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REPORT BY THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE FOR PROMOTING
THE RETURN OF CULTURAL PROPERTY TO ITS COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN
OR ITS RESTITUTION IN CASE OF ILLICIT APPROPRIATION
ON ITS ACTIVITIES (1990-1991)

SUMMARY

Since the twenty-fifth session of the General Conference, the Intergovernmental Committee for Promoting the Return of Cultural Property to its Countries of Origin or its Restitution in Case of Illicit Appropriation has met only once, at its seventh session in Athens, Greece, from 22 to 25 April 1991.

The Committee herewith submits to the General Conference its final report on that session, in accordance with Article 4, paragraph 8, of its Statutes.

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The seventh session of the Intergovernmental Committee for Promoting the Return of Cultural Property to its Countries of Origin or its Restitution in Case of Illicit Appropriation was held in Athens, Greece, from 22 to 25 April 1991. It was attended by 13 of the 19 Member States of the Committee. A representative of the International Council of Museums (ICOM) attended the meeting in an advisory capacity. A number of observers were also present, representing 26 Member States of UNESCO that are not on the Committee, two non-Member States of UNESCO and several international organizations, including the United Nations, the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) and the International Institute for the Unification of Private Law (UNIDROIT).

II. OPENING OF THE SESSION

2. The Director of the Division of the Physical Heritage, representing the Director-General of UNESCO, after welcoming the participants, thanked the Greek Government for its generous invitation to hold the seventh session of the Committee at Athens. She then turned to the serious problem of increased pillaging of archaeological sites and exporting of representative specimens of the cultural heritage through the major art markets. She stressed that certain States described as 'importers' of cultural property, which were parties to the Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property (Paris, 1970) had adopted national measures to curb that traffic. The implementation of those measures nevertheless required active co-operation from police forces and customs authorities. In that connection she referred to the suppression of frontier controls in 1993 between the countries of the European Community. She expressed the hope that, like the United States and Canada, all the European countries would become parties to the 1970 Convention, and drew attention to the existence of a joint declaration between Turkey and Ireland which referred to the principles contained in the Convention and under which each of the two countries undertook to return to the country of origin any cultural property which had circulated illicitly and been discovered on its territory. Lastly, she noted the considerable international media coverage of the problem of combating the illicit traffic in cultural property and referred to recent encouraging developments in the courts of the United States and the United Kingdom in cases concerning illicit traffic.

3. The Greek Minister of Culture then welcomed the participants to Athens, the cradle of democracy. He said that although each country endeavoured to protect its cultural property, the latter had become an instrument of speculation. Having paid tribute to UNESCO and to the Committee, he stressed the efforts made in his country to protect cultural property, particularly through projects to improve security in museums and to prevent illegal excavations. He stated that the architectural competition which had been launched for the construction of a new museum of the Acropolis had met with great success and he wished the participants a fruitful working session.

III. ELECTION OF THE CHAIRMAN

4. On the proposal of a member of the Committee, Mr Y. Tzedakis (Greece) was unanimously elected Chairman. The new Chairman took the chair, thanking delegates for their confidence in him and declaring his strong interest in the work of the Committee.

IV. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

5. The provisional agenda of the session contained in document CLT-91/CONF.204/1 was adopted without any change.

V. ELECTION OF THE VICE-CHAIRMEN AND RAPPORTEUR

6. The delegates of the following four Member States, members of the Committee, were elected Vice-Chairmen: Canada, Cuba, Republic of Korea and Uruguay. The Committee then elected Mr Y. Lijadu, delegate of Nigeria, as Rapporteur.

VI. SECRETARIAT REPORT ON THE MEASURES TAKEN TO IMPLEMENT THE RECOMMENDATIONS FORMULATED BY THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE AT ITS SIXTH SESSION

7. The representative of the Secretariat informed the Committee of progress since its last session in two cases pending. In the case of the claim of Greece against the United Kingdom for the return of the Parthenon marbles, the Greek authorities had informed the Secretariat of an architectural competition for a design for a new museum in Athens which might in time house the Parthenon marbles. There were 438 entries (ten of which were selected for detailed projects) and the first prize was awarded to an Italian team for a museum on the Makryanni site.

8. With respect to the Turkish Government's claim for the return of the Hittite sphinx from Boguskoy, as recommended at the sixth session of the Committee, the former chairman of the Committee was in Ankara at the invitation of the Turkish Government during negotiations, between representatives of the German Democratic Republic and Turkey. As the German Democratic Republic has now ceased to exist, the Secretariat had been in contact with the authorities of the Federal Republic of Germany so that negotiations could continue.

