

We, the representatives of Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestinian Territories and Syria, who participated in the sub-regional Seminar organised by the UNESCO Beirut Office on "the Protection of Cultural Property through Application of Conventions and their Tools", which was held in Amman from 18 to 20 June 2007, recommend the following

Recommendation n. I

Supporting the value of the UNESCO-WCO Model Export Certificate for cultural objects,

1. Welcome the UNESCO-WCO joint initiative aimed at conducting a survey on the adoption of this certificate world wide and at assessing its effectiveness in the fight against illicit traffic,
2. Encourage the adoption of such Model Export Certificate for cultural objects in the region.

Recommendation n.II

Recalling that because the cultural heritage is part of the identity of each nation and form together the cultural heritage of humanity, it should be particularly protected during armed conflicts,

Recognizing the fact that national and international legislation are necessary and complementary to provide such protection and fight efficiently illicit traffic in cultural property,

1. Strengthen national legislation so as to reflect the importance of asserting ownership of the State over all archaeological objects,
2. Strongly encourage all States of the region to make their national legislation easily accessible by providing it to the UNESCO Secretariat in order to be inserted in the UNESCO Cultural Heritage Laws Database,
3. Urge all States of the region which have not already done so to become party to the relevant international conventions, including the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, the 1995 UNIDROIT Convention on Stolen or Illegally Exported Cultural Objects and the 2001 UNESCO Convention for the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage,
4. Request UNESCO and UNIDROIT to organise a workshop to study the complementarity between, and the practical application of the 1970 UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property and the 1995 UNIDROIT Convention,
5. Also request that the INTERPOL General Secretariat liaise with the UNESCO offices in the arab sub-region to organise a capacity building regional workshop, particularly for law enforcement agencies, concerning the alarming illicit traffic of cultural objects from the sub-region and in particular that of Iraq.

Recommendation n.III

Stressing the need to accelerate the making of inventories and documentation of cultural objects in order to facilitate their identification in case of theft or illicit export,

Recognizing the importance of reporting thefts as quickly as possible and with the best documentation possible,

1. Encourage the wide adoption of the Object ID form as a minimum standard for identification of objects which will also serve as an element of proof in case of illegal appropriation,
2. Urge the cultural institutions to contact the INTERPOL national central bureau in their respective countries in order to circulate the information as soon as possible through INTERPOL tools and networks and, where appropriate, request ICOM and UNESCO's assistance.

Recommendation n. IV

Convinced of the necessity to associate the civil society to the protection of its cultural heritage,

1. Stress the importance of raising public awareness regarding the cultural heritage and the harm caused by illicit trafficking in cultural property at the national level, including educational programmes in schools and information campaigns designed for the general public in cooperation with the national commissions of UNESCO, national ICOM committees, other concerned institutions and media.