



**Message from Ellen Tise –IFLA President**  
**8 November 2010**

It is my privilege and honour to share a message at such a significant occasion as the opening of the second Lubuto Library. As much as IFLA is engaging in a number of activities that has strong bias towards technology, the love story between the reader and the book must never die nor must the light that reading brings to the lives of the children of Africa EVER be extinguished.

There is synergy between my Presidential theme of *Libraries driving access to knowledge*, the Millennium Development Goals and the activities of Lubuto. As we are all aware, knowledge or access to information is the most significant issue in getting Africa to address all of its problems. The commitment of Lubuto speaks volumes in taking information to those that need it the most to change their lives. The fact that you have taken the time to carefully choose books that are will be heavily read is testimony of your commitment to produce a library that is relevant and meaningful to those children.

To digress slightly, a reading society will become an informed society. And, an informed society is essential for the growth and development of a democracy and the quest for rights that protect the most vulnerable. As indicated by Alan Bundy, reading is critical to people in society and the sustenance of thinking and questioning democratic societies. Without it, no true educational revolution can occur; people cannot engage fully in society; they cannot benefit from new learning technologies; it is difficult for them to find meaningful employment; and it can make life culturally and socially isolating. The early exposure to reading augurs wells for the growth and development of Zambia. And, if we extrapolate this second opening of a Lubuto Library to the planned 100 libraries in the region makes for an ‘educated’ and much read Africa.

I would like to return to the love story between the reader and the book but within the context of a child. A child's love for reading grows when the words on the page come to life. It frees the child's imagination and allows the child to dabble in the world of fantasy. It is this world of fantasy that provides children with a fertile ground for the growth of ambition and desire for progress. This era of fantasy is not only important for the cultivation of ambition; it allows the child to dream and embrace reading as a lifelong source of pleasure.

I spoke of the synergy between the MDGs and your programme. The millennium development goals are about inclusion and working together at a global level to achieve a common vision - your programme will play a significant role by increasing access to information in support of the inclusion process. Access to knowledge through the capacity to read, understand, interpret and apply that knowledge will go a long way to eradicating extreme poverty, reduce the high death rates due to disease, reduce the unfortunate high infant mortality rates and the drastically reduce HIV/Aids.

In closing, I am led to believe that a unique feature of the physical building is its beauty: it is green, sustainable and indigenously styled. I interpret this library to be something sustainable and that which is not intrusive but fits into that particular society. You have taken the time to look at the most minute detail and I applaud you for that.

I, on behalf of IFLA and all of its affiliates, wish you well for the opening and wish you greater strength for the next 98 openings.