9. It was noted that the decision of a Belgian court, announced to the last session of the Committee, rejecting Iran's claims to objects from the necropolis at Khurvin which are in the possession of a private person, is subject to an appeal which is expected to be heard in the next few months. The Philippines had sought assistance for the recovery of 300 items illegally exported and now held in a German museum. The Secretariat had sent all necessary information to the authorities of the Philippines and was awaiting to hear further from these authorities. The theft of three very valuable documents had been reported from Egypt: although the Committee's procedures could not be used because their whereabouts were not known, the Secretariat had asked Egypt for further information and photographs so that a notice of stolen property could be circulated.

10. Three cases of return reported to the Secretariat included a burial mantle returned by Australia to Peru, 'art nouveau' furniture recovered from an auction house in Monaco by Canada and the action of two Swiss private citizens who had detected a stolen bronze Benin head, verified its status, and informed the Swiss police, thus ensuring its seizure and return to the Jos Museum in Nigeria. An important decision had been taken by the courts in the United States which ordered the restitution to the owner, namely the Autocephalous Orthodox Church of Cyprus of mosaics stolen from Kanakaria in Cyprus and found in the hands of an Indianapolis dealer. The 'Sevso treasure' was held by court order in New York pending litigation on claims to its ownership by Yugoslavia and Lebanon.

11. The Secretariat had been engaged in a broad range of activities for international co-operation financed under its regular programme, the Participation Programme, and with assistance from the United Nations Development Programme. It had contributed to museum development under the World Decade for Cultural Development, was publishing two technical handbooks for museums under contract with ICOM and has assisted three States (Gabon, Niger and the Maldives) to draft legislation for the protection of cultural property. ICOM's Code of Ethics was now available in 15 languages. The United Nations General Assembly had commended the work of UNESCO and of the Committee. The International Bureau of Education was seeking the Committee's advice on the contribution of education to cultural development.

12. With respect to steps taken to curb illicit traffic, the Secretariat reported the accession to the Convention of five States, Australia, Belize, China, Côte d'Ivoire and Madagascar, bringing to 69 the number of States party to this Convention. In 1989 and 1990 the Secretariat had circulated notices about cultural property stolen from Ecuador, Colombia, Cyprus, Panama and Greece as well as two notices relating to Turkish cultural property. A successful meeting had been organized by INTERPOL at its headquarters at Lyons, in association with UNESCO and ICOM, on stolen cultural property. It gathered heads of police forces, museums and customs services, insurance experts, lawyers, art dealers, collectors, publishers and firms specializing in museum security. Practical methods of direct co-operation among these bodies were discussed.

13. The Secretariat has published the texts of 31 States' laws concerning movable cultural property and a handbook containing summaries of the export control legislation of over 150 countries. A study on codes of ethics of dealers was under way and a working document available to the Committee. The final document would be published before the next Committee meeting.

14. A round table meeting concerning the Angkor monuments in Cambodia, organized by UNESCO in Bangkok in 1990 had examined the loss of valuable parts of these monuments through illicit traffic, and a regional workshop on illicit traffic in the Asian region organized by UNESCO's Regional Office in Bangkok will take place in Peshawar, Pakistan, this year.

15. The co-operation with UNIDROIT on the new Preliminary Draft Convention on Stolen or Illegally Exported Cultural Objects was described as well as the co-operative work with the Secretariat of the United Nations Congress for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders which had resulted in a draft model bilateral treaty for co-operation to combat offences involving cultural property. The eighth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders also recommended co-operation for the setting up of computerized data bases relating to stolen cultural property. Further, a meeting of experts at the International Institute of Higher Studies in Criminal Sciences at Syracuse in Italy, in October 1989, at which a member of the Secretariat was present, approved guidelines for an international instrument on the protection of cultural property.

16. Discussions on the implications of suppressing all internal frontier controls in the Common Market in 1993 were being closely followed by the Secretariat. This question was also among others raised at an interdisciplinary symposium attended by a member of the Secretariat which was organized at the Austrian Academy of Sciences in Vienna in October 1990.

17. The Secretariat also reported on increased and lively media coverage of return and restitution issues, on many requests for information from members of the public, and of a number of articles in 'Museum' on the subject.

18. Finally, it was reported that the evaluation of the Committee, recommended at its last meeting, had not been able to take place because of budgetary constraints.

19. The Rapporteur, speaking in his capacity as delegate for Nigeria, gave further information on the return of a Benin bronze head, which had been returned to the Jos Museum in Nigeria, thanks to the vigilance of two private Swiss citizens. Suspecting that the object advertised for auction in Zurich had been stolen, they had not only used their own knowledge but had, in their own time and at their own expense, verified this with an expert in the United States and informed the Swiss police of INTERPOL's listing of the object. He noted that the care and diligence for the protection of a foreign cultural heritage of such citizens should be commended and was most encouraging for those States which were suffering serious losses from illicit traffic.

