

Closing Ceremony Address by Alan Carbery National Sub-Committee Chair



Full text of address given by Alan Carbery at the Closing Session on Thursday 28 July 2022

A dhaoine uaisle, A chairde,

Three years ago, on stage like this, the Irish National Organising Committee promised you a fantastic World Library & Information Congress in 2020. It just took us a little longer than we originally planned. Like we've done many times throughout the organisation of this Congress, the national committee banded together and said "sure, it'll be grand", and we kept going. We like to keep our promises around here. I think we can now definitively say:

Tá sé deanta! We did it!

On behalf of the National Committee and the entire Irish library community, thank you for a thoroughly successful Congress. We hope you have been inspired and engaged throughout your time here in Ireland. We hope that coming together in Dublin has enabled you to connect with your colleagues across from globe, and that you've established new connections and opportunities for the years ahead. We also hope you've had the chance to experience the best of Ireland, and that you might already be planning your return visit.

We have a saying. Ní neart go cur le chéile. There is no strength without unity. You also made the best of your time in Dublin. You flash-mobbed your way through a multilingual reading of James Joyce's Ulysses on the lawn outside the most iconic library in the world. Trinity College Dublin, just in case you didn't know.

You discussed issues of sustainability, leadership, diversity and inclusion. We explored ways to recruit and support our LGBTQIA library staff. You also discovered, through a poster presentation, that 71% of French Librarians are "cat people"! I'd like to register a vote for "team dog".

We were challenged. Iar-Uachtarán na hÉireann, former President of Ireland, Chair of the Elders and all around legend Mary Robinson challenged us to become prisoners of hope, relentless in our efforts to show how libraries are at the vanguard tackling social injustice, racism and the climate crisis.

We ate ice cream by the seaside and danced the YMCA in the Children's section in DLR Lexicon Library. We experienced Irish culture, music, song and dance. You learned that when the Irish say the phrase "cúpla focail", we're not swearing at you. We're literally saying "a few words".

We made headline news! Radió Teilifís Éireann, our national broadcaster, shared news of Ireland's hosting of the IFLA World Library & Information Congress raising the profile of libraries, library staff and library associations all over the world.

To the conference organising partners, to the governing board of IFLA, IFLA staff and the leadership of IFLA - Míle buíochas daoibh go léir. Thank you for your confidence in the National Committee to deliver this congress. We hope that all delegates leave with fond memories of their time here in Dublin and to help you the National Committee would like to share with you some memories of our Congress together.

Slán abhaile. Safe home.

Alan Carbery, University College Cork
National Sub-Committee Chair