



Capacity-building and awareness-raising on the fight against illicit trafficking of cultural property in West Africa

Dakar, UNESCO-BREDA, Senegal, 17 – 19 September 2012

RECOMMENDATIONS

The participants¹ of the sub-regional workshop “Capacity-building and awareness-raising on the fight against illicit trafficking of cultural properties in West Africa” which took place in Dakar, Senegal, from 17 to 19 September 2012 at the UNESCO-BREDA Office:

Thank the Director General of UNESCO, Ms Irina Bokova, for the necessary funding of the workshop out of the emergency funds of UNESCO,

Express their deep gratitude to the Republic of Senegal for hosting the workshop,

Further thank the Government of the Netherlands for lending its financial support to the organization of the workshop,

Recognizing the exceptionally grave current situation of the cultural heritage of Mali, invite Mali's neighbouring States (Algeria, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal) to strengthen their cooperation with national, regional and international organizations in the development of a joint strategy for the preservation of the heritage of Mali, in particular to fight against the illicit trafficking of cultural objects and the destruction of the world heritage sites.

Referring to the discussions and suggestions of recommendations submitted during the workshop by the UNESCO-BREDA Office in Dakar, propose to the States and to governmental and non-governmental organizations as a priority action plan the following recommendations:

¹ The participants in the workshop were delegates from Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal and Togo.

A. Short term actions

1. Establish or complete inventories of cultural property, both in public and private ownership, and archaeological sites, with a priority given to cultural objects that are particularly vulnerable to destruction, theft and illicit exportation, as well as to archaeological sites vulnerable to illicit excavations.
2. Develop the training of police, customs and all civil and military personnel involved in the front line of the fight against trafficking (collection and dissemination of information, communications, border control, surveillance of sites, Internet regulation, etc.).
3. Strengthen the cooperation between police, customs and cultural heritage services, together with the relevant regional and international organizations (e.g. UNESCO, UNIDROIT, INTERPOL, WCO, UNODC, ICOM) involved in the fight against the illicit trafficking of cultural objects.
4. Ensure the provision of data for and the updating of the UNESCO database of national cultural heritage laws.
5. Create national databases of stolen cultural objects and enhance the dissemination, consultation and transmission of data to the INTERPOL database of stolen works of art.
6. Encourage the dissemination and application of the UNESCO and ICOM codes of ethics by museum and art market professionals.
7. Closely involve the media in the spread of information concerning heritage threatened or endangered by the mobilization of heritage stakeholders.

B. Medium-term actions

1. Become Parties to the UNESCO 1954 (The Hague) and 1970 Conventions, as well as to the 1995 UNIDROIT Convention.
2. Adopt or update legislation concerning the protection, management and promotion of cultural heritage with an emphasis on:
 - the definition of cultural objects
 - ownership and transfer of ownership of cultural objects
 - the creation of inventories
 - the regulation of archaeological excavations
 - the prevention and the fight against the theft of cultural objects
 - the control of trade, including via Internet
 - export certificates and customs controls
 - restitution procedures
 - the creation of services specializing in the protection of cultural heritage, in particular police services, and
 - administrative and penal sanctions.

3. Develop campaigns of information, awareness-raising and education in order to mobilize all members of society in preventing and fighting against the illicit trafficking of cultural property.
4. Identify partner countries and engage in negotiations with them in order to establish bilateral agreements on the reciprocal protection and restitution of stolen or illegally exported cultural property.

C. Long-term actions

1. Enhance the legal and regulatory tools for the prevention of and the fight against the illicit trafficking of cultural property whilst ensuring the implementation of the international Conventions in this field.
2. Ensure the on-going training of the personnel of the services mentioned above.
3. To hold, within two years, a regional workshop on the same theme with the particular objective of evaluating both experiences and results obtained, and to draft a new action plan.