

Commission: Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Committee

Session : National MUN - 2024

Sponsors : Afghanistan, Iran (Islamic Republic of), New Zealand, Nigeria, Philippines, Republic of Korea (South), Russian Federation, Singapore, Thailand, Türkiye, Ukraine, Viet Nam

QUESTION OF: **COMBATting THE ILLICIT TRADE IN CULTURAL ARTIFACTS**

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming the provision of the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the event of armed conflicts and its two protocols, as well as the 1970 UNESCO Convention on the means of prohibiting and preventing the illicit import, export and transfer of ownership of cultural property,

Deeply concerned by the increasing scale of illicit trafficking of cultural artifacts like organisations such as online marketplaces, which deprives nations of their heritage and fuels organized crime and terrorism,

Further deploring that the lack of public awareness and education on the importance of cultural heritage contributes to the perpetuation of illicit trade,

Acknowledges that cultural artifacts experience greater vulnerability in the face of conflicts,

Expressing deep concern that the current level of international Cooperation and information sharing among law enforcement agencies is insufficient to effectively combat the illicit trade in cultural artifacts,

Taking into account the challenges faced by countries in enforcing existing laws and regulations to prevent and combat the illicit trade in cultural artifacts,

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1. Requests the G77 Chapter at UNESCO to:
  - I. strengthen its efforts in developing strategies to combat the illicit trade in cultural artifacts, with a particular focus on the needs and challenges faced by developing countries;
  - II. collaborate with Member States and relevant international organizations in capacity building and technology transfer to enhance the protection of cultural heritage in developing countries;
  - III. advocate for increased financial and technical assistance to developing countries to support their efforts in preventing and combating the illicit trade in cultural artifacts;
2. Further requests the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and UNESCO to collaborate on developing comprehensive guidelines and best practices for combating the illicit trade in cultural artifacts, incorporating successful strategies from various regions;
3. Encourages the development of public awareness campaigns to inform citizens about the value of cultural heritage and the impact of illicit trade;
4. Recommends integrating cultural heritage preservation into school curricula to give a sense of pride and responsibility in younger generations;
5. Requests NGOs to monitor government activities concerning cultural artifacts in conflict zones with aim to fight against illegal funding of wars through selling of country's heritage;
6. Urges governments to ensure the protection of cultural artifacts during conflicts;

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7. Calls upon Member States to enhance international cooperation through the exchange of information and best practices, and to participate in joint operations and initiatives coordinated by INTERPOL and UNESCO aimed at identifying and dismantling networks involved in the illicit trade;
8. Endorses the adoption of digital platforms and databases that enable both the public and professionals to report and track stolen artifacts in real-time;
9. Requests funding and resources to museums, archives, cultural institutions for the proper documentation, protection, and restoration of cultural artifacts;
10. Encourages Member States to establish and strengthen national data bases of cultural artifacts to aid in the identification and recovery of stolen items, and to share relevant information with INTERPOL and other international bodies;
11. Further requests governments to create bilateral agreements with foreign countries whereby strong international legal consensus can aid in preventing the illegal trade of cultural artifacts and thereby help in recovering cultural artefacts;
12. Recommends the establishment of a global framework for the standardization and certification of cultural artifacts, ensuring traceability and authenticity, to prevent illegal transactions and to assist law enforcement agencies in identifying illicit artifacts;
13. Encourages the development of technological solutions, such as blockchain and digital tracking systems, to enhance the traceability and accountability of cultural artefacts throughout their life cycle.