

# **Library of Congress, National Library of China Sign World Digital Library Agreement**

The Library of Congress and the National Library of China have concluded an agreement to cooperate in developing the World Digital Library. Signing the cooperative agreement in a brief ceremony on Sunday in the Asian Reading Room at the Library of Congress were Zhan Furui, General Director, National Library of China, and Librarian of Congress James Billington. The signing took place in the presence of the Minister of Culture for the People's Republic of China, Cai Wu, on the occasion of the meeting of the U.S. President's Committee for the Arts and Humanities.

The two libraries agreed to provide content to the World Digital Library and to cooperate in such areas as the development and maintenance of the Chinese-language interface, the convening of international working groups to plan and develop the project, and the formation of an advisory committee of leading scholars and curators to recommend important collections about the culture and history of China for inclusion in the World Digital Library.

The Web-based World Digital Library, slated to launch in April 2009, is an initiative of the Library of Congress and other cultural institutions around the world in cooperation with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). Other institutions participating in the project include major libraries from Brazil, Egypt, Iraq, Israel, Russia, Serbia, and Sweden, the U.S. National Archives and Records Administration, the John Carter Brown Library, and the libraries of Brown and Yale Universities.

The goal of the World Digital Library is to represent major world cultures in a way that contributes to better understanding among different cultures, as well as to serve the needs of scholars and researchers. The project will digitize and make available on the Internet, free of charge and in multilingual format, significant primary materials of many cultures, including manuscripts, maps, rare books, musical scores, recordings, films, prints, photographs, architectural drawings and other materials of interest both to scholars and the general public.

Additional information about the World Digital Library can be found at [www.worlddigitallibrary.org](http://www.worlddigitallibrary.org).

(Source: <http://www.loc.gov/today/pr/2008/08-217.html>)