20. Another member of the Committee spoke of the inventory recently drawn up by Madagascar, in co-operation with Norway, of objects of its cultural heritage held overseas. Madagascar is now seeking copies of these objects or their repatriation and the delegate noted the return from the Museum of Mankind, in London, with the help of private individuals, of seven paintings of the late nineteenth century and some jewels of the last Queen. Madagascar was now seeking the return of some objects in France and again was receiving the help of private individuals.

VII. INTERNATIONAL TECHNICAL CO-OPERATION

21. Several delegates and observers from the international organizations represented expressed interest in the preliminary draft of the Convention on Stolen or Illegally Exported Cultural Objects (UNIDROIT). The representative of UNIDROIT welcomed their interest and explained that the preliminary draft had been prepared by a Commission of Enquiry which had held three meetings and, with constant support from UNESCO, had drafted a concise and balanced text on the private law issues relating to restitution not only of stolen but also of illicitly exported cultural property. The text took into account recent developments in legal doctrine in that connection. The preliminary draft, of which the provisions were complementary to those of the UNESCO Convention of 1970, would be submitted in May 1991 to a committee of governmental experts. Some delegates expressed interest in the relationship of the UNIDROIT draft to the UNESCO Convention and in its effectiveness in combating illegal excavations. The Secretariat explained that it was complementary and compatible. Other provisions which concerned delegates were those regarding the definition of cultural objects, time limitation of claims, the concept of just compensation, due diligence and its relation to good faith.

22. The observer from the United Nations thanked UNESCO for its co-operation in preparing a model treaty for the prevention of crimes involving the cultural heritage, which was intended to assist countries in their bilateral negotiations. He added that the United Nations Secretariat was maintaining its contacts with all the organizations concerned, particularly UNESCO, with a view to organizing a meeting of experts on the preparation of data bases, relating to stolen cultural property.

23. The delegates supported the Secretariat's efforts to promote the exchange of information on national measures to implement the 1970 Convention. They hoped that the publication of national legislative texts would be continued. Several delegates also hoped that the penal provisions of certain national measures would be strengthened.

24. The ICOM representative gave a brief account of that organization's activities since 1989. During that period ICOM, its various constituent committees and the Secretariat, had made many efforts to strengthen security in museums, to disseminate information on stolen cultural property (in particular through their publication 'ICOM News'), to encourage the use of inventories and export certificates, and to organize museology training activities. He drew delegates' attention to the ICOM Code of Ethics, which had already been translated into 16 languages and contained important provisions concerning the acquisition of objects.

25. The INTERPOL representative said that his organization was circulating the 'INTERPOL Notices' on stolen works of art as widely as possible. He welcomed the strengthening of co-operation with UNESCO, in particular the international symposium held in Lyons in December 1989, in which ICOM had also participated. The computerization of INTERPOL's impressive file of stolen works of art would soon be completed. INTERPOL would thus be fully prepared to assist the Secretary-General of the United Nations as far as it could in his efforts to co-ordinate computerized data bases on stolen cultural property.

VIII. STEPS TO CURB ILLICIT TRAFFIC IN CULTURAL PROPERTY

26. One observer, referring to recent legal developments in the United States concerning the restitution of cultural property, confirmed that the decision of the District Court of Indianapolis in the case of the Kanakaria mosaics had been upheld by the Court of Appeal. He mentioned another case, in which the Supreme Court of New York had ruled that the three-year time limitation for claiming restitution of a painting by Chagall would begin from the date on which the identity of the holder became known and not from the date of the theft. That constituted an important precedent which had already been quoted in another case. He welcomed those new legal developments. He also announced that the United States authorities had just adopted measures restricting the importing of objects from Guatemala, under the terms of the law implementing the 1970 UNESCO Convention. It was the fourth time that that type of measure had been taken. With the co-operation of experts in the countries of origin, measures could be imposed very rapidly.

