Fourth Session, Paris, UNESCO Headquarters, Room XI, 15-16 May 2017


Monday 15 May 2017, 11:30 – 11:45

Maria Andreadaki – Vlazaki
Secretary General
The organization of a roundtable involving the art-market professionals, including auction houses, private collectors and internet service providers. “The movement of cultural property in 2016: regulation, international cooperation and diligence of professionals for cultural heritage protection” (Paris 30 March 2016) focused on:

- the provenance of cultural objects
- the role of free ports regarding the safeguarding of cultural property.
- the enhancement of the international cooperation and
- the optimization of the legislation regarding the monitoring of the legal trade of cultural goods.
Actions pursuant to the decisions of the 3rd SC meeting
28 – 30 September 2015

Joint Meeting of the Bureaus: Bureau for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict and Bureau of the Subsidiary Committee of the Meeting of States Parties to the 1970 Convention

- Joint awareness-raising campaigns on the protection of cultural heritage in situations of conflict.
- Encouragement of all members states to ratify and implement both Conventions and mainly the second Protocol of the Hague Convention
- Training of military forces and law-enforcement authorities, the basic authorities for the protection of cultural heritage and the prohibition of illicit trafficking of cultural goods.
- Creation of an open online database for cultural property “lost” during armed conflicts
- Exchange of information on the other Convention with respective partners i.e. ICRC, to be informed on the risks of illicit trafficking of cultural property and its protection in occupied territory
- Establishment of the joint meetings of the Chairpersons once a year to enhance the synergies among all UNESCO Conventions.
Actions pursuant to the decisions of the 3\textsuperscript{rd} SC meeting
28 – 30 September 2015

- circulation of proposals through draft documents for possible amendments to the rules of procedure of our Committee
- the drafting of a standard action plan for the restitution or return of stolen or illicitly exported cultural property offered for sale in particular on the internet or by auction
- the development of an on-line questionnaire for the electronic submission of periodic reports
Actions pursuant to the decisions of the 3rd SC meeting  
28 – 30 September 2015

A major success: the decision “to establish an informal reflection group until its 4th session composed of all 18 Members of the Subsidiary Committee of the Meeting of States Parties and open to Observers under the coordination of the Chairperson of this Committee” with the mandate to work on priority topics and with the ability to invite experts to exchange views on these topics:

- The online sales of illicitly trafficked cultural property
- The establishment of standard and simplified procedures for search, seizure, confiscation and restitution
- The trafficking in documentary heritage.
First Informal Reflection Group meeting  
3 – 5 June 2016, Delphi - Greece

- Discussion on the outcomes of the Roundtable with the art market professionals
- Discussions that concluded and proposed the following:
  - Strengthening of the monitoring of the auction houses
  - Authenticity of the provenance certificates
  - Promotion of the dialogue, cooperation and exchange of information among auction houses and states
  - Establishment of a sanction mechanism for the import of illegally removed cultural property or for failure to perform the due diligence.
  - Harmonization of the law provisions.
  - Continuous training of the personnel who is involved with restitution and combat of illicit trade.
  - Proper documentation of cultural goods according to the international guidelines.
  - Careful and detailed monitor at the borders among state members
  - Increase of the synergies among state entities (police, judicial, diplomatic authorities) and intergovernmental organizations (Interpol, UNODC, UNESCO).
Discussion on:
• the proposal of Mexico regarding the Protection and prevention of illicit trafficking of the documentary heritage
• the issues concerning the amendment of the Rules of Procedure of the Subsidiary Committee
• the new questionnaire on the periodic reporting on the implementation of the 1970 Convention
Second joint meeting of the six Chairpersons of the UNESCO Culture Conventions 
26 September 2016, UNESCO Headquarters, Paris

the need for further and closer cooperation was particularly stressed
The amendments on the Rules of procedure were finalized and decided. They mainly refer to:

- The eligibility of the members of the SC and duration of the members of the SC
- Simple majority instead of two thirds of the Committee members for the decision of a request for extraordinary session
- The time of the election of the Bureau and the duration of its duties
• The Standard Action Plan for return and restitution of cultural objects illegally on sale on the market was finalized and adopted. This Action Plan also applies to stolen and/or illegally exported cultural objects located abroad.

• A meeting in cooperation with the Government of Mexico for the illicit trafficking of documentary heritage was decided for October 2017.

• The broadening of old partnerships and the establishment of new ones with international organizations involved in monitoring and reporting on e-commerce and cyber-crime, such as OECD and UNCTAD, UN Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team, UNODC and INTERPOL was also decided.
The discussion mainly focused on:

- The digital documentation of movable and immovable cultural property, its specific problems and the option to transfer this good practice to other countries, as well as the need for establishing and maintaining updated inventories.
- The threats faced by countries under armed conflict in safekeeping their cultural heritage from illegal trade.
- The cooperation of countries with INTERPOL and national law enforcement authorities which have developed advanced techniques in confronting cultural crime.
Informal Working Group
10 – 13 March 2017, Chania and Heraklion, Crete - Greece

The discussion mainly focused on:

• The bilateral cooperation between countries for the exchange of information
• The efforts to strengthen legal trade of cultural goods and handle it as part of the solution through the due diligence of the buyer and the compliance of the seller to the relevant code of ethics of ICOM
• The legislation terms and conditions of e – traders
• The attempts for creating mobile phone applications for searching lost or stolen cultural goods in online relevant databases.
An initiative and action of Greece for the protection of our cultural property from illegal transport and damage especially in territories under armed conflict.

The establishment of a roster, at present counting almost 30 persons, which are ready to offer their services in countries under armed conflict situations, where cultural heritage is seriously under threat. Archaeologists, architects and civil engineers, conservators, lawyers and specialists in the restoration of monuments have replied positively to our call and now their contact details and CVs are available upon request to the UNESCO Secretariat or any other competent body for possible future cooperation.
Thank you for your attention!

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