

**Meeting with Dr. David Leitch, Secretary General And Christine Martinaz Deputy
of the
International Council on Archives**

On the sidelines of the general assembly meeting of the Arab Regional Branch of the International Council on Archives (ARBICA), held in Cairo on 20 December, 2010, an interview was held with Dr. David Leitch, Secretary General of the International Council on Archives (ICA) and his deputy, Ms. Christine Martinez. The following is a recap of the interview:

Q: How are financial resources allocated to each branch and are they allocated evenly?

A: Financial resources have been allocated over the past two years. Allocation first started in Algeria during the meeting of the Executive Council that was held in the presence of all branch presidents. At that time, each branch received an equal share of 100,000 Euros. This year, we will evenly allocate an additional 50,000 Euros to all branches, in addition to the funds remaining in their possession from the preceding year. Some branches have fully withdrawn their financial allocations and made best use of them; nevertheless, ARBICA did not optimally utilize its share.

Q: We are not made aware of the various activities undertaken by ICA, is there a mechanism for the dissemination of information over branch members?

A: Branch presidents are notified of the activities of the ICA. Many meetings are held annually and are attended by all branch presidents; it is one of their main duties to convey information upon their members.

Q: What are the sources for financing projects under the ICA?

A: Funds allocated to branches are not the only source of financing activities; there are at least two other sources, namely:

- FIDA, which is a program that aims at enhancing archival development and maximizing the professional efficiency of archives. Thanks to FIDA, projects are now being presented in the area of capacity building.
- Program Commission Financing field-specific projects which culminate in a final product that other archives may avail themselves of. Funds for such projects range from 5,000 Euros to 10,000 Euros.

Q: Why can't Arabic be an official language of the ICA?

A: As a matter of fact, the official language of the ICA is English. English is used by the majority of the member states followed by French, because France houses the headquarters of the ICA; it also extensively supports the Council financially as well as pays the salary of the Deputy of the Secretary General and subsidizes the translation process. However, all ICA meetings are held in English; nevertheless, if a substantial

number of Arab countries attend one of the meetings and subsidize the translation process, arrangements can be made for Arabic translation to be provided.

We propose that a translation coordination office be established in one of the Arab countries; that way, all studies undertaken can be translated and provided in the Arabic language on the ICA website for the benefit of all member countries. On this issue, I would also like to point out that the Algerian archives is doing a great job in translating a newsletter entitled *Flash*, issued periodically by the ICA.

Q: What about the membership fees for youth and students?

A: There is a discounted membership of 20 Euros for those youth who are interested in accessing all the studies available on the ICA website.