

RECOMMENDATIONS

5th Meeting of the Interpol Expert Group (IEG) on Stolen Cultural Property – Lyon, 4 and 5 March 2008

The participants at the 5th Meeting of the Interpol Expert Group (IEG) on Stolen Cultural Property, held in Lyon on 4 and 5 March 2008:

RECOGNIZING the value of INTERPOL's stolen works of art database as a world wide investigation tool and the need for systematic supply of updated information,

AWARE of the need for access to this information beyond the law enforcement agencies by the museums, the art trade professionals and the wider public,

ALARMED by the recent increase of armed robberies from museums, churches, public and private collections of works of art,

CONSCIENT of the persistent use of the Internet for the illicit sale of cultural property involving responsibility on the part of the Internet platforms,

ACKNOWLEDGING the crucial role that the art trade can play in the fight against illicit traffic in cultural property,

NOTING the lack of public awareness of the importance of cultural heritage and the need for its protection

Recommend:

- The INTERPOL General Secretariat :
- to develop an electronic message format in order to facilitate the transmission of art theft information from the National Central Bureaus to the General Secretariat;
- to pursue the initiative of granting the widest possible access to INTERPOL's stolen works of art database by means of its public web site;

- to collect and periodically disseminate information from member countries concerning agreements with Internet platforms with a view to reducing the illicit online sales of cultural property;

- to closely monitor the increasing use of violence in art crime and address the problem during future conferences and meetings;

- INTERPOL, UNESCO and ICOM:

- to jointly study the means of raising public awareness for the protection of cultural heritage;

- INTERPOL and UNESCO member countries:

- to contact their respective art trade associations, in particular auction houses, in order to obtain their adoption and application of codes of ethics and specific rules;

- to conclude agreements with Internet platforms containing the limitation of sale of cultural property according to national law, the self control of the Internet platforms and activities of raising public awareness of the need for the protection of cultural property ;

- to encourage Internet platforms, auction houses and art dealers to grant free access to online and conventional catalogues for law enforcement agencies;

- ICOM:

- to contact international art trade associations and auction houses in order to obtain their adoption and application of codes of ethics and specific rules.