



## CONCLUSIONS

### 12th Meeting of the INTERPOL Expert Group (IEG) on Stolen Cultural Property Lyon, France, 18-19 June 2015

The participants at the 12th Meeting of the INTERPOL Expert Group (IEG) on Stolen Cultural Property, held in Lyon, France, on 18-19 June 2015:

**ACKNOWLEDGING** the full relevance of the recommendations of the 11th meeting of the INTERPOL Expert Group held in Lyon on 27-28 February 2014;

**AWARE** of the long-term threat of cultural cleansing in countries affected by natural disasters, civil unrest or armed conflict, and of the increasing cases of thefts and illicit trafficking in cultural property in many regions of the world;

**TAKING** into consideration recent UN resolutions, in particular UN Security Council Resolution 2199 (2015) on the need to tackle the source of financing for terrorist groups in Syria and Iraq, including illicit traffic in cultural property, adopted on 12 February 2015, UN Resolution 69/281 on saving the cultural heritage of Iraq, adopted by the General Assembly on 28 May 2015, and Resolution 69/196 on international guidelines for crime prevention and criminal justice responses with respect to trafficking in cultural property and other related offences, adopted by the General Assembly on 18 December 2014;

**ALSO TAKING** into consideration the European Parliament Resolution of 30 April 2015 on the destruction of cultural sites perpetrated by ISIS/Da'esh (2015/2649(RSP));

**RECOGNIZING** the need for strong national legislation for the protection of cultural heritage, and for harmonization of laws across jurisdictions, and the benefits of efficient implementation of international legal instruments in this area;

**WELCOMING** the adoption of the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property (UNESCO, 1970);

**RECOGNIZING** the benefits and importance of exchanges of best practices and of increased operational cooperation to fight the illicit traffic in cultural property, in particular between law enforcement agencies and UNESCO, UNIDROIT, UNODC, the WCO and ICOM;

**ENCOURAGE INTERPOL's member countries to:**

**IMPLEMENT** the requirements of the UN Security Council Resolution 2199 (2015) concerning cultural property and other items of archaeological, historical, cultural, rare scientific, and religious importance illegally removed from Iraq since 6 August 1990 and from Syria since 15 March 2011;

**COMPILE** and share data on thefts and seizures of cultural items, and conduct research into actors and operational modes of illicit trafficking in cultural items;

**CONSIDER** applying the International Guidelines for Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Responses with Respect to Trafficking in Cultural Property and Other Related Offences adopted by the United Nations General Assembly (as Annex to Resolution 69/196);

**USE** INTERPOL's tools (INTERPOL Stolen Works of Art Database, Poster of the Most Wanted Works of Art, Notices, etc.) for improving police cooperation in countering illicit traffic in cultural goods and related offences worldwide, particularly if linked to organized crime and terrorism, as well as all other practical tools available to the law enforcement agencies, such as ICOM Red List of Cultural Objects at Risk, etc.;

**RECOMMEND that INTERPOL and its partner Organizations:**

**PROVIDE**, in line with their respective roles, technical assistance to raise awareness and build capacity for appropriate officials, including customs, police, prosecution and judicial services, and include a component on the possible links between trafficking in cultural property and terrorism financing, particularly in relation to Iraq and Syria, in accordance with Security Council Resolution 2199 (2015);

**INCREASE** their efforts in searching for a coordinated approach in order to obtain more complete, consistent and reliable statistical data on crimes against cultural property;

**PROVIDE**, in line with their respective roles, special support to countries during crisis and post-crisis periods, in particular by raising awareness and building capacity, reinforcing information exchanges and priority recording of data about stolen cultural property in the INTERPOL Works of Art database;

**ENCOURAGE** their respective member countries to ratify the relevant international conventions relating to the protection of cultural heritage, if they are not yet States Parties, and implement their provisions. In particular:

- Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (1954) and its two protocols (1954 and 1999);
- Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property (1970);
- Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (1972);

- Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage (2001);
- UNIDROIT Convention on Stolen or Illegally Exported Cultural Objects (1995).

**CONSIDER** the use of the 2000 United Nations Convention on Transnational Organized Crime for investigations into illicit trafficking in cultural property and related transnational crimes;

**RAISE AWARENESS** within the private sector, including auction houses, internet companies and providers, etc., of the consequences of the illicit trade in cultural objects, in particular the risk of terrorism financing;

**CONSIDER** supporting media campaigns to inform public opinion on the destruction of cultural heritage by terrorist groups and the risk of links between the illegal trade in cultural objects and terrorism financing;

**RECOMMEND that INTERPOL General Secretariat:**

**SEEK** increased operational cooperation with NCBs and specialized law enforcement agencies in particular cases, which may lead to the creation of a regular Task Force;

**WORK** in closer cooperation with the World Customs Organization and its Regional Intelligence Liaison Offices (RILOs) network in the field of cultural heritage in order to intercept illegally imported/exported cultural goods at borders.

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