UNESCO Database of National Cultural Heritage Laws

**Act-Law:** The creation, extinction, or transfer of a right by the operation of the law itself, without any consent on the part of the persons concerned.¹

**Agreement:** A mutual understanding between two or more legal entities about their relative rights and duties regarding past or future performances; a manifestation of mutual assent by two or more legal entities. The parties' actual bargain as found in their language or by implication from other circumstances, including course of dealing, usage of trade, and course of performance.² In the field of public international law, a treaty (an interchangeable term for the term “agreement”) is an international agreement concluded between States in written form and governed by international law, whether embodied in a single instrument or in two or more related instruments and whatever its particular designation.³

**Amendment:** A formal revision or addition proposed or made to a statute, constitution, pleading, order, or other instrument; specifically, a change made by addition, deletion, or correction; esp., an alteration in wording.⁴

**Application for authorization:** A request or petition for formal approval.⁵

**Archaeological objects or sites:** Any place where objects, features, or ecofacts manufactured or modified by human beings are found.⁶ A material thing that can be seen and touched. Belonging to, having reference to, or dealing with archaeology.⁷ Any material remains of the past which offer potential for archaeological investigation and analysis as a means of contributing to the understanding of past human communities.⁸

**Architecture:** Architectural work; structure, building.⁹

**Archives:** Collected and preserved public, historical, or institutional papers and records, and/or the place where public, historical, or institutional records are systematically preserved.¹⁰

**Armed Conflict:** International armed conflicts and non-international armed conflicts that have as a minimum two characteristics: (1) organized armed groups, (2) engaged in intense armed

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² Id. at Agreement.
⁴ Black’s Law Dictionary, supra note 1, at Amendment.
⁵ See Id. at Application and Authorization.
⁸ See Darvill, supra note 6, at Archaeological resource.
¹⁰ Black’s Law Dictionary, supra note 1, at Archive.
An armed conflict exists whenever there is a resort to armed force between States or protracted armed violence between governmental authorities and organized armed groups or between such groups within a State.\(^\text{12}\)

**Arms:** Instruments of offence used in war; weapons.\(^\text{13}\)

**Art:** Creative expression, or the product of creative expression.\(^\text{14}\)

**Authorization, Permits, License:** A permission, usually revocable, to commit some act that would otherwise be unlawful; or, the certificate or document evidencing such permission.\(^\text{15}\) In context of the fight against illicit traffic in cultural property, authorization/permits/license means a document authorizing licit export of cultural property.

**Book:** A literary composition such as would occupy one or more volumes.\(^\text{16}\)

**Burial grounds and graves:** A piece of ground set apart as devoted to the regular interment of the dead; a burying-ground, cemetery. A place of burial; an excavation in the earth for the reception of a corpse.\(^\text{17}\)

**By-law:** A rule or administrative provision adopted by an organization for its internal governance and its external dealings.\(^\text{18}\)

**Ceramics:** Products of the ceramic art; pottery.\(^\text{19}\)

**Certificate, License:** A document certifying the bearer’s status or authorization to act in a specified way, usually to commit some act that would otherwise be unlawful.\(^\text{20}\)

**Chart:** A charter, grant, title-deed; a deed or document of any kind.\(^\text{21}\)

**Coins:** Pieces of metal (gold, silver, copper, etc.) of definite weight and value, usually a circular disc, made into money by being stamped with an officially authorized device; pieces of money.\(^\text{22}\)

**Compensation:** Remuneration and other benefits received in return for services rendered and/or Payment of damages, or any other act that a court orders to be done by a person who has caused injury to another.\(^\text{23}\) In the context of the fight against the illicit traffic in cultural property, the

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\(^\text{13}\) Oxford English Dictionary, *supra* note 7, at Arms.

\(^\text{14}\) Black’s Law Dictionary, *supra* note 1, at Art.

\(^\text{15}\) See Black’s Law Dictionary, *supra* note 1, at License.


\(^\text{17}\) Id. at Burial ground and Grave.

\(^\text{18}\) See Black’s Law Dictionary, *supra* note 1, at By-Law.

\(^\text{19}\) Oxford English Dictionary, *supra* note 7, Ceramics.


\(^\text{22}\) Id. at Coins.

