

FORUM: General Assembly Third Committee

QUESTION OF: The Question of the Intentional Destruction and Misappropriation of Cultural Heritage

SUBMITTED BY: Brazil

CO-SUBMITTERS: Albania, Austria, Bahamas, Belize, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Cambodia, China, Côte d'Ivoire, ECA, Ecuador, Greece, Guatemala, Hungary, Indonesia, Italy, Liberia, Malaysia, Mali, Nepal, South Africa, South Korea, Suriname, UNESCO, Yemen

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY,

Understanding the importance of cultural heritage sites to the international community and respective nations' history,

Recalling that cultural heritage sites and cultural artifacts have been protected in wars for thousands of years,

Acknowledging the existence of customary international law and its importance in preserving cultural heritage from misappropriation and international destruction,

Desiring cultural education accessible to all global community members with the goal of increasing awareness about the issue,

Recognizing the need for a cohesive source of information for the status of cultural artifacts,

Expresses its appreciation for the organization of technical support missions by UNESCO's World Heritage Centre in order to safeguard Cultural Heritage from intentional destruction and trafficking in cultural property and related offences,

Alarmed by the threats made by world leaders of attacking cultural heritage sites,

Welcoming the participation and support from the global community in executing the following plan with the initiative of inspiring greatness for a better world by leading with dignity,

1. Recommends the establishment of national workshops in order to raise public awareness about the value of cultural heritage preservation, in collaboration with UNESCO, WCO and other relevant organizations, focused on:
 - a) community involvement in identifying and creating an inventory of the intentional destruction and misappropriation of cultural heritage according to international law
 - b) information gathering about their concerns pertaining to the destruction of cultural heritage within communities
 - c) giving museums and other relevant organizations experience in fieldwork
 - d) informing museums, relevant business associations and other relevant organizations on provenance documentation;
2. Urges member states to facilitate the creation of educational programs specific to their country with the help of UNESCO in secondary schools pertaining to the intentional destruction and misappropriation of cultural heritage as well as helping young citizens understand the innate importance of protecting not only their own cultural heritage but also cultural heritage belonging to others by discussing topics such as but not limited to:
 - a) how to safeguard their own cultural heritage by
 - i. learning about their country's history and beliefs through local history classes and school programs
 - ii. taking part in cultural outings to museums and UNESCO World Heritage Sites if available to experience their own culture and view artifacts from their culture's history

- b) how to respect and appreciate the cultural heritage of other nationalities and the rest of the world through the means of
 - i. being educated on other nationalities' culture in addition to their own to promote intercultural understanding and tolerance
 - ii. educating citizens on the consequences of the purchasing of cultural artifacts through the black market in their respective countries
 - iii. trips to neighbouring countries as cultural outings to observe their heritage and artifacts;
3. Calls upon UNESCO to start a mass media campaign to inform people who do not have access to education, due to conflict as well as anybody who has an interest in learning more about their cultural heritage, to teach them the importance of their country's cultural heritage and the role it plays in the identity, history, and religion of their respective country through means such as but not limited to:
 - a) advertisement in local newspapers and magazines
 - b) seminars held in community centers
 - c) social media advertisement
 - d) television broadcasting
 - e) mobile education units in rural areas to promote the following to all people no longer in education
 - i. respect for all cultures including their own
 - ii. national language services
 - iii. informing citizens of the threat of purchasing illegal artifacts;
4. Requests member states to promote the creation of local databases, in which member nations can:
 - a) catalogue objects and buildings of cultural importance so as to protect and track them further
 - b) record objects that are identified as stolen and internationally recognizing them in conjunction with
 - i. INTERPOL database of Stolen Works of Art
 - ii. UNESCO database of National Cultural Heritage Law
 - iii. WCO ARCHEO platform
 - iv. United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)
 - v. other NGOs determined to have relevance;
5. Calls for the implementation of a branch of the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization, named the United Nations Cultural Office of Protection (UNCHOP), which would organize and lead other organizations such as Carabinieri Department for the Protection of Cultural Heritage, The Heritage Team of the Central Operational Unit of the 'Guardia Civil' Central Office for the Fight against Trafficking of Cultural Property (OCBC), INTERPOL, with access to its Stolen Works of Art Database, and other specialized police forces, whose role would include but not be limited to the following:
 - a) monitoring the illegal possession of cultural heritage, and holding nation-states accountable
 - b) determining the suitable punishment for the individual, nation, or organization which was illegally the possessor of the artifact
 - c) monitoring the protection and preservation of heritage
 - d) conducting investigations on stolen or lost artifacts in order to find said artifacts and anyone who may have been responsible
 - e) provide training in terms of protecting cultural heritage to local police or armed forces specific to their situation and area by means such as but not limited to:
 - i. using UNESCO or INTERPOL approved experts to directly educate police or armed force leaders to protect cultural heritage sites and prevent illicit trade of cultural artifacts, as well as ways to deter potential criminals
 - ii. putting up posters and distributing flyers around the offices, camps, outposts and

headquarters of police and armed forces summarizing what they would need to know, as specified in sub-clause a, in terms of protecting cultural heritage

- f) regulate the verification process of repatriating heritage
 - g) verify bi-annually the extent to which countries can protect and preserve repatriated artifacts;
6. Emphasizes the creation of a verification process, overseen by UNCHOP, for the repatriation of artifacts that works in conjunction with the United Nations Office of Legal Affairs in order to determine the ability of said nation to protect and preserve the artefact in question;
7. Urges the world bank, member states of the UN, UNESCO, ALIPH, WCO and other relevant organizations to provide other member states assistance, based upon their requests and needs, to allow them to undertake capital expenditure focussed on programs whose efforts prevent and counter the intentional destruction and misappropriation of cultural heritage;
8. Asks that all member states, in an attempt to prevent the illegal exportation and thus appropriation of cultural property to adopt the following measures:
- a) implementing appropriate documentation in collaboration with the United Nations Group of Governmental Experts (including certification of provenance) for cultural artifacts, through digitized information when possible in a network of 'safe havens' accessible only to that member nation and any relevant organizations such as but not limited to
 - i. INTERPOL
 - ii. UNESCO
 - b) prohibiting cross-border trade in such illicit items lacking clear documentation and certified provenance, (notably those originating from a context of armed conflict and exploited by terrorist groups), for its eventual safe return to their country of origin;
9. Encourages the establishment of an annual convention of all countries and nongovernmental organizations specifically dedicated to discussing the progression of measures on this issue at hand with the purpose of:
- a) reviewing, editing, and continuing the efforts for the priorly stated initiatives and programs
 - b) strengthening cooperation and ensuring effective communication with security organizations at a local and international level
 - c) ensuring active participation of citizens and governments at the local and international level
 - d) coordinating respective nations' efforts and sharing with other members
 - e) reaffirming commitment to aforementioned and created initiatives annually;
10. Decides to remain actively seized of the matter.