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1954 HAGUE CONVENTION FOR THE PROTECTION OF CULTURAL PROPERTY IN THE EVENT OF ARMED CONFLICT

ELEVENTH MEETING OF THE HIGH CONTRACTING PARTIES

UNESCO Headquarters, Paris
8 December 2015 (a.m.)

Item 4 of the Provisional Agenda: **Report of the Secretariat on its activities**

As this report is to be presented to three statutory bodies (11th Meeting of the High Contracting Parties to the 1954 Hague Convention, 6th Meeting of the Parties to the Second Protocol to said Convention and 10th Meeting of the Committee), the first part presents the activities carried out between December 2013 and December 2014 (I), while the second part presents those carried out between the 9th Meeting of the Committee in December 2014 and 30 September 2015 (II).

An oral update will be provided on the occasion of those meetings. A draft decision will be presented to each governing body for its consideration.

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Introduction

1. This Report of the Secretariat of the 1954 Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (hereinafter “the Hague Convention”) is divided into two parts, each one corresponding respectively to activities carried out by the Secretariat during the period from December 2013 to December 2014 (I), and from December 2014 to 30 September 2015 (II). This division has been applied in the interest of efficiency, as meetings of three statutory bodies of the Hague Convention and its two Protocols will take place from 8 to 11 December 2015: (i) the 11th Meeting of the High Contracting Parties to the Hague Convention (the morning of 8 December 2015); (ii) the 6th Meeting of the Parties to the Second Protocol to the Hague Convention adopted at The Hague in 1999 (hereinafter “the Second Protocol”) (8 - 9 December 2015); and (iii) the 10th Meeting of the Committee for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (hereinafter “the Committee”) (10 - 11 December 2015). This practice, therefore, makes it possible to submit a single report on the activities of the Secretariat for the attention of these three statutory bodies.
2. It should be noted that this is not an exhaustive report of all activities by the Secretariat. Indeed, several activities of the Secretariat are described in separate documents prepared as appropriate to the meetings of the three statutory bodies. The information contained herein has been updated as of 30 September 2015.
- I. **Activities carried out between the 10th Meeting of the High Contracting Parties to the Hague Convention and the 5th Meeting of the Parties to the Second Protocol, held in December 2013, and the 9th Meeting of the Committee, held in December 2014**
 - A. **Promotion of ratification of the Hague Convention and its two Protocols**
 3. New Zealand became a party to the First and Second Protocols to the Hague Convention on 17 October 2013 and 23 October 2013, respectively. In addition, Morocco ratified the Second Protocol on 5 December 2013.
 4. As a follow-up to the recommendation of the 10th Meeting of the High Contracting Parties, the Chairperson of the Committee and the Secretariat met with a number of Permanent Delegations to encourage their respective governments to become party to the three instruments.
 - B. **UNESCO’s action for Iraq and Syria**
 - i. **UNESCO’s action for Iraq**
 5. On 17 July 2014, an Emergency Expert Meeting for the Safeguarding of Iraq’s Cultural Heritage was convened by the Director-General at UNESCO’s Headquarters in Paris.
 6. On 10 November 2014, the Director-General transmitted a series of letters to States participating in the armed conflict in Iraq (Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States of America) calling attention to the Iraq cultural sites inscribed on UNESCO’s World Heritage List, as well as those on the Tentative List, including their geographic coordinates.
 - ii. **UNESCO’s action for Syria**
 7. On 26 - 28 May 2014, the Secretariat organized an international experts meeting to help rally the International Community to safeguard Syria’s cultural heritage, coordinate action and refine the Action Plan. As a result, participants agreed to establish an observatory in Beirut to monitor and assess the state of Syria’s cultural heritage.

iii. UNESCO's joint action for Iraq and Syria

8. In October of 2014, the Secretariat created a Task Force to ensure overall monitoring and coordination of the situation on the ground and develop and advise the Director-General on strategies to more efficiently and better prepare and respond to emergencies in Iraq and Syria.
9. On 3 December 2014, a high-level international conference on "Heritage and Cultural Diversity at Risk in Iraq and Syria" was held at the UNESCO Headquarters.