27. One delegate gave further information on the return of protected cultural property to Canada: he explained that the furniture in question had come to Canada with a family migrating from Scotland many years earlier. Subsequently it had been exported to Monaco to be auctioned since the owners were unaware of the export control. The auction house had returned it to Canada and, in foregoing commission on the sale and paying all transport costs, had probably expended an amount exceeding the possible maximum fine. The delegate also described the ingenious method used to conceal the authenticity of some important ancient ceramics illegally exported from Peru. False ceramic bases had been added with crude lettering which indicated that they had been made in Bolivia, probably recently and for the export market. Lengthy storage while the Court was considering the case had seen these later additions crack and detach, revealing the true nature of these pieces. Storage for lengthy periods could, however, cause less beneficial results: the authorities, on expert advice, had had to freeze solid some ancient textiles, probably of Peruvian origin, which had suffered a water leak and then insect infestation probably through the hatching of eggs already in the textiles on their arrival in Canada. He also announced that Canada had established a computerized data bank relating to thefts of cultural property, its rediscovery, and the corresponding legislation. Canada would make the data banks available to all the member countries of the United Nations for a modest fee. Referring to the

adoption by the eighth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crimes and the Treatment of Offenders of a resolution concerning the establishment of such data banks, he expressed the hope that links would be established between the different national and international organizations and institutions that had set up data banks in that field.

28. The need to introduce export certificates was emphasized by one delegate. Although their establishment required considerable financial and human resources, they could nevertheless help to provide proof of illicit export. The Secretariat agreed that the existence of such a system of export control would make it easier to prove illicit exportation, and said that that had been taken into account in the UNIDROIT project.

29. Several delegates spoke of the difficulties and costs involved in drawing up inventories. And that was not enough - thefts then had to be reported to the organizations that could circulate the descriptions of the stolen objects and effective measures had to be taken to prevent illegal excavations.

30. Several speakers expressed their concern over the ransacking of Panamanian museums on 20 December 1989. It was recalled that the Panamanian authorities had requested the Secretariat to help them to recover the stolen objects. The Secretariat representative informed the Committee that UNESCO had already responded positively to a request by Panama on that subject and that a notice illustrated by photographs of the stolen objects had been published and widely circulated by the Secretariat in accordance with the provisions of the 1970 Convention. The Secretariat would supply the delegate of Panama with a copy of the notice and information on the action that could be taken by UNESCO in such a situation, and with any further information he might require.

31. The Secretariat announced that a catalogue of cultural property which had disappeared from Kuwaiti museums during the recent events was being prepared by a team of French and Danish archaeologists. UNESCO had been requested for assistance in circulating those catalogues as widely as possible. ICOM would publish an article on the subject in a forthcoming issue of 'ICOM News'.

32. Several delegates expressed concern over the forthcoming suppression of border controls in the European Community. One of the possible solutions at community level for protecting cultural property from illicit traffic was the ratification of the 1970 UNESCO Convention. That solution had been proposed on two occasions in the European Parliament and in the report of a member of the European Parliament on that subject. So far no decision had been taken by the Council of Ministers, which had set up a panel of experts to examine possible solutions. The panel of experts had also examined the UNIDROIT preliminary draft convention.

IX. PUBLIC INFORMATION

33. One observer emphasized the importance of media coverage of the Quedlingburg treasures in the United States which had led to the voluntary return to the German authorities by a private owner of a mediaeval manuscript which had been in a private collection in New Jersey for 40 years. Similarly, musical scores of Mozart had been returned to Austria by a California museum. A delegate from another State noted that his country was organizing an exhibition of cultural objects which had been returned as a result of action to stop illicit traffic and which would show the public the cultural significance of the goods saved.

X. CASE-STUDIES

34. With regards to the Parthenon marbles, the delegate of Greece asked what action had been taken to implement the recommendation of the last session of the Committee that impartial museological experts, appointed with the assistance of ICOM, give an opinion, based on all available technical information, including the prize-winning plan of the new museum in Athens, as to where the marbles could best be situated. The Secretariat explained that, as the plans of the new Acropolis Museum in Athens had only just become available, and as these did not yet include specifications and detailed studies for the interior and museological requirements for display, which would be prepared during the next two years, it had not been thought appropriate to seek advice until all necessary technical documentation was available. The delegate of Greece added that the plans for the future Acropolis Museum, which those attending that session of the Committee had been able to view, would be displayed in other European countries in a travelling exhibition.

35. The Vice-President of the British Committee for the restitution of the Parthenon marbles, stated that his Committee believed that the last real argument against return by the British Museum had now been dissolved. The arguments as to universality of the British Museum, as to political partisanship of those wishing return, of the legality of the original purchase, of the inability and unwillingness of Greece to care for the marbles properly, of the altruistic desire of the British Museum to preserve them had, in his view, all been overcome in the eight or nine years since the British Committee had been formed. The only remaining ground of opposition was that of precedent: he hoped that his country would not be too timid to create a good precedent.

36. The delegate of Turkey noted that no further developments had taken place in respect of Turkey's claim for a sphinx from the German Democratic Republic beyond those mentioned in the Secretariat's report. It was expected that negotiations would continue with the Federal Republic of Germany.

