

**FEDERATION DES ALLIANCES FRANCAISES DE NOUVELLE-ZÉLANDE
ASSEMBLÉE GÉNÉRALE DU 14 MAI 2011 À PALMERSTON NORTH
RAPPORT DU DÉLÉGUÉ GÉNÉRAL**

Dear friends, dear colleagues, allow me first of all to thank you for your presence at this AGM. I am aware of the delicate nature of our institution's finances and of what a voyage to Palmerston North represents for many of you. Let us consider, however, that the expense will not have been in vain, as our affairs have been making progress on more than one point. Concerning the action of the Delegation General in favour of our network, I must first of all note that on my arrival it did not seem to me that this network existed in truth. Setting aside several initiatives which were, granted, very visible (the French Film Festival with the Embassy, Cartooning for Peace or the film Home for example), I did not note, in the rare archives I have been able to consult, that a real network existed between the 11 Alliances of New Zealand.

This perception greatly influenced the mission I assigned myself, and the establishment, or re-establishment of networking activity became one of my priorities. It was necessary to start modestly, but I believe we are well on track and that 2011-2012 will see our activities grow on a national level. Let me remind you of the principal moments, in the 2010-2011 period (up until May 2011)

- the tour of Fariba Hachtroudi, writer in residence at Randell Cottage, organised in several towns with the Cultural service of the Embassy. - DELF-DALF workshop in Christchurch with the support of the Cultural Service.
- Recital by the singer Franck Monnet in Wellington, Christchurch, Dunedin and Palmerston North.
- Charles de Gaulle exhibition in our % Alliances and conference of Christiane Mortelier on this theme in Wellington and Dunedin.
- The exhibition TARA - Polar night, in Wellington, Auckland and Masterton, cancelled alas in Christchurch for reasons of which you are all aware.
- And from 2011, once again the French Film festival and the writer Yann Appery's conferences organised alongside the Cultural Service,
- UNI-PRESSE exhibition (titles from the French press and encouragement to subscribe) in Wellington, Dunedin, Napier and, next up, Auckland. Exhibition 'Long White Cloud' in Wellington, Palmerston North and Napier.
- Recital by Luc Arnault in Wellington and Napier.

And lastly, the launch of the globe-trotting photographer Hakim Alj's exhibition in Wellington and then Auckland, Hamilton and Dunedin, exhibition in conjunction with the raffle of two plane tickets and three nights in a hotel in Tahiti.

These events remain certainly on a relatively modest scale, but their constancy will not fail to have an effect, I am assured of this.

I therefore most strongly encourage you not only to host these events, but also to propose others, if there are artists in your region who are worth promoting in this way. The Delegation Generale serves specifically this purpose: assisting you to put in place such events. Do not hesitate to consult me. I know already what many of you will reply: cultural events are expensive, we do not have rooms, it's complicated, one has to provide staff, provide drinks, hang the paintings, contact journalists, in short, they are a lot of work. And yes, they are a lot of work, but it's not so expensive if one considers the benefit in terms of publicity. How much does a paid advertisement in your local newspaper cost? Several hundred dollars probably. How much is an article describing an exhibition, a concert, a petanque competition, or a crepes evening? At the most, the price of a beer or coffee for the journalist who interviewed you. And, having tested it in the course of a career which will have its 40th anniversary next year, I can guarantee to you that our presence in the cultural domain inevitably has beneficial effects on enrolments in our classes. It is a trusted recipe which I have confirmed in various locations: the Alliance Francaise makes its name by its cultural presence in the town, which allows it to expand its audience. Its mission is also to keep this audience by the quality of its teachers; do not forget this.

Of course, for this it is necessary to set aside a cultural budget as part of your annual spending. And not to be content with an almost symbolic sum as I have noticed in several Alliances around the country. I estimate that a minimum of 5% of your annual budget should be dedicated to cultural activities, and I assure you that you will see a payoff in terms of class enrolments. In any case, the sum of 5% can probably be raised through sponsorship, , partners and other benefactors of our institutions. This is another domain in which I think we can make some progress: sponsorship. Sources of funding are varied. We can count on the Cultural Service of the Embassy which, despite constantly diminishing means, continues to support our cultural and linguistic activity, as well as our means of communication. Thus the tours of Fariba Hachtroudi and Yann Apperry were almost completely taken care of by the SCAC. The Polar Night, Charles de Gaulle and Hakim Alij exhibitions received substantial support, as did the concerts of Franck Monnet. I must remind you on this topic that only your project-based requests can be accepted by the SCAC. Thus, no general funding, no help to balance your accounts, and donation of equipment only in the context of specific projects.

Another source of finances: the France/New Zealand Friendship Fund. Applications are to be submitted at the beginning of the year, to be considered at the end of March. Two criteria not to forget in your Friendship Fund applications: reciprocity (the project must benefit the French side as well as the New Zealand partner) and non-recurrence. It is of no use, therefore, to approach the Friendship Fund for events such as the fête de la musique, Lire en fête or the Concours Oral, which happen each year. I must insist on this point, as such demands are not only fruitless but can reflect badly on other applications presented, by giving our Alliances an appearance of dilettantism or amateurism.

Following this, the Institut Francais, and Cultures-France, which depends on the Ministries of Culture and of Foreign Affairs, and whose tenders you receive. I have presented several projects for 2011 to the Institut Francais, concerning several of the Alliances of our network, of which more later.

