



THE LIBRARIAN OF CONGRESS

February 21, 2013

Dear Colleague:

I am writing to invite you to two lectures by Dr. Ismail Serageldin, Director in the New Library of Alexandria, the remarkable new version of the Alexandria Library, the greatest repository of knowledge in late antiquity.

I believe that he is one of the most imaginative and successful Library directors in the Arab world, and also one of the most profound thinkers about the impact and interactions between of new technologies and the enduring power of books.

Dr. Serageldin is a former vice president of the World Bank. He is our principal partner and head of the international team that is working with the Library of Congress (LOC) and UNESCO to build the World Digital Library (WDL); currently accessible in seven languages. He gave a marvelous talk at the first World Summit of the Book at the Library of Congress this past December. If you are interested in hearing the story of his remarkable library and his reflections on the future of libraries, I invite you to join us for either or both of his lectures and a reception on March 8, 2013.

Ismail Serageldin has played a unique role in both the library world and the evolution of Egypt, during the so-called "Arab Spring." When large mobs were present everywhere on the streets of Cairo and Alexandria, his dynamic young staff joined hands and formed a circle around the New Library of Alexandria. As a result, no harm was done to this very large and modern complex. This double-header of lectures is a perfect time for us to gather, and to receive and share with you the wisdom of a man who is a great scholar, a visionary thinker, champion for the free-flow of ideas across generations and cultures, and a force for constructive change in the Middle East.

There will also be opportunities to ask questions and perhaps visit our Civil War exhibit, Jefferson's Library and other displays from the Library's extraordinary collections.

With all good wishes and hopes to welcome you here for either or both of these historic occasions on March 8.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James H. Billington". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "James" written in a larger, more prominent script.

James H. Billington
The Librarian of Congress

Enclosures



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

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JAMES H. BILLINGTON

CORDIALLY INVITES YOU TO ATTEND

A LECTURE BY

Dr. Ismail Serageldin

DIRECTOR, BIBLIOTHECA ALEXANDRINA

ON

“The Loss and Rebirth of the Library of Alexandria”

FRIDAY, MARCH 8, 2013

12:00 PM

LJ-119

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

THOMAS JEFFERSON BUILDING

10 FIRST STREET, SE

WASHINGTON, DC

Kindly respond by Thursday, February 28th

E-mail: specialevents@loc.gov

Phone: 202.707.1616



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JAMES H. BILLINGTON

CORDIALLY INVITES YOU TO ATTEND

A LECTURE BY

Dr. Ismail Serageldin

DIRECTOR, BIBLIOTHECA ALEXANDRINA

ON

“The Knowledge Revolution and the Future of Libraries”

FRIDAY, MARCH 8, 2013

6:30 PM RECEPTION, GREAT HALL

7:00 PM LECTURE, COOLIDGE AUDITORIUM

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