

From June 21-23, 2023, the annual conference of the General Assembly of Francophone Digital Network (RFN-AISBL) took place in Alexandria, Egypt, with the participation of 24 delegates representing 18 libraries and national archives of the Francophone countries. Attending the conference, the delegation of the National Library of Viet Nam (NLV) was led by Ms. Nguyen Ngoc Anh, Deputy Director. This is the first in-person conference after a 3-year interrupted due to the impact of COVID-19 worldwide.

The conference listened to the 2022 RFN-AISBL's Report presented by representatives of the executive committee, which focused on a number of regional projects, such as the MemoAfricaNum-IFAN project to digitize and promote the special oral legacy of West Africa, the project to digitize the Arabic and Ajamis manuscripts as part of the "Hidden collections in Africa" of CLIR (Council on Library and Information Resources), the emergency digitization project valued 70,000 euros funded by ALIPH (International Union for Conservation of Heritage) for the Bibliothèque des Spiritans Haïtiens (Library of Haitian Catholic Missionaries) to digitize documents after the 2011 earthquake.

The members have approved the revised RFN-AISBL Francophone Digital Network Constitution in order to conform to the new legal provisions of the Belgian Companies and Associations Law (CSA). The conference also officially recognized full membership for the National Library of Guinea, bringing the total membership of RFN-AISBL to 30 libraries and archives from 20 Francophone countries. In addition, the delegates spent time discussing the future of the Network, with special emphasis on the issue of annual membership fees and calls for international funding for activities and projects under the Network.

At the Conference, delegates were introduced to the beta version of the Library of Francophone Digital Network (BRFN) built on the principle of a common bibliographic tree structure based on the DEWEY classification, while keeping the identity of each member separately by expanding the document range to include collections in the native language in addition to the collections in French... According to the 2022 statistics, BRFN received 25,094 visits with 170,317 pages viewed.

Within the framework of the annual conference of the Francophone Digital Network RFN-AISBL, the Francophone Digital Network in collaboration with AIFBD (International Association of Francophone Librarians) organized the Workshop on "Heritage, Digital and Artificial Intelligence". Speakers are library experts from France, Canada, Switzerland, Congo, Senegal, Morocco and Egypt.

On the sidelines of the conference, the NLV delegation exchanged and worked with the Director of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina (Library of Alexandria), the General Director of the National Library of Quebec, the Director of the National Library of Morocco, the Director of the National Library of Guinea, Director of Digitalization Division of the Royal Library of Belgium to introduce the Vietnamese library industry and the possibility of cooperation in future projects. During a private meeting with the President of the National Library of France, the two sides mentioned the extension of the cooperation agreement between the two libraries in order to continue carrying out cooperative activities in the coming time.

Within the framework of the Conference, the delegates visited the Bibliotheca Alexandrina. Deriving from the idea of reviving the ancient library of Alexandria, with international financial support through UNESCO up to 220 million USD, Bibliotheca Alexandrina was built in 7 years from 1995-2002 and now becomes a cultural center of the city of Alexandria as well as of Egypt.

The RFN-AISBL General Assembly is scheduled to hold its 2024 Conference in the Moroccan capital, Rabat.

Photos of the same event:



Panoramic view of the General Assembly





Ms. Nguyen Ngoc Anh, Deputy Director of the National Library of Viet Nam at the Conference



Digitizing Europe's President, Deputy Director of the National Archives and President of the French Ministry of Culture, Ms. Anne-Cécile...



with the Director of the National Library and the Director of the National Archives of Morocco





... met international colleagues





Visiting the Bibliotheca Alexandrina



News and photos: Huong Giang