37. One delegate gave further information about the case pending in Belgium concerning objects from the necropolis of Khurvin in Iran and requested the presence of a UNESCO observer at the proceedings. He also gave information about other cases being pursued by Iran: one concerned property put up for auction sale at the Maison Drouot, Paris. A civil proceeding to restrain sale had been successful but was reversed on appeal. An appeal against that reversal has been lodged. A criminal suit had been brought in Paris against the present holders of the property for illicit excavation and possession of stolen property and a first order in favour of Iran was reversed. Another case concerned articles excavated from Choghamish mound in the Khuzistan jointly with Iran by the American Institute for Oriental Studies. Yet another case concerned cultural properties smuggled to Dubai. Diplomatic exchanges with the Italian Government had led to a conciliatory resolution of a matter concerning objects excavated from an excavation at the site of Shar-e Suhteh in Sistan and Baluchistan. Two stolen paintings had been returned to Iran from the United Kingdom and action was being sought to recover another held by a private person in Switzerland. Iran was ready to negotiate bilateral agreements with neighbouring countries to prevent illicit traffic.

38. An observer of a State which had not previously taken part in the meetings of the Committee stressed the helpfulness of the documentation provided and spoke of the significance of Illyrian remains in Albania. Many archaeological objects were now in museums abroad and some had been completely lost. Illicit traffic had recently become a most disturbing phenomenon. Albania was acting to restrain this activity on the basis of international

norms, at a time when the country was undergoing major economic reforms and the Government of Albania was showing ever-increasing interest in the safeguarding of monuments and in cultural values. In conclusion the observer stressed the commitment of his government to co-operation in the new cultural Europe.

39. Another observer thanked the Committee for the opportunity to participate, that being the first time that his country had taken part in the Committee's work. Mongolia had a long and rich history but had lost most of its cultural heritage, including the use of its own alphabet, because of pressure from outside. The former alphabet would be reintroduced in 1994. The observer also referred to a wealth of seventh-century monuments built by the ancestors of the present Turkish people. But, in a less positive vein, a copper statue of a deer dating from the seventh or eighth century had disappeared from the Museum of Fine Arts in Ulan Bator several years ago. Further, when Mongolia became independent of its Manchu rulers in 1911, an 80-foot high statue of Avalokitesvara Megzed-janraisig, the Buddhist god, was erected in Ulan Bator symbolizing the liberty of the country. That important monument had been removed in the 1940s and its return to Mongolia was now being sought. The observer appealed for support for the return of those two important pieces of cultural property.

40. Another delegate described some important cultural property now in the United Kingdom and appealed for its return. The gold statues of former kings of Burma which had been taken from the palace in 1885 were of great spiritual and historical significance for the people of Myanmar.

XI. OTHER BUSINESS

41. The Committee had also decided that the final report of the seventh session would be submitted as the Committee's report to the General Conference at its twenty-sixth session, in accordance with Rule 9.3 of its Rules of Procedure. The Committee authorized a copy of the report to be sent to the International Bureau of Education (IBE), which had requested that the Committee be associated in the preparation of the 43rd International Conference on Education (ICE), which would be held in September 1992 on the theme 'The Contribution of Education to Cultural Development'.

XII. DATE AND PLACE OF THE EIGHTH SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE

42. The Committee took note of the invitation, addressed in writing by Guatemala, a Member State represented on the Committee, to hold the eighth session of the Committee in Guatemala. Several members of the Committee had expressed the hope that the forthcoming session would be held in a Latin American country. In the absence of a representative of Guatemala, the Committee requested the Director-General of UNESCO to undertake negotiations with the authorities of that country and then to decide on the place in which the eighth session would be held in the spring of 1993.

XIII. INVITATIONS TO THE EIGHTH SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE

43. After considering the list of organizations to be invited (which had been drawn up at the sixth session of the Committee in 1989) and taking into account the extent of participation on previous occasions, the Committee adopted the following new list:

1. Intergovernmental organizations

Agency for Cultural and Technical Co-operation (ACCT)

International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM)

Commission of the European Communities

Customs Co-operation Council (CCC)

Council of Europe

African Cultural Institute (ACI)

International Institute for the Unification of Private Law (UNIDROIT)

Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (ALECSO)

International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL)

2. Non-governmental organizations

International Association of Art Critics

International Council on Archives

International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS)

International Council of Museums (ICOM) (consultative status)

World Federation of Friends of Museums

International Bar Association

Organization for Museums, Monuments and Sites of Africa (OMMSA) (consultative status)

International Union of Local Authorities

3. Other organizations

Commonwealth Parliamentary