C. Synergies between the Second Protocol and other conventions, programmes and State actors

i. Synergies with the Culture Conventions

10. The Chairperson of the Committee met the Chairperson of the Subsidiary Committee of the Meeting of States Parties to the 1970 Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property (hereinafter "the 1970 Convention") to discuss the possible improvement of the protection of cultural property through synergies existing between the Hague Convention and its two Protocols and the 1970 Convention.

ii. Synergies with the World Heritage Convention

11. To develop synergies between the Second Protocol and the Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (hereinafter "the World Heritage Convention"), the Secretariat and the Chairperson met the Secretariat of the World Heritage Convention on potential modifications to the nomination forms for inscription on the World Heritage List in order to allow States that are party to both the World Heritage Convention and the Second Protocol to apply, at their convenience, simultaneously for inscription on the World Heritage List and on the List of Cultural Property under Enhanced Protection. An integrated approach to periodic reporting was considered more appropriate. A follow-up to this initiative is discussed below in Section II(C)(ii).

iii. Strengthening of partnerships with stakeholders concerned with the protection of cultural property in the event of armed conflict

12. In March and June of 2014, the Chairperson of the Committee convened representatives of UNESCO, the International Committee of the Red Cross and the International Committee of the Blue Shield to form an international discussion platform on all matters related to the protection of cultural property in the event of armed conflict, including communication in case of emergency. The main objective of the platform is to (i) disseminate information to all stakeholders involved in protection of cultural heritage; (ii) strengthen cooperation for joint actions, including in times of armed conflict; and (iii) enhance the work of the National Committees of the Blue Shield, UNESCO National Commissions and National Committees established under Resolution II adopted by the Hague Conference of 1954. In 2015, the platform was not convened.

D. New Cultural Properties Inscribed to the List of Cultural Property under Enhanced Protection

13. At its 8th Meeting, held in December 2013, the Committee inscribed five new cultural properties to the List of Cultural Property under Enhanced Protection (hereinafter "the List"):
 - Walled City of Baku with the Shirvanshah's Palace and Maiden Tower (Azerbaijan);
 - Gobustan Archaeological Site (Azerbaijan);

- House and Workshop of Victor Horta (Belgium):
- Neolithic Flint Mines at Spiennes, Mons (Belgium); and,
- Plantin-Moretus House-Workshops-Museum Complex and the Business Archives of the Officina Plantiniana (Belgium).

E. Development of methodologies to analyse criteria 10(a) and 10(b) of the Second Protocol in order to facilitate the submission and evaluation of requests for enhanced protection

14. By Decision 8.COM 2, the Committee invited the Secretariat to present the conclusions of the studies undertaken by ICOMOS to analyze criteria 10(a) and 10(b) of the Second Protocol, as well as any potential follow-up at its 9th Meeting. The Secretariat presented this study at the 9th Meeting of the Committee,¹ and will present a follow-up working document on the ICOMOS study at the 10th Meeting of the Committee.

F. Activities of the Secretariat to raise awareness on the protection of cultural property in the event of armed conflict

i. Training workshop at the International Institute of Humanitarian Law, 3 - 6 June 2014, Sanremo (Italy)

15. On 3 - 6 June 2014, the Secretariat took part in a training workshop on non-international armed conflicts organized by the International Institute of Humanitarian Law in Sanremo (Italy). The workshop was offered to military personnel and government specialists from various countries. During the workshop, the Secretariat presented information on UNESCO's role concerning the protection of objects and places. Possible avenues for future cooperation between UNESCO and the International Institute of Humanitarian Law with regard to the training of military personnel were discussed.

ii. Cooperation with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)

16. The Secretariat cooperated with the ICRC by providing its comments on two documents related to the protection of cultural property in the event of armed conflict, both of which were written by the ICRC Advisory Service on International Humanitarian Law: (1) a technical paper on the 1954 Convention on the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict and its two Protocols, and (2) the Model Law on the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict. The Model Law was drafted for consideration by States with a common-law legal tradition.² For States with a civil-law legal tradition, it may prove useful as a checklist of provisions that need to be implemented through domestic law.