\(^\text{23}\) Black’s Law Dictionary, *supra* note 1, at Compensation.
term “compensation” is used both by the 1970 Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property and the 1995 UNIDROIT Convention on Stolen or Illegally Exported Cultural Objects with regard to a good faith possessor or a person who has valid title to cultural property.\textsuperscript{24}

**Conservation:** Preservation from destructive influences, natural decay, or waste. The preservation of the environment, esp. of natural resources.\textsuperscript{25} The maintenance of essential ecological processes and life-support systems, the preservation of genetic diversity, and the sustainable utilization of species and ecosystems.\textsuperscript{26}

**Copy:** An imitation or reproduction of an original.\textsuperscript{27}

**Cultural Diversity:** The manifold ways in which the cultures of groups and societies find expression.\textsuperscript{28}

**Immovable Cultural Heritage:** Monuments, such as architectural works, works of monumental sculpture and painting, elements or structures of an archaeological nature, inscriptions, cave dwellings and combinations of features, which are of outstanding universal value from the point of view of history, art or science; groups of buildings, such as groups of separate or connected buildings which, because of their architecture, their homogeneity or their place in the landscape, are of outstanding universal value from the point of view of history, art or science; and sites, such as works of man or the combined works of nature and man, and areas including archaeological sites which are of outstanding universal value from the historical, aesthetic, ethnological or anthropological point of view.\textsuperscript{29}

**Movable Cultural Heritage:** Property which, on religious or secular grounds, is specifically designated by each State as being of importance for archaeology, prehistory, history, literature, art or science and which belongs to the following categories: rare collections and specimens of fauna, flora, minerals and anatomy, and objects of palaeontological interest; property relating to history, including the history of science and technology and military and social history, to the life of national leaders, thinkers, scientists and artist and to events of national importance; products of archaeological excavations (including regular and clandestine) or of archaeological discoveries; elements of artistic or historical monuments or archaeological sites which have been dismembered; antiquities more than one hundred years old, such as inscriptions, coins and engraved seals; objects of ethnological interest; property of artistic interest, such as: pictures, paintings and drawings produced entirely by hand on any support and in any material (excluding industrial designs and manufactured articles decorated by hand); original works of statuary art and sculpture in any material; original engravings, prints and lithographs; original artistic assemblages and montages in any material; rare manuscripts and incunabula, old books, documents and publications of special interest (historical, artistic, scientific, literary, etc.) singly or in collections; postage, revenue and similar stamps, singly or in collections; archives,

\textsuperscript{24} UNIDROIT Convention on Stolen or Illegally Exported Cultural Objects Preamble, arts.4 (1)(2)(3), 6(1)(3), June 24, 1995; Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property art. 7(b)(ii), November 14, 1970.

\textsuperscript{25} See Oxford English Dictionary, supra note 7, at Conservation.


\textsuperscript{27} Black’s Law Dictionary, supra note 1, at Copy.

\textsuperscript{28} Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions art. 4(1), October 20, 2005.

\textsuperscript{29} Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage art. 1, November 16, 1972.
including sound, photographic and cinematographic archives; and articles of furniture more than one hundred years old and old musical instruments.\textsuperscript{30}

\textbf{Customs}: The Government Service which is responsible for the administration of Customs law and the collection of duties and taxes and which also has the responsibility for the application of other laws and regulations relating to the importation, exportation, movement or storage of goods.\textsuperscript{31}

\textbf{Dealer trade}: The professional members of the trade in the import, export or transfer the ownership of cultural property.\textsuperscript{32}

\textbf{Designation cancellation}: The action of making void or rescinding the appointment of a person, organization or object to a particular purpose or use.\textsuperscript{33}

\textbf{Donation}: a gift.\textsuperscript{34}

\textbf{Entry into force}: The date State parties to a treaty become bound by the terms of the treaty.\textsuperscript{35}
The point in time at which a treaty becomes binding, as between the parties that have ratified or acceded to it.\textsuperscript{36}

\textbf{Exploration license}: A document certifying the bearer’s status or authorization to conduct operations in search for cultural property.\textsuperscript{37} This term is, for example, used in the 2001 Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage with regard to the protection of underwater cultural heritage from commercial exploitation, and the provision of archeological services or the deposition of underwater cultural heritage for scientific research not in conformity with the convention that would lead to the destruction of cultural heritage or its irreplaceable dispersal.\textsuperscript{38}

\textbf{Exportation}: The act of sending or carrying goods and merchandise from one country to another.\textsuperscript{39}

\textbf{Fauna and Flora}: A collective term applied to the animals or animal life and the plants or plant life of any particular region or epoch.\textsuperscript{40}