Lastly is what I call 'local sponsorship'. You all have among your members and students people inclined to offer us assistance: a printer, a restaurant owner, a business executive, a bank manager, a cinema director; local sponsorship presents not only the interest of material or financial aid, it brings us networks and thus potential members. It is then up to us to woo these by the quality of our events, the warmth of our welcome, the conviviality of our meetings. I encourage you strongly to make use of this source of finance: displaying the name of a high-calibre sponsor is the best means of showing our standing and the confidence placed in us by important businesses.

Let us now note upcoming projects, in which the Delegation Generale is investing a great effort in time, work and funding:

- The exhibition of the photographer Hakim Alij, mentioned earlier. These are 30 photos from a world tour undertaken between 2008 and 2010. This exhibition is currently in Wellington (20 photos at the Alliance and 10 at our partner Harbour City Travel). It will be in Auckland in June, Hamilton in July and Dunedin in August. Two other partners, Air Tahiti Nui and Radisson Hotel, have gifted us two tickets to Tahiti and several nights' hotel accommodation. The prize draw, open to all visitors in these four cities, will take place in early September. The choice of the four cities was part of an agreement with the partners, my apologies to our colleagues who are not on the circuit, but be aware the exhibition will subsequently be available to them.
- The French song competition: you will have received the poster and a message from myself on this topic. Please advertise this promising initiative as widely as possible. I note that the bank BNP Paribas is seriously interested in this project, in the context of its 'discovering young talent' project. I remind you also that this project is another opportunity for you to recruit further students from among the singing candidates who require assistance with their pronunciation.
- The international year of the forest: an exhibition of 20 magnificent photos will be presented to you in the weeks to come (remind yourselves of the biodiversity exhibition, this will be the same quality of images). It will be integrated, in Auckland and Wellington, with activities organised by the New Zealand association of forestry owners which is holding a seminar on the topic in these two towns with some forty French foresters.

- And of course the Rugby World Cup, for which several projects are proposed. First of all, the caricaturist Gérard Gargouil, who will make appearances in Wellington, Auckland and Napier. In Wellington, this will be for two 'family portraits' (the All Blacks and the French first XV) which will be auctioned for charity, and in Auckland for an event at the (nautical exhibition), and workshops with the Alliance, and in Napier for activities still to be finalised.
- Also for the Rugby World Cup - a request for funding has been presented by the Délégation Générale in the name of all towns which will host matches. The aim is to offer French classes (at little or no cost) to all professionals likely to have dealings with French tourists or supporters (police, tourism, hotels, banks, post offices, stadiums etc). I will inform you, as soon as I know, of what the Institut Français will provide for this teaching activity.
- In the linguistic domain, an immersion course will take place in Nouméa, from the 3rd to the 10th of November, for a group of 30 people: language classes in the morning at the CREIPAC, exploration of the town and environs in the afternoon. You will have received promotional flyers, please promote this initiative widely to the public. A teaching materials project has also been submitted to the Institut Français: a donation of interactive blackboards. I have requested 9 in total, 2 for Wellington and Auckland which will then be completely equipped, 1 for Dunedin which has its own premises where classes are organised, and 4 for Christchurch, thus encouraging our Parisian authorities to make a strong gesture in favour of our friends in Christchurch, who were gravely affected by the February 22nd earthquake.
- And to remain on the theme of teaching, a workshop will take place from the 10th to the 14th of October next, in Wellington (10 and 11), then in Auckland (13 and 14) led by Mme Joëlle GORIA, instructor at the CAVILAM in Besançon. This workshop, organised jointly by the Embassy's Cultural Service and the Délégation Générale in New Zealand, is addressed to teachers of the national network and of the Alliances Françaises. You will be informed of the programme very soon. It will include workshops on language register, idiomatic expressions and also games and creativity in French classes. Do encourage your teachers to participate.

This leads me to another unifying theme: the Alliance Française of Christchurch has lost everything: its premises, equipment and library. With the support of the Embassy and the Délégation Générale, it has faced these trying circumstances with remarkable courage, and has been able to re-establish itself in very well-placed premises, reasonably well appointed (4 classrooms, reception and numerous storage spaces) but ... empty. Our friends in Christchurch received aid from the international network of Alliances Françaises. They ought to receive one from Paris. I propose that the New Zealand network also mobilise to bring its own aid to Christchurch (several colleagues have already done so: Hamilton and Auckland among others). I confess I am unsure as to what manner of aid, but our meeting today serves this purpose: to reflect collectively on a course of action we could undertake together.

I will finish now on a project which is being put in place at the instigation of the Alliance Française Foundation in Paris: the Etats Généraux of the Alliance Française in the Pacific, at which the representatives of the Alliances of Fiji, Vanuatu, New Zealand and Australia will assemble in Nouméa on the 7th, 8th and 9th of November 2011. These regional meetings are an occasion to reflect on our action in a wider arena, and to plan together common actions which may be put in place. Each Alliance in New Zealand will send at least one representative (travel and accommodation taken care of by Nouméa and/or Paris). I shall not fail to keep you informed as more information arises on this subject.

Dear friends, I thank you for your attention and am now at your disposal for any questions or comments that may arise from what has been discussed.