iii. Seminar on the protection of cultural property, its military and operational aspects and its implementation in situations outside armed conflicts, 22 May 2014, Brussels (Belgium)

17. The Chairperson of the Committee and the Secretariat gave presentations at a seminar organized by the Centre of Study on Military Law and the Law of War on the protection of

¹ Please see the document: <http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CLT/images/ICOMOS-studies.pdf>

² Please find the Model Law: <http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CLT/images/model-law-on-the-protection-of-cultural-property-in-the-.pdf>

cultural property and its operational and military aspects in times of peace on 22 May 2014 in Brussels (Belgium).³

iv. Creation of a “Best Practices” section on the website of the Hague Convention

18. A section entitled “Best Practices” was added to the website of the Hague Convention and its two Protocols⁴ and includes the activities undertaken by States Parties pursuant to the assistance granted by the Committee concerning the dissemination, awareness-raising and identification of cultural property with the Blue Shield emblem of protection in the event of armed conflict. At present, activities developed by El Salvador and Mali, as well as a joint submission presented by Cyprus and the Netherlands during the 10th Meeting of the High Contracting Parties, is available online.⁵

G. Fundraising strategy for the Fund for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict

19. By Decision 5.SP 3 of the Meeting of the Parties to the Second Protocol, the Committee was requested to continue the implementation of an effective fundraising strategy for the Fund for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (hereinafter “the Fund”) and the Secretariat was requested to report to it thereon at its 6th Meeting.
20. Two documents comprise information concerning updates on the implementation of the fundraising strategy and contributions made to the Fund since the 5th Meeting of the Parties to the Second Protocol. Document CLT-14/9.COM/CONF.203/8,⁶ presented at the 9th Meeting of the Committee, covers information about the period between December 2013 and December 2014. The document entitled “Fundraising strategy”, to be presented at the 10th Meeting of the Committee, covers the period from December 2014 to December 2015.⁷

H. Reflection on the forms annexed to and the elaboration mechanisms of the Guidelines

21. By Decision 5.SP 2, the States Parties requested the Committee to reflect on the forms annexed to the Guidelines, as well as their elaboration mechanisms, and report thereon at its 6th Meeting.
22. In May 2014 and September 2014, the Chairperson of the Committee discussed the issue with Bureau members during a consultation with the Secretariat and decided to maintain the current *status quo* with the forms annexed to the Guidelines.

I. Creation of a specific distinctive emblem to mark cultural properties under Enhanced Protection of the Second Protocol

23. By its Decision 8.COM 12, the Committee invited the Bureau to submit to the Committee’s 9th Meeting a proposal to create a specific distinctive emblem to mark cultural property under

³ Please find the program: <http://www.ismlw-be.org/session/2014-05-22-Prog.pdf>

⁴ Please find the website: <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/culture/themes/armed-conflict-and-heritage/reference-documents/#c287992>

⁵ Please find the Best Practices section: <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/culture/themes/armed-conflict-and-heritage/best-practices/>

⁶ Please see the document: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0023/002308/230821E.pdf>

⁷ Please see the document, “Fundraising Strategies”, Document CLT-15/10.COM/CONF.203/5

enhanced protection, as well as the modalities of its use, with a view to obtaining its adoption by the 6th Meeting of the Parties in 2015.

24. The Secretariat presented the working document on the creation of a distinctive emblem and establishment of the modalities for its use (CLT-14/9.COM/CONF.203/4/REV2) at the 9th Meeting of the Committee in December 2015.⁸ The Committee, by its Decision 9.COM 4, recommended that the Meeting of the Parties to the Second Protocol endorse proposals for the modification of the Guidelines for the Implementation of the Second Protocol (contained in Annex 2 to document CLT-14/9.COM/CONF.203/4/REV2) and examine Proposal 3 in Annex 1 to the same document, including its graphic charter and the modalities for its use at its 6th Meeting with a view, if appropriate, to approving them and amending the Guidelines accordingly. As a follow-up to Decision 9.COM 4, the Secretariat prepared a working document (CLT-15/6.SP/CONF.202/2).

