

Resolutions concerning historic centres, archaeological excavations and illegal traffic in works of art

INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR THE STUDY OF THE PRESERVATION AND THE RESTORATION OF CULTURAL PROPERTY ¹

Original publication: International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and the Restoration of Cultural Property (1974) "Resolutions concerning historic centres, archaeological excavations and illegal traffic in works of art", *General Assembly, 7th Session, Rome, 9-12 April 1973*, AG7/11, Rome, October 1974 (Original in French).

RESOLUTION

Training of conservation specialists

The General Assembly

Considering that the cultural and social values inherent in cultural property are being increasingly recognized, in particular cultural property which provides man's daily environment, that is to say historic districts,

Considering that the preservation of these districts in many countries poses methodological and technical problems of great scope and urgency,

Considering that, on the other hand, specialized training in conservation has been undertaken in an ever increasing number of countries;

Recommends that the interested Member States inform the Director of the Centre of any specialized conservation and restoration training courses, the syllabus of the courses and details of any diplomas or certificates awarded,

And urges that appropriate posts, consistent with their special training, experience and responsibility be offered to those specialists in conservation who have acquired the necessary qualifications; and that refresher courses be organized regularly on the basic principles and techniques of conservation and restoration.

¹ The name ICCROM was officially adopted in 1979.

RESOLUTION

The publication of archaeological excavation reports

The General Assembly

Considering that more than 50% of the archaeological excavations carried out in the last half century have never had the results published,

Considering that in most instances those technically qualified to report on the excavations are dead,

Considering, moreover, that an unpublished excavation is a negative contribution to archaeology since valuable information is thus lost forever,

Recommends that Member States, in order to assure the publication of the results of excavations carried out on their territory, take the necessary measures to terminate all excavations where it appears that published reports will not be forthcoming in a reasonable time.

RESOLUTION

Undercover archaeological excavations and illegal traffic in works of art

The General Assembly

Considering that undercover archaeological excavation, and the illegal movement and sale of works of art and cultural property in general is steadily increasing,

Recommends that Member States take the necessary measures to present as soon as possible their ratification or approval of the Convention concerning the measures to be taken to forbid and discourage the importation, exportation, and transfer of illegal cultural property, adopted by the General Conference of UNESCO at the Sixteenth Session, held in Paris, November 14, 1970.

Recommends equally that the Member States take the necessary legislative measures to achieve the provisions of this Convention.

Recommends also to work towards the creation of storage facilities for objects found during excavation, in order that their conservation and security may be guaranteed.

RESOLUTION

Archaeological excavations

The General Assembly

Considering that a great number of archaeological excavations are conducted under conditions contrary to the fundamental scientific principles of archaeology and conservation,

Reminds Member States of the recommendation defining the international principles applicable to the conduct of archaeological excavation adopted by the General Conference of UNESCO at the Ninth Session held in New Delhi, December 5, 1956 and

Recommends in particular to Member States:

- a. to limit archaeological excavations to the actual possibilities of the project at hand and to the actual capacity for conserving and publishing reports on the archaeological remains uncovered and the objects brought to light;
- b. to proceed in such a way that the excavation and conservation is accomplished by teams of archaeologists, architects, art historians and conservation specialists working together;
- c. to restrict reconstruction of destroyed buildings in such cases where this operation can be achieved completely or almost completely by reassembling its dismembered but still existent fragments (anastylosis). Only such a method of reconstruction can safeguard the genuine value of the original monument (*Venice Charter*, art. 15).

RESOLUTION

The conservation of monuments on their original sites

The General Assembly

Considering that the growing tendency to use recent advances in engineering technology in order to move historic monuments from their original sites poses a particularly grave threat to cultural, historic, and aesthetic values which are contained in the strict relationship which exists between a monument and its historical and spatial context,

Recommends that the principle of conserving monuments on their original site be recognized as a fundamental basic principle of monument conservation as it has been expressed in Article 8 of the Recommendation defining the international principles applied to archaeological excavation procedure adopted by the General Conference of UNESCO at the Ninth Session held in New Delhi, December 5, 1956.

Recommends furthermore that all studies necessary be carried out to demonstrate that maintaining the authenticity and integrity of cultural patrimony does not constitute a braking effect on the development of modern society, but, on the contrary constitutes an essential factor in the development of the quality of life at the social and economic level as well as on the cultural level.

*