

## INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM STATEMENTS

Croatian Library Association /  
Hrvatsko knjižničarsko društvo (HKD)

www.hkdrustvo.hr

### Statement on Libraries, Ethics and Anti-Corruption

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Croatian Library Association and its Committee for Freedom of Access to Information and Freedom of Expression, organizing the 6th Round Table Talks on Freedom of Access to Information *Librarians' Professional Ethics and Social Norms* and Workshop on struggle against corruption *Libraries, Civil Society Organizations and Anti-Corruption*, held in Zagreb on the 8th and 9th of December 2006., on the occasion of the *International Anti-Corruption Day* and the *International Day of Human Rights*, joins the global campaign against corruption and IFLA/FAIFE efforts to include libraries in that campaign.

Corruption undermines basic social values, jeopardizes the rule of law, trust in judicial and political institutions and legal system, honesty, equality and safety of citizens. Corruption destroys basic ethical values, increases and deepens social inequalities, disparages the values of human labour. Corruption makes scientific work and research more difficult, weakens academic and other professions and obstructs creation of the knowledge society.

Having regard to the principles stated in the Statute and Code of Professional Ethics, as well as those in the Statement on Freedom of Expression and Freedom of Access to Information and, having regard to the national and international documents and recommendations, especially the UN Convention against Corruption and National Programme with the Action Plan against Corruption (2002) and National Programme Against Corruption 2006 - 2008 (2006),

Croatian Library Association

invites its members and all other library professionals to be guided by the principles of professional ethics in their work, and to join the process of raising public awareness to the problem of corruption by promoting and providing free access to information and freedom of expression.

Increasing level of awareness of the danger of corruption is a necessary requirement for more efficient work, and providing library materials and information on government and other public authorities, as well as on the legislation and methods of preventing and combating corruption is an opportunity for libraries to support anti-corruption campaign.

#### **Croatian Library Association reminds that:**

- since 2001 it has been organizing annual Round Table Talks on Freedom of Access to Information on the occasion of International Day of Human Rights, dedicated to the idea of libraries, especially public libraries, as points of public access to

information;

- in 2002 it organized the Second Round Table Talks on Free Access to Official Publications in Service of Democracy Development to draw attention to the importance of official publications as an integral part of library collection and to encourage libraries to provide availability of official publications and information for their users by organizing quality processing and information service, as well as providing adequate equipment;
- in 2003, together with Croatian Helsinki Committee for Human Rights and other NGOs, it joined the Campaign *The Public has Right to Know* and participated in drafting of the Freedom of Information Act, in order to highlight the importance of principles of the access to official information for everybody, obligation to publish and provide information on public authorities, education for democracy and meeting European standards;
- since 2005, in cooperation with eleven societies, it has been implementing the programme *Information on European Union in Public Libraries*.

Croatian Library Association emphasizes that transparent work of public authorities and free access to information held by those authorities are characteristics of the pluralistic democratic society. Openness to the public ensures control and responsibility. In democratic societies transparency and accuracy of information are the main weapons to combat corruption. The library role is to provide free access to information for every user in order that s/he understands the function and role of the public authorities. Well informed citizens, citizens who know and are aware that THEY HAVE RIGHT TO KNOW, responsibly stand up against violation of human rights.

Therefore Croatian Library Association calls upon authorities to increase transparency by developing networking of libraries in every town and municipality, in order to make information of public interest accessible to all citizens.

Croatian Library Association calls upon libraries to acquire and provide all official information, in order to prevent corruption on local and national level and to disseminate information on combat against corruption.

Croatian Library Association calls upon its members to direct its users to published and unpublished information, in the library as well as outside, and to join national and international anti-corruption programmes.

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