J. Financial and human resources of the Secretariat

25. During the period from December 2013 to December 2014, the Secretariat obtained from Belgium additional funds of US\$ 25,111 in the form of appropriation letters to (i) support the ICOMOS study to clarify the assessment of criteria of Article 10(a) and Article 10(b) of the Second Protocol; and (ii) support the human resources of the Secretariat.
26. A Junior Professional Officer (P-1) from the Republic of Azerbaijan joined the Secretariat in June 2014 to reinforce the Secretariat.

II. Activities undertaken between the 9th Meeting of the Committee, held in December 2014, and 30 September 2015

A. Promotion of ratification of the Hague Convention and its two Protocols

27. There are currently 126 States Parties to the Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, 103 of which are also States Parties to the First Protocol. On 11 February 2015, the Republic of South Africa became the 68th party to the Second Protocol.

B. UNESCO's action for Iraq, Syria and Yemen

i. UNESCO's action for Iraq

28. On 28 March 2015, the Director-General launched the #Unite4Heritage Campaign at the Faculty of Arts of the University of Baghdad in Iraq.

ii. UNESCO's joint action for Iraq and Syria

29. On 1 April 2015, the Director-General convened a high-level meeting in Paris to stop illegal trade of cultural property from Syria and Iraq with heads of UNSMT, INTERPOL, World Customs Organization, UNIDROIT, ICCROM, ICOMOS, ICOM, IFLA and ICA in support of the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 2199.⁹

⁸ Please see the document: http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CLT/pdf/9COM-4-Distinctive-emblem-rev2_en.pdf

⁹ UN Security Council, *Security Council resolution 2199 (2015) [on threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts by Al-Qaida]*, 12 February 2015 S/RES/2199 (2015), paras. 15-17, available at: <http://www.refworld.org/docid/54ef1f704.html> [accessed 8 October 2015].

iii. UNESCO's action for Yemen

30. On 27 March 2015, the Director-General transmitted letters to Permanent Delegations to UNESCO of States participating in military operations (Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Morocco, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sudan and the United Arab Emirates), reminding them of their legal obligations under the Hague Convention, and sharing the coordinates of Yemeni cultural sites inscribed on the World Heritage List, as well as those on the Tentative List.
31. On 28 April 2015, UNESCO organized a coordination meeting on protection measures regarding Yemeni cultural heritage in Manama, Bahrain, with the participation of ARC-WH, General Organization for the Preservation of Historic Cities of Yemen (GOPCHY) and ICCROM-ATHAR. An Emergency Response Plan for Yemen was defined during the meeting.
32. On 18 May 2015, UNESCO compiled a list of expanded coordinates of cultural heritage sites in Yemen and sent it the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) who is in direct contact with Saudi military forces.
33. On 15 - 16 July 2015, UNESCO organized an Expert Meeting on the Safeguarding of Yemen's Cultural Heritage to 1) establish a coordination mechanism among different parties in order to harmonize their responses; 2) examine the current situation of cultural heritage in Yemen affected by the airstrikes carried out by the coalition; 3) share information on initiatives undertaken for the protection of Yemen's cultural heritage by different partners so far; 4) define a strategy for the emergency safeguarding of Yemen's cultural heritage and identify specific activities that could be carried out by all involved partners in close cooperation with the Yemeni authorities.

