



International Coordination Committee for the Safeguarding of the Cultural Heritage of Iraq

FIRST PLENARY SESSION

24-25 MAY 2004 – UNESCO HEADQUARTERS, PARIS

FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

The Members of the ICC convened by the Director-General of UNESCO, Mr Koichiro Matsuura, at the *First Plenary Session of the International Coordination Committee for the Safeguarding of the Cultural Heritage of Iraq*, at UNESCO Headquarters from 24 to 25 May 2004,

Thanking the Director-General of UNESCO and the Minister of Culture of Iraq, Mr Mufid Al-Jazairi, for calling the first session of the ICC,

Taking note of the results of two UNESCO expert missions in Iraq, the three UNESCO expert meetings and the Organization's on-going activities in favour of cultural heritage of Iraq,

Acknowledging the experts' contributions made during the debates,

Agreed on the following recommendations:

OBJECTIVE 1 - Assist the Ministry of Culture of Iraq in ensuring the institutional reform, capacity-building and training in the field of cultural policy aimed at the safeguarding of the cultural heritage of Iraq with a view to empowering the Ministry for the protection, conservation and rehabilitation of the cultural heritage in the country and ensure the enhancement of skills and training of national human resources to this end.

Complete a thorough assessment of the Iraqi Ministry staff and facilities in Baghdad, including its cultural departments and institutions elsewhere in the country, with the aim of identifying the expertise needed in different fields of cultural heritage, particularly urgent priorities for capacity-building and training of personnel and revise

programs and strategies of cultural institutions where appropriate in collaboration with ICCROM.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- **UNESCO:** to assist the Ministry of Culture to carry out a survey of the above-mentioned institutions and to review its strategic plan in light of the recent needs and priorities, with a view to provide training courses to its personnel accordingly;
- the **Ministry of Culture of Iraq:** to ensure full cooperation with UNESCO by providing all relevant information

OBJECTIVE 2 - Assist the Iraqi Ministry of Culture to review, enforce and strengthen its national legislation on cultural heritage, libraries and archives.

Based on the collection and revision of the existing national legislation on cultural heritage, libraries and archives and on the effectiveness or lack of effectiveness of the existing legislation, determine the need for updates and amendments to the existing legislation in line with current international legal standards for the protection of cultural heritage and legislation on legal deposit, on archives, and access to official information and devise, in close cooperation with the Ministry of Culture, an efficient plan to strengthen national legislation for the protection of cultural heritage as well as a national strategy to inform the public and professionals thereon.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- **UNESCO:** to assist the Ministry of Culture to review the existing legislation by providing technical assistance and support its enforcement, as well as measures to prevent illicit trafficking of cultural property and to facilitate its return and restitution through training of specialized personnel in cooperation with INTERPOL; and to assist the Ministry of Culture to review current legislation in the field of libraries and archives
- the **Ministry of Culture of Iraq:** to enforce existing legislation and review its legislation with a view to ratifying the pertinent International texts in this domain

OBJECTIVE 3 - Assist the Iraqi museums to devise a comprehensive conservation plan as well as a museological programme to enhance national capacities of Iraq in the research, study, documentation and conservation of its cultural heritage.

Complete the data collection and reporting conditions on existing collections in partnership with major international museums and ICOM, with a view to devising a comprehensive conservation plan, including preventive conservation and risk-preparedness tools; establishing a program for the documenting of museum

collections; providing training in museum related studies; and implementing conservation, museological and educational programmes.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- **UNESCO:** to channel and coordinate international efforts and inputs to achieve the above-mentioned objectives and programmes in full cooperation with the staff of the Iraqi Museum, the State Board of Antiquities and Heritage (SBAH) and the Ministry of Culture
- the **Ministry of Culture of Iraq:** to provide all relevant information to implement the programmes, solicit foreign institutions to provide their available data on archaeological and ethnographical objects and artefacts in particular for missing artefacts, and ensure the monitoring of the implementation of the conservation and museological programmes

OBJECTIVE 4 - Assist the Ministry of Culture of Iraq to devise a cooperation mechanism and network of international partners and stakeholders aiming at the rehabilitation of the National Library and archives, as well as of other libraries and archives in the country, including their condition assessment, their preventive conservation, the provision of publications, data collection and management tools, as well as training and in particular providing an appropriate centralized digital library cataloguing system

