

## **FINAL DOCUMENT**

### **Sub-Regional Meeting for the Promotion and Implementation of Conventions for the Safeguarding of Cultural Heritage In Central Asia**

**Dushanbe, Tajikistan**

**19-20 January 2007**

On 19-20 January 2007, a *Sub-Regional Meeting for the Promotion and Implementation of the 1970, 1995 and 1954 Conventions in Central Asia* was held in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, organized by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) under the high auspices of the Government of Tajikistan.

Four States of the Central Asian region (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan<sup>1</sup>, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan) participated in the Meeting.

The meeting pursued the following objectives:

- (i) Promote the ratification and improve the implementation of the 1954 Convention and its two protocols, the 1970 UNESCO Convention, as well as the 1995 UNIDROIT Convention at national level;
- (ii) Promote the ratification of the 2003 Convention, and discuss the results of the First Intergovernmental Committee Meeting held in Algiers in November 2006;
- (iii) Discuss links between the 1972 and 2003 Conventions.

Thanking the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Tajikistan, the Tajik National Commission for UNESCO and the UNESCO Almaty Office for the successful organization of this Meeting, we, the participants of the “Sub-Regional Meeting for the Promotion and Implementation of Conventions for the Safeguarding of Cultural Heritage in Central Asia” adopt the following:

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<sup>1</sup> Due to bad weather conditions and the closing of the Dushanbe airport, the Kyrgyz Delegation could not join. However, national reports have been provided.

## - RECOMMENDATIONS -

**Taking into consideration** the provisions of the international standard setting instruments and notably:

- a. the Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict of 1954 and its two protocols;
- b. the Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property of 1970;
- c. the UNIDROIT Convention on Stolen or Illegally Exported Cultural Objects of 1995;
- d. the Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage of 1972;
- e. the Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage of 2003;

**Observing** that some States Parties participating in the Sub-Regional Meeting have yet to harmonize their national legislation with the provisions of the 1954 Hague Convention, its two 1954 and 1999 Protocols and the 1970 Convention in order to ensure proper implementation and, in particular, penalize offences against cultural property;

**Deeply** concerned by the growing phenomenon of the illicit traffic of cultural property in the Central Asian Region;

**Recognizing** the need as well as the difficulties of institutional cooperation among the cultural authorities and institutions, police, customs and judiciary, nationally and at the sub-regional level;

**Aware** of the problem of insufficient regional cooperation in fighting the illicit traffic in cultural objects;

1. *invite* all States of the Central Asian region which have not yet done so to consider becoming party to both Protocols to the 1954 Hague Convention, the 1970 as well as the 1995 Convention;
2. *invite* all States of the Central Asian region to consider becoming party to the 2003 Intangible Heritage Convention;
3. *remind* States Parties to the 1954 Hague Convention and its Protocols, and invite all other States, to adopt relevant national measures aimed at, in particular:
  - the preparation, maintenance and regular updating of inventories of cultural property, or updating existing inventories;
  - the adoption of the necessary safeguard measures to ensure the protection of cultural property in the event of armed conflict or other situations of emergency, including the preparation of documentation and identification of refuges for movable cultural property;

- the identification of cultural objects and sites which may be considered for entry in the International Register of Cultural Property under Special Protection (1954 Convention) or the List of Cultural Property under Enhanced Protection (1999 Protocol);
- the consideration for the marking of immovable cultural property with the distinctive emblem of the 1954 Hague Convention;
- the training of specialized civilian and military personnel responsible for the protection of cultural property in the event of armed conflict;
- the introduction of the provisions of IHL for the protection of cultural property in the event of armed conflict into military manuals;
- ensuring the widest possible dissemination of the rules protecting cultural property in the event of armed conflict both within concerned target groups such as the armed forces, law enforcement officers, civil servants and cultural heritage professionals, as well as civil society as a whole; and
- the inclusion of the subject of the protection of cultural property in curricula and training of different educational institutions, both civilian and military;

4. *recommend* that concerned States consider the following actions in order to fight the illicit traffic of the cultural property:

a. at the national level:

- Enhance the relevant national legislation in order to reduce the illicit traffic of cultural property;
- Enhance the national inventories and databases of cultural property;
- Ensure at least the use of Object ID standards;
- Enhance the cooperation and provide an adequate training among the cultural authorities and institutions, police, customs and judiciary as a matter of utmost importance;
- Encourage the creation of specialized police and customs units dedicated to the combat against the illicit traffic of cultural property;
- Develop or improve the cooperation with INTERPOL, in particular by ensuring prompt report of stolen cultural property to INTERPOL National Bureaus;
- Enhance security measures for premises hosting cultural property such as museums, public collections, places of worship as well as archaeological sites in order to prevent thefts;
- Regulate and monitor the art market by promoting the legal framework of the trading of cultural property;
- Raise public awareness for the need of protecting cultural property through media campaigns and educational programs;
- Consider adopting the UNESCO-WCO Export Certificate as national export certificate for cultural property;

b. at regional and international level:

- Promote the issues related to the fight against the illicit traffic of cultural property at appropriate events ;
  - Promote cross-border cooperation among the services and institutions dedicated to the fight against illicit traffic of cultural property;
  - Exchange regularly information, expertise and experience relevant to the traffic of the cultural property;
  - Invite UNESCO to facilitate further promotion of the applicable international standard setting instruments as well as other activities in order to fight the illicit traffic of cultural property in the Central Asian region;
  - Contribute by submitting to the UNESCO Cultural Heritage Law Database national legislations, if not yet done so;
5. *acknowledge* that the division of responsibilities for the protection of cultural property may vary in each State and that, in consequence, it is necessary to ensure the appropriate co-ordination among different State bodies and institutions;
6. *acknowledge*, for those States that are party or considering becoming a party to relevant international treaties for the protection of cultural property, the importance of reviewing the compatibility of the national legal system with those treaties;
7. *recognize* the need for governmental authorities and experts to pursue the exchange of national experiences in the field of protection of cultural property, including information on technical measures, both at the bilateral and multilateral levels, as well as through UNESCO or other competent international or regional institutions;
8. *Invite* all States to continue supporting the on-going Silk Roads Serial Nomination process in the framework of the 1972 World Heritage Convention, and to take into consideration other forms of intangible heritage among attributes expressing authenticity when preparing the Nominations.