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\bibitem{32} \textit{See} International Code of Ethics for Dealers in Cultural Property, Adopted by the UNESCO intergovernmental Committee for Promoting the Return of Cultural Property to its Countries of Origin or its Restitution in Case of Illicit Appropriation at its Tenth Session, January 1999 and endorsed by the 30th General Conference of UNESCO, November 1999.
\bibitem{34} Black’s Law Dictionary, \textit{supra} note 1, at Donation.
\bibitem{37} \textit{See} Black’s Law Dictionary, \textit{supra} note 1, at License; Oxford English Dictionary, \textit{supra} note 7, at Exploration.
\bibitem{39} Black’s Law Dictionary, \textit{supra} note 1, at Exportation.
\bibitem{40} Oxford English Dictionary, \textit{supra} note 7, at Fauna and Flora.
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Fossils: Anything found in the strata of the earth, which is recognizable as the remains of a plant or animal of a former geological period, or as showing vestiges of the animal or vegetable life of such a period.\textsuperscript{41}

Fragments: A detached, isolated, or incomplete part; a (comparatively) small portion of anything; a part remaining or still preserved when the whole is lost or destroyed.\textsuperscript{42}

Fund: A sum of money or other liquid assets established for a specific purpose.\textsuperscript{43} For example, the Fund for the Intergovernmental Committee for Promoting the Return of Cultural Property to its Countries of Origin or its Restitution in case of Illicit Appropriation aims to support Member States in their efforts to pursue the return or restitution of cultural property and effectively fight illicit traffic in cultural property, particularly with regard to: the verification of cultural objects by experts, transportation, insurance costs, the setting up of facilities to exhibit them in satisfactory conditions, and the training of museum professionals in the originating countries of cultural objects.\textsuperscript{44}

Furnitures: Movable articles, whether useful or ornamental, in a dwelling-house, place of business, or public building.\textsuperscript{45}

Good faith acquisition: Within the context of the fight against the illicit traffic in cultural property, means the gaining of possession or control over an object where the possessor neither knew nor ought reasonably to have known that the object was stolen and can prove that it exercised due diligence when acquiring the object.\textsuperscript{46}

History: That branch of knowledge which deals with past events, as recorded in writings or otherwise ascertained; the formal record of the past, esp. of human affairs or actions; the study of the formation and growth of communities and nations.\textsuperscript{47}

Illicit traffic: The import, export or transfer of ownership of property contrary to the provisions of the domestic legal norms of the jurisdiction in which the import, export, or transfer occurred and/or any applicable international legal norms.\textsuperscript{48}

Importation: The bringing of goods into a country from another country.\textsuperscript{49}

Indigenous People: Peoples in independent countries who descended from the populations which inhabited the country, or a geographical region to which the country belongs, at the time of conquest or colonisation or the establishment of present state boundaries and who, irrespective

\textsuperscript{41} Id. at Fossils.
\textsuperscript{42} See Id. at Fragments.
\textsuperscript{43} Black’s Law Dictionary, \textit{supra} note 1, at Fund.
\textsuperscript{45} Oxford English Dictionary, \textit{supra} note 7, at Furnitures.
\textsuperscript{46} UNIDROIT Convention on Stolen or Illegally Exported Cultural Objects, \textit{supra} note 24, at art. 4(1).
\textsuperscript{47} Oxford English Dictionary, \textit{supra} note 7, at History.
\textsuperscript{48} Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, \textit{supra} note 24, at art. 3; Oxford English Dictionary, \textit{supra} note 7, at Illicit.
\textsuperscript{49} Black’s Law Dictionary, \textit{supra} note 1, at Importation.
of their legal status, retain some or all of their own social, economic, cultural and political institutions.\textsuperscript{50}

**Intangible Cultural Heritage:** The practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills – as well as the instruments, objects, artifacts and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage.\textsuperscript{51}

**Intellectual Property:** A general name for property (such as patents, trademarks, and copyright material) which is the product of invention or creativity, and which does not exist in a tangible, physical form.\textsuperscript{52} A category of intangible rights protecting commercially valuable products of the human intellect. The category comprises primarily trademark, copyright, and patent rights, but also includes trade-secret rights, publicity rights, moral rights, and rights against unfair competition.\textsuperscript{53} Also, all intellectual property that are the subject of sections 1 through 7 of part II of the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights, namely copyright and related rights, trademarks, geographical indications, industrial designs, patents, layout-designs (topographies) of integrated circuits, and undisclosed information.\textsuperscript{54}

