

June 8, 2005

Shi Deng, Chair
ALCTS/CCS CC:AAM
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Ms. Deng,

On behalf of the ALCTS/LITA/RUSA MARBI Committee, I want to acknowledge and thank you for your letter regarding the motion from CC:AAM to MARBI that was passed by CC:AAM in June 2004.

MARBI considered this motion at its midwinter meeting in Boston in January 2005. The Committee agrees with the intent of this motion and supports the goal of inclusion in the character repertoire of the Unicode Universal Character Set beyond that included in the MARC-8 subset. However, on a practical level, the Committee acknowledges also that character repertoire expansion will not occur in the U.S. environment until some of the technical issues that affect important constituents, such as OCLC and RLG, are resolved. At the Boston meeting, we learned that the Library of Congress Network Development and MARC Standards Office would have a discussion paper ready for consideration at the 2005 ALA Annual Meeting in Chicago that should help us move forward with the process of expanding the character repertoire. LC recently released this report, entitled "Assessment of Options for Handling Full Unicode in Character Encodings, Part 2: Issues." It is available at <http://www.loc.gov/marc/marbi/2005/2005-report01.pdf> and will be discussed at MARBI's June 25, 2005 meeting in Chicago, 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., in the Hyatt Regency Chicago on Wacker Avenue, Grand Ballroom F.

MARBI appreciates your concern and desire to move this process forward. I hope that you and/or other members of CC:AAM will be able to attend and participate in the discussions about Unicode at our meeting in Chicago.

Sincerely,

Adam L. Schiff
MARBI Chair