C. Synergies between the Second Protocol and other conventions

i. Synergies with the Culture Conventions

34. At the 39th session of the World Heritage Committee held in Bonn (Germany) from 28 June to 8 July 2015, the World Heritage Committee requested, by its Decision 38 COM 11, "that the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, in consultation with the Secretariat of the Hague Convention (1954), consider options for further developing concrete synergies and coordinating reporting mechanisms between the World Heritage Convention and the Second Protocol (1999) of the Hague Convention (1954) for the next revision of the Operational Guidelines in 2017 and while revising the Periodic Reporting Format during the Reflection Period towards the Third Cycle of Periodic Reporting".¹⁰
35. During the same session, on 25 June 2015, the Chairpersons of the Committees of the six UNESCO Culture Conventions met in a joint meeting with the Director-General of UNESCO in order to "strengthen synergies among UNESCO's culture Conventions and ensure that these conventions reinforce each other and act as a unified corpus for the fulfillment of their complementary goals, reflecting a holistic vision".¹¹ In particular, the Chairpersons invited all relevant actors to step up efforts to increase the effectiveness of the work of their governing bodies and to ensure the adequate implementation of the conventions. The Chairpersons

¹⁰ Please see decision: <http://whc.unesco.org/archive/2015/whc15-39com-19-en.pdf>

¹¹ Joint Statement of the Chairpersons, 25 June 2015, 39th session of the World Heritage Committee held 28 June to 8 July 2015, Bonn, Germany. Please see decision: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/news/1305>

further called for systematic efforts to continue appraising the scope and effectiveness of the culture conventions and recommended that the Chairpersons meet regularly to evaluate the progress and next steps toward achieving the common vision.

ii. Synergies with the World Heritage Convention

36. To strengthen the coordination between the Secretariat of the Hague Convention and its two Protocols and the Secretariat of the World Heritage Convention, a proposal to revise Annex 5 of the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention (Format for the Nominations of Properties for Inscription on the World Heritage List) was considered at the 39th session of the World Heritage Committee. The revised Operational Guidelines would allow Parties to the 1999 Second Protocol to request, if they so wish, the inscription of the nominated property on the List of Cultural Property under Enhanced Protection. This proposal was also contained in the document WHC-15/39.COM/11 on “Revision of the Operational Guidelines” prepared by the World Heritage Centre. However, the Advisory Bodies and the World Heritage Centre noted that it was not possible to present a specific proposal for this revision, and instead advised the World Heritage Committee to “examine all the different options for further developing synergies”.
37. The World Heritage Committee, by its Decision 39 COM 11, requested that “the World Heritage Centre and its Advisory Bodies, in consultation with the Secretariat of the Hague Convention (1954), consider options for further developing concrete synergies and coordinating reporting mechanisms between the World Heritage Convention and the Second Protocol (1999) of the Hague Convention (1954) for the next revision of the Operational Guidelines in 2017 and while revising the Periodic Reporting Format during the Reflection Period towards the Third Cycle of Periodic Reporting”.¹²
38. It should be noted that more detailed information on synergies between the Second Protocol and other conventions, programmes and State actors can be found in Document CLT-15/10.COM/CONF.203/4, “Development of synergies with other relevant UNESCO’s normative instruments and programmes and strengthening partnerships”, which will be discussed at the 10th Meeting of the Committee on 10-11 December 2015.

D. New Cultural Properties Inscribed to the List of Cultural Property under Enhanced Protection

39. At present, ten cultural parties from five States Parties have been inscribed to the List. In accordance with the relevant provision of the Second Protocol, the Secretariat has made the List available online.¹³
40. An increasing number of States have expressed their interest in enhanced protection and intend to submit requests for the granting of enhanced protection for their cultural property in the future.
41. On 26 February 2015, the Secretariat acknowledged receipt of an official request by Egypt for the granting of enhanced protection to World Heritage site “Thebes and its Necropolis”. Although the request will not be considered by the Committee at its 10th Meeting, the

¹² Please see the decision: <http://whc.unesco.org/archive/2015/whc15-39com-19-en.pdf>

¹³ Please see the list: http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CLT/pdf/19542P-enhanced-protection-list-en_20140320.pdf

Secretariat continues to work closely with the relevant Egyptian authorities to ensure completeness of the request, which will be considered by the Committee in the future.