**Inventory, Registry:** A detailed list of assets; the list or record of property subject to a particular treaty regime.\textsuperscript{55} In the case of cultural property: a list, kept by the appropriate national authority, of important public and private cultural property whose export would constitute an appreciable impoverishment of the national cultural heritage.\textsuperscript{56}

**Library:** A place set apart to contain books for reading, study, or reference.\textsuperscript{57}

**Living authors:** The composer or writer of a treatise or book currently alive.\textsuperscript{58}

**Loan:** An act of lending; a grant of something for temporary use.\textsuperscript{59}

**Maintenance:** The care and work put into property to keep it operating and productive; general repair and upkeep.\textsuperscript{60}

**Military History:** That branch of knowledge which deals with past events of or relating to warfare or defense, as recorded in writings or otherwise ascertained; the formal record of the past, esp. of human affairs or actions; the study of the formation and growth of communities and nations.\textsuperscript{61}

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\textsuperscript{52} Oxford English Dictionary, \textit{supra} note 7, at Intellectual Property.
\textsuperscript{53} Black’s Law Dictionary, \textit{supra} note 1, at Intellectual Property.
\textsuperscript{55} See Black’s Law Dictionary, \textit{supra} note 1, at Inventory and Registry.
\textsuperscript{56} Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, \textit{supra} note 24, at, art. 5(b).
\textsuperscript{57} Oxford English Dictionary, \textit{supra} note 7, at Library.
\textsuperscript{58} See \textit{Id.}, at Living and Author.
\textsuperscript{59} Black’s Law Dictionary, \textit{supra} note 1, at Loan.
\textsuperscript{60} \textit{Id.}, at Maintenance.
\textsuperscript{61} Oxford English Dictionary, \textit{supra} note 7, at Military and History.
Monuments: Any natural or artificial objects that are fixed permanently in land and referred to in a legal description of the land.62

Museums: Any permanent establishment administered in the general interest for the purpose of preserving, studying, enhancing by various means and in particular, exhibiting to the public for its delectation and instruction, groups of objects and specimens of cultural value: artistic, historical, scientific and technological collections, botanical and zoological gardens and aquariums.63

Musical instruments: An object or device for producing musical sounds.64

Natural heritage: Natural features consisting of physical and biological formations or groups of such formations, which are of outstanding universal value from the aesthetic or scientific point of view; geological and physiographical formations and precisely delineated areas which constitute the habitat of threatened species of animals and plants of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science or conservation; and natural sites or precisely delineated natural areas of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science, conservation or natural beauty.65

Norms: A model or standard accepted (voluntarily or involuntarily) by society or other large group, against which society judges someone or something.66

Oral practices: The oral traditions and expressions, including language as a vehicle of intangible cultural heritage, that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage.67

Owner: One who has the right to possess, use, and convey something; a person in whom one or more interests are vested.68

Ownership: The bundle of rights allowing one to use, manage, and enjoy property, including the right to convey it to others.69

Paintings: Representations on surfaces executed in paint or colours; painted pictures or likenesses.70

Possessor: One who has possession of real or personal property.71

62 Black’s Law Dictionary, supra note 1, at Monument.
64 Oxford English Dictionary, supra note 7, at Musical instruments.
65 See Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, supra note 29, at art. 2.
66 Black’s Law Dictionary, supra note 1, at Norms.
68 Black’s Law Dictionary, supra note 1, at Owner.
69 Id. at Ownership.
70 Oxford English Dictionary, supra note 7, at Painting.
71 Black’s Law Dictionary, supra note 1, at Possessor.
Promotion and development: Promotion is to further, advance, actively support, or encourage the growth, development, progress, or establishment of a thing, concept, or objective. For example, the objectives of the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Heritage include building awareness of the importance of intangible heritage and its safeguarding. Development is a process of enhancement, advancement or growth. For example, the objectives of the 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions include creating the conditions for cultures to flourish and to freely interact in a mutually beneficial manner, encouraging dialogue among cultures with a view to ensuring wider and balanced cultural exchanges in the world in favour of intercultural respect and a culture of peace, and fostering interculturality in order to develop cultural interaction in the spirit of building bridges among peoples.

Protected area or good: A locality or object guarded by laws controlling damage or alteration.

Rare Manuscripts: A text written in ink or in paint on a thin, pliant and portable object (such as paper, papyrus, or leather) of a kind seldom found, done, or occurring; unusual, uncommon, exceptional.