Based on the available assessment of libraries and archives in Iraq which was carried out by the Ministry of Culture, the CPA, UNESCO and specialized NGOs compile a comprehensive report on the state of libraries and archives and devise thereon a plan of action, including an international coordination mechanism, for immediate and medium-term measures.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- **UNESCO:** to contribute to the preparation of a comprehensive plan of action in full accordance with Iraqi priorities and needs, and constitute, to this end, a specific expert committee under its auspices in cooperation with ICA and IFLA and all the Iraqi concerned authorities
- the **Ministry of Culture of Iraq:** to ensure the in-country coordination with a view to provide the above-mentioned Committee with all the information available

OBJECTIVE 5 - Assist the Ministry of Culture of Iraq to devise a national program for recording, documenting, assessing conditions, and mapping archaeological sites and elements of the built heritage, with a view to establish an official national registry and a plan for their protection and conservation

Adopting a framework for inventorying, recording, documenting, evaluating, registering and managing the protection of the built heritage in view of establishing an official national registry to classify cultural heritage resources in the country according to the cultural values and significance of each site and in line with the national legislation for the protection of cultural heritage; cooperate with ICOMOS, GCI and WMF with regard to all the above activities; encourage specialized institutions to provide relevant information and available documentation to the Iraqi concerned authorities.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- **UNESCO:** to assist the Ministry of Culture and the SBAH to establish a national registry of archaeological and historical sites and in particular assist in the compilation of nomination files inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage Tentative List of Iraq with a view to prepare requests of emergency assistance to the World Heritage Fund for the sites of Hatra and Ashur, thanks to the generous contribution of the Government of Italy to this Fund
- the **Ministry of Culture of Iraq:** to establish national criteria for the documentation of sites and monuments and enforce their application throughout the country, as well as devise a mechanism of cooperation among different national and international institutions for the regular sharing of information in this regard

OBJECTIVE 6 - Assist the Ministry of Culture in devising action plans for the protection and promotion of the intangible cultural heritage of Iraq, in particular by sustaining and enhancing the oral traditions and performing arts

Based on an assessment of the state of the art as regards the intangible cultural heritage in Iraq, provide technical assistance for the identification, definition and documentation of intangible cultural heritage in Iraq with a view to devise plans that will enable the revitalized transmission of expressions, representations and practices within groups and communities living in Iraq, with special attention to the habitats and the social and cultural traditions of the Marsh Arabs in southern Iraq.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- **UNESCO:** to provide technical assistance to the Ministry of Culture of Iraq in particular specialized expertise and an overall framework of guidelines to assess, identify and collect information on the intangible cultural heritage of Iraq
- the **Ministry of Culture of Iraq:** to set a timeframe for the establishment of a comprehensive strategy for assessing the intangible cultural heritage in the country with UNESCO's assistance, and report thereon to the next session of the ICC Committee in order to further devise appropriate measures and

policies for the safeguarding of the intangible aspects of Iraq's cultural diversity, including the ratification of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage

OBJECTIVE 7 – (Mandate ICC) Coordinate international action and channel international aid – both bilateral and multilateral – with a view to ensure the implementation of the strategy for the safeguarding of the cultural heritage in Iraq and assess its overall monitoring based on the recommendations adopted by the ICC

Acknowledge the role of culture in building national identity as a basic humanitarian need and an integral component of the UN reconstruction process in order to achieve stability in the country, and therefore, call upon the international community and governmental stakeholders – in particular the countries of the region and the specialized regional organizations (ISESCO, ALECSO) - to earmark human and financial resources for the safeguarding of Iraqi cultural heritage.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- **UNESCO:** to report to the UNDG on the recommendations adopted during the first session of the ICC with a view to develop relevant projects in the fields mentioned above to be submitted to the Iraq Trust Fund facility; to establish a team of professional within UNESCO Culture Sector to monitor the implementation of ICC adopted recommendations; to report on the progress made by the ICC to its Executive Board at its 170th session, and to foster the mobilization of additional resources to the UNESCO Special Account for Iraqi cultural heritage; call upon Coalition forces to assume their responsibility according to International laws and adopted Conventions and take all needed measures to prevent all kind of violations against Iraqi cultural heritage
- The **Ministry of Culture of Iraq:** to request the Director-General of UNESCO to convene the 2nd session of the ICC in early 2005 in Iraq and to mobilize the neighbouring countries of Iraq to actively engage in providing all the assistance which is in their power to support the reconstruction process in Iraq.