42. On 2 March 2015, Mali became the second State (Belgium was the first in 2012) to submit to the Committee a tentative list of three cultural properties for which it intended to request the granting of enhanced protection, in accordance with Article 11(1) of the Second Protocol.¹⁴
43. On the same day, Mali submitted an official request to the Secretariat for the granting of enhanced protection to World Heritage site “Tomb of Askia”. The request was not registered by the Secretariat, however, as it was submitted after the statutory deadline of 1 March 2015, as provided in paragraph 45 of the Guidelines for the Implementation of the Second Protocol. In accordance with paragraph 45, the request will be considered during the 11th Meeting of the Committee in 2016.
44. On 2 September 2015, Bosnia and Herzegovina submitted Enhanced Protection Request Forms for two cultural properties: (i) the natural and architectural ensemble of Blagaj; and (ii) the Mehmed Paša Sokolović Bridge in Višegrad, Srpska. These requests will be considered during the 11th Meeting of the Committee in 2016.

E. International Register of Cultural Property under Special Protection

45. On 15 October 2013, Mexico requested to grant special protection to nine World Heritage sites through their inscription on the International Register of Cultural Property under Special Protection. On 19 March 2014, the Secretariat dispatched letters to High Contracting Parties to the 1954 Hague Convention informing them of Mexico’s request. Considering that no objection had been lodged against the registration of the nominated sites, the Director-General proceeded with the entry of the cultural properties in the Register on 30 March 2015.

F. Activities of the Secretariat to raise awareness on the protection of cultural property in the event of armed conflict

i. Preparation of a Military Manual on the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict for armed forces

46. The Secretariat prepared a project for preparation of the Military Manual on the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict for armed forces which may be implemented by Sanremo International Institute of Humanitarian Law (Italy). The modalities of co-operation were discussed with the Institute in the end of May 2015 during the occasion of the “Workshop on Non-international Armed Conflicts”. The Manual is to be published by December 2016. The project will be funded by the Government of Azerbaijan.

ii. Preparation of Training Materials on the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict

47. The Secretariat launched cooperation with the University of Newcastle on the preparation of training materials for military personnel on the protection of cultural property in the event of armed conflict. Training materials for a three-day long workshop will be developed by an expert group. The production of the training materials is expected to be completed by 31 December 2015 and will be uploaded to the website of the Hague Convention and its two Protocols.

¹⁴ Article 11(1) of the Second Protocol states that each Party should “submit to the Committee a list of cultural property for which it intends to request the granting of enhanced protection”.

iii. Cooperation with the French Army and French authorities

48. The Secretariat cooperated with the Ministry of Defence of France on the preparation of a Memento for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict. In drafting the Memento, the coordinator asked the Secretariat to contribute its expertise, and in response the Secretariat provided all relevant and necessary comments. An English version of the Memento has been made available.¹⁵
49. The Secretariat has been working very closely with the French authorities to facilitate the accession by France to the Second Protocol. On 4 June 2015, a member of the Secretariat provided a testimony on main tenets of the Second Protocol and UNESCO's activities aimed at the promotion and wide dissemination of the Hague Convention and its Second Protocol to the *Commission nationale consultative des droits de l'Homme*.¹⁶ On 2 July 2015, the Commission issued an advisory opinion recommending, among others, the French accession to the Second Protocol.¹⁷

iv. ASEAN Regional Seminar on the Hague Convention

50. UNESCO, the Cambodian National Commission for UNESCO and the International Committee of the Red Cross, with support by the Chairperson of the Committee of the Second Protocol, organized an ASEAN Regional Seminar on the Hague Convention on the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict in Siem Reap and Preah Vihear, Cambodia on 1 - 3 September 2015. The seminar aimed at training military personnel from ASEAN countries on the content of the Hague Convention and its practical uses on the ground. Representatives from Cambodia, Malaysia, Philippines and Laos participated in this seminar.

v. Publication of the French version of the Commentary on the Second Protocol

51. A French version of the article-by-article commentary on the Second Protocol, "*Cultural Property in War: Improvement in Protection: Commentary on the 1999 Second Protocol to the Hague Convention of 1954 for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict*" will be published by 31 December 2015. This publication intends to provide cultural heritage professionals and national and international civil servants and lawyers with a comprehensive text on the rules of international humanitarian law in dealing with the protection of cultural property in the event of armed conflict. Among the topics raised in this commentary, the sections on the Protection of Cultural Property under Customary International Law and the International Criminal Law and the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict are of utmost importance in considering the current conflicts threatening cultural heritage worldwide.