Records, films, photographs: A documentary account of past events, usu. designed to memorialize those events. Information that is inscribed on a tangible medium or that, having been stored in an electronic or other medium, is retrievable in perceivable form.

Religion: A system of faith and worship usually involving belief in a supreme being and usually containing a moral or ethical code.

Restitution: Return or restoration of some specific thing to its rightful owner or status. Compensation for loss; esp., full or partial compensation paid by a criminal to a victim, not awarded in a civil trial for tort, but ordered as part of a criminal sentence or as a condition of probation. In the context of the fight against the illicit traffic in cultural property, this term means the action of returning of a cultural object, by its possessor, to the State from which the cultural object has been stolen.

Return: In the context of the fight against the illicit traffic in cultural property, it reflects the action of returning a cultural object illegally exported from the territory of the requesting State.

72 See Oxford English Dictionary, supra note 7, at Promotion and Development.
76 See Oxford English Dictionary, supra note 7, at Protected, Area and Good.
77 See Darvill, supra note 6, at Writing; Oxford English Dictionary, supra note 7, at Museum.
78 See Black’s Law Dictionary, supra note 1, at Record.
79 Id. at Religion.
80 See Id. at Restitution.
81 UNIDROIT Convention on Stolen or Illegally Exported Cultural Objects, supra note 24, at arts. 1(a), 3, 4.
82 Id. at art. 5(1).
Rock art: Any artificially created mark that is cut, engraved, incised, etched, gouged, ground or pecked into, or applied with paint, wax, or other substance (organic or mineral) onto, a rock surface.  

Sanctions: Penalties or coercive measures that result from failure to comply with a law, rule, or order.

Sculptures: The product of the sculptor's art; that which is sculptured (or engraved); sculptured figures in general.

Shipwrecks: A ship's wreckage. The injury or destruction of a vessel because of circumstances beyond the owner's control, rendering the vessel incapable of carrying out its mission.

Sites: The ground or area upon which a building, town, etc., has been built, or which is set apart for some purpose. Also, a plot, or number of plots, of land intended or suitable for building purposes, and, in wider use, a piece of ground or an area which has been appropriated for some purpose; the scene of a specified activity.

Statutes of limitation: A law that bars claims after a specified period; a statute establishing a time limit for prosecuting a crime, based on the date when the offense occurred.

Statutory Bodies Creation: The establishment or designation, by convention or statute, of a relevant administrative body responsible for the implementation of the convention or statute. For example, the 1999 Second Protocol to the Hague Convention of 1954 for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict establishes a Committee for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict whose purpose, among others, is “to monitor and supervise the implementation of [the] Protocol and promote the identification of cultural property under enhanced protection.”

Textiles: Of or pertaining to weaving or to woven fabrics. Also, of non-woven fabric.

Theft: The felonious taking and removing of another's personal property with the intent of depriving the true owner of it; larceny.

Time limit: A limit in time, or to the duration of some action or condition; also, a limit to the duration of a license or privilege.

Transfer of ownership: Any mode of disposing of or parting with an asset or an interest in an asset.

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83 See Darvill, supra note 6, at Rock art.
84 Black’s Law Dictionary, supra note 1, at Sanction.
85 Oxford English Dictionary, supra note 7, at Sculpture.
86 Black’s Law Dictionary, supra note 1, at Shipwreck.
87 Oxford English Dictionary, supra note 7, at Sites.
88 Black’s Law Dictionary, supra note 1, at Statutes of Limitation.
90 Oxford English Dictionary, supra note 7, Textile.
91 Black’s Law Dictionary, supra note 1, at Larceny.
92 Oxford English Dictionary, supra note 7, at Time limit.
Underwater Cultural heritage: All traces of human existence having a cultural, historical or archaeological character which have been partially or totally underwater, periodically or continuously, for at least 100 years, such as: sites, structures, buildings, artifacts and human remains, together with their archaeological and natural context; vessels, aircraft, other vehicles or any part thereof, their cargo or other contents, together with their archaeological and natural context; and objects of prehistoric character.94

Vehicles: Things used as instruments of conveyance.95

World Heritage: The cultural and natural heritage as defined in Articles 1 and 2 of the World Heritage Convention for whose protection it is the duty of the international community as a whole to co-operate.96

93 See Black’s Law Dictionary, supra note 1, at Transfer and Ownership.
95 Black’s Law Dictionary, supra note 1, at Vehicle.
96 See Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, supra note 29, at art. 6(1).