

ITEM 10

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. On behalf of the Nordic countries, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden, we would like to read the following statement regarding strengthening of the implementation of the convention.

The Nordic delegations have particularly noted that the United Nations Security Council has in several resolutions encouraged the strengthening of national efforts to prevent illicit trafficking of cultural objects, as well as reporting on those actions. This was last emphasised in March 2019 in Resolution 2462 on countering the financing of terrorism.

Since our last Nordic statement, there have been several important initiatives in the follow-up of the Nordic ministerial declaration from 2015. This includes two Nordic conferences in Oslo and a coordination meeting between Nordic cultural authorities in Stockholm. In April this year, a network meeting was organised in Copenhagen by the Danish National Commission of UNESCO and the Nordic Centre for Protection of Cultural Heritage in Armed Conflict (CHAC). A key question there was how the national UNESCO-commissions and NGOs could contribute to the governments' efforts to curb illicit trade and protect cultural heritage.

We have taken note that similar regional workshops and seminars have also recently taken place in other regions under the auspices of UNESCO, INTERPOL, the WCO, and the EU.

We wish to highlight the great work done by UNESCO, the WCO, the UNODC and the EU in developing practical tools to help the authorities work to prevent cultural crime and trafficking of cultural property. We also encourage law enforcement, professional authorities and other Nordic stakeholders to further develop the Nordic co-operation, in line with the conclusion of the Oslo conference in 2015, and to actively share e-learning platforms.

We note that the Council of Europe Convention on Offences relating to Cultural Property (Nicosia, 2017) is in our view an important supplement to UNESCO's cultural conventions and to the UNIDROIT Convention on the return of stolen and illegally exported cultural objects. The Nicosia Convention - which falls under the jurisdiction of each country's judicial authorities - will, when it comes into force, be open for global accession, and may thus become an important tool for countries to ameliorate the protection of cultural property.

Considering UNSC Resolution 2347 (2017), other sectors should be encouraged to integrate culture and cultural heritage as a *central premise* in their work towards the UN's sustainability goals within their respective areas, within the judicial sector, within education, research, climate and environment, as well as within defence and military operations.

All parts of civil society should also be encouraged to engage in the preservation of the world's cultural heritage, while acknowledging the special responsibility of protecting and securing our own national cultural heritage.

The Delegation of Iceland



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