G. Meeting of the Bureau

52. On 21 May 2015, the Bureau of the Committee for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict held its meeting with a view to preparing the 10th Meeting of the Committee. Ms Artemis Papathanasiou (Greece), Chairperson of the Committee, Ms Rosa

¹⁵ Please find the Memento here: <http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CLT/pdf/EMP-EN-Edition2015.pdf>

¹⁶ More information on the Commission nationale consultative des droits de l'Homme is available at: <http://www.cncdh.fr/fr/institution>

¹⁷ Please see: <http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CLT/pdf/AvisProtectionBiensCulturelsFRANCE.pdf>

Moreira de Lemoine (El Salvador), Rapporteur of the Committee, the other four members of the Bureau (Armenia, Cambodia, Egypt and Mali) and several observers (including Belgium, Georgia and Palestine) attended the meeting. The Bureau discussed the following issues: 1) requests for the granting of enhanced protection (Thebes and its Necropolis) submitted by Egypt; 2) strengthening synergies between the Second Protocol and the World Heritage Convention; 3) distinctive emblem for cultural property under enhanced protection; and 4) the Committee's role in protecting cultural property in Iraq and Syria.¹⁸

H. Statements of the Chairperson on behalf of the Committee for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict

53. The Chairperson of the Committee, acting in accordance with Decision 9.COM 3 adopted by the Committee at its 9th Meeting, issued three statements as of 30 September 2015.
54. On 26 March 2015, the Chairperson strongly condemned the systematic destruction of cultural heritage in Iraq and Syria, in particular by ISIL, with note to acts of destruction of Iraq's cultural heritage, including religious sites and objects. The Chairperson called upon the Syrian Arab Republic and Iraq to ratify the Second Protocol at the earliest opportunity and submit their requests to the Committee for granting enhanced protection to cultural property on an emergency basis. The Chairperson further urged States and the international community to undertake a common effort to counter the destruction and looting of cultural sites in Iraq and Syria.
55. On 21 May 2015, the Chairperson issued a statement inviting States Parties to the Second Protocol which are parties to an armed conflict, as well as States Parties to a conflict which are not Parties to the Second Protocol to request international assistance under Article 32 of the Second Protocol, at their earliest convenience.¹⁹
56. On 4 September 2015, the Chairperson issued a statement condemning the deliberate destruction of the ancient temples of Baalshamin and Bel in Palmyra, Syria and urging the international community to unite and intensify its efforts to confront the present situation.²⁰ In particular, it called upon all the parties of the conflict to comply with provisions of Article 4 of the Hague Convention.

I. Financial and human resources of the Secretariat

57. In May 2014, Georgia contributed US\$ 1000 to support the promotion and implementation of the Hague Convention and its two Protocols.
58. During the period from December 2014 to 30 September 2015, Belgium contributed US\$ 33,546 to reinforce the activities of the Secretariat concerning the work of the Hague Convention and its two Protocols and, in particular, its statutory activities.
59. The Cypriot authorities seconded a professional to the Secretariat for a period of one year, beginning in September 2015, to reinforce the Secretariat.
60. A P1/2 Associate Programme Specialist post for the Secretariat is currently under recruitment.

¹⁸ More information is available at:
http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CLT/pdf/Report_of_the_meeting_Bureau_ENG.pdf

¹⁹ Please see the Statement: http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CLT/pdf/Statement_FINAL_ENG.pdf

²⁰ Please see the Statement: http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CLT/pdf/Statement-Chairperson-Palmyra_03.pdf