomanov suggested the two libraries sign a cooperative agreement in addition to the publication exchange that is already in place.

Following the meeting, the group from NCL was given a tour of the library's manuscript department, famous French philosopher Voltaire's special collections room, and the library's reading room. They were keenly interested in the Asian books found in the manuscript room, and expressed a desire to work together on publishing them in the future.

NCL's relationship with the Russian Academy of Sciences Library takes another step forward. On September 2, 2011, NCL Director-general Tseng and a group of library staff visited the Russian Academy of Sciences Library, located in St. Petersburg. The director of the library, Valerii Pavlovich Leonov and his assistant director Natalia Vladimirovna Kolpakova personally welcomed them and held a discussion. As this is the oldest library established by the Russian Academy of Sciences, it has over 21 million books in its collection. Of these, 9 million are in a foreign language. During the 18th century, the library began exchanging publications with East Asian countries, and in 1818 the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts was established to collect information and books on ancient Chinese studies. Currently it exchanges publications with over 2250 other institutions.

The library's director stated that on the foundation of the publication exchange already in place that NCL can provide more publications regarding contemporary society and life, scientific developments, politics, technology, history, and culture in Taiwan. Director-general



Director-general Tseng (second from left), Director-general Valerii Pavlovich Leonov (third from left), Russian Academy of Sciences Library

Tseng hopes that the library can provide more material regarding Russian publications on Taiwan studies, Chinese studies, art, and science. In addition to exchanging publications, the library suggested that a cooperative agreement be signed before the end of the year that outlines specific cooperative endeavors, such as co-hosting exhibitions, showing movies, or lectures. The desire is to increase mutual public understanding between the two countries.

The library made special arrangements for NCL's group to tour their manuscript department and Asian & African documents department. NCL promised to provide even more suitable publications and documents for their collections.

■ *NCL Attends the 2011 Annual Meeting of WDL Partners*

The U.S. Library of Congress and the Bavarian State Library co-hosted the 2011 Annual Meeting of World Digital Library Partners from November 14-15 in Munich, Germany. National Central Library's Director-general Tseng Shu hsien attended the meeting