

Forum: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Question of: Preserving and Reconstructing Cultural Heritage in War-Torn Areas



Submitted by: United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Co-submitted by: Ethiopia, Greece, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Oman, Pakistan, Sudan, St. Lucia, Turkey, Viet Nam

1 The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization,
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3 *Alarmed* by the number of World Heritage sites in danger and the intentional destruction of
4 cultural heritage in war-torn areas by state or non-state parties, such as terrorist groups,
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6 *Believing* that cultural heritage is an important component of the cultural identity of states,
7 groups or individuals,
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9 *Fully believing* in the invaluable role of cultural heritage in post-crisis recovery for long-term
10 cultural, social, and economic development,
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12 *Acknowledging* the invaluable work of the World Heritage Committee,
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14 *Having considered further* the important work of the International Centre for the Study of the
15 Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM),
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17 *Having considered further* the important work of The International Council on Monuments and
18 Sites (ICOMOS),
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20 *Referring to* Article I (2) (c) of the Constitution of UNESCO that entrusts UNESCO with the task
21 of maintaining, increasing, and diffusing knowledge by “assuring the conservation and protec-
22 tion of the world’s inheritance of books, works of art and monuments of history and science,
23 and recommending to the nations concerned the necessary international conventions”,
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25 *Recalling* the Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed conflict
26 of 14 May 1954 and its Protocols of 14 May 1954 and 26 March 1999, the Convention on the
27 Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of
28 Cultural Property of 14 November 1970, and the Convention concerning the protection of the
29 World Cultural and Natural Heritage of 16 November 1972,
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31 *Acknowledging* Security Council Resolution 2199 of 12 February 2015, which prohibits the
32 illicit trafficking of cultural goods from Iraq and Syria to fight against international terrorism
33 financing,
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35 *Viewing with appreciation* Security Council Resolution 2347 of 24 March 2017, which focuses
36 exclusively on the protection of cultural heritage and its necessity for peace and security,
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38 *Welcoming* the decision of the International Criminal Court to convict a defendant for the first
39 time for the war crimes of intentionally destroying religious and historic monuments and build-
40 ings,

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Approving of the work of the non-governmental organizations World Heritage Watch and Heritage for Peace,

Taking note of the HEREIN System, established by the Council of Europe,

1. **Calls upon** all member states to take all appropriate measures to prevent the illicit trade of cultural goods including, but not limited to:
 - a. providing useful information to the INTERPOL database of Stolen Works of Art, the UNODC portal SHERLOC, and the World Heritage Committee,
 - b. establishing law enforcement units on a national and local level, with the specific task of prosecuting the illicit trade of cultural heritage,
 - c. intensifying the cooperation with museums, universities, and research centers in order to exchange information regarding historic monuments and artefacts,
 - d. creating a legal framework in cooperation with other states to complicate and combat the illicit trade of cultural heritage,
 - e. increasing the penalties for the intentional destruction of cultural heritage and the looting of movable cultural heritage for all parties involved and the non-reporting of suspicious activities;

2. **Suggests** the establishment of a variety of pre-conflict safeguarding measures including, but not limited to:
 - a. the preparation of a register to estimate the given risk of destruction and the needed capital for reconstruction,
 - b. the planning of emergency measures for protection against fire or structural collapse, such as stabilization or direct access to forge water;

3. **Urges** the community of member states to raise awareness about the current destruction of cultural heritage including, but not limited to:
 - a. using international, national, and regional media as well as social networks,
 - b. establishing educational campaigns for the public;

4. **Supports** the option that United Nations peacekeeping operations may support authorities with military protection of endangered World Heritage sites;

5. **Requests** that the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) intensifies its analysis of the looting and illicit trade of objects regarded as cultural heritage in order to:
 - a. establish a bi-annual report on to provide necessary information,
 - b. strengthen its cooperation with UNESCO;

6. **Recommends** that all member states cooperate with the International Centre of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM) to research new methods to preserve and restore historic monuments and artefacts including, but not limited to:
 - a. developing modern tools for the monitoring of cultural heritage in war-torn areas,
 - b. providing national researchers, archaeologists, and other professionals with crucial data to detect changes and possible damages in heritage sites and artifacts;

7. **Supports** the decision, made by the International Criminal Court and affirmed by the Security Council, to assess the intentional destruction of cultural heritage in the context of armed conflict as a war crime;

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8. **Suggests** that all member states work together closely with the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) in order to exchange knowledge and information with other states and organizations;
 9. **Calls upon** social networks to stop the spread of positive coverage of violent actions against cultural heritage on the internet in order to stop the recruitment done by terrorist groups;
 10. **Encourages** the G20 states and any volunteering nation to financially support the World Heritage Fund (WHF);
 11. **Supports** opinions, strategies, actions and claims that can help to protect cultural heritage sites and solve problems;
 12. **Further** requests to form an organization which will concentrate on documenting moveable and immovable cultural heritage to preserve it;
 13. **Suggests** the establishment of a new organization called International Organization for Preserving Culture Zone (IOPCZ) which will:
 - a. protect cultural heritage around the world especially in the Middle East and Africa like:
 - i. the Mosque and tomb of Qabib al-Ban al-Mawisili, which is located in Iraq,
 - ii. the village of Bathurst, which is located in South Africa,
 - iii. the temple of Boal Shemin, which is located in Syria,
 - b. take action until 2020,
 - c. involve Middle Eastern and African countries among all UN member states,
 - d. research and collect data and statistics on the issues, such as:
 - i. the most damaged cultural heritage sites,
 - ii. cultural heritage sites in each country and how damaged they are,
 - iii. the amount of money that is needed to restore cultural heritage sites,
 - e. design posters, tee shirts, and hats, etc. to sell and collect money to use to restore cultural heritage sites,
 - f. prepare and publish review essays about researches that have been done about the issue and inform people about the situation;
 14. **Declares** to remain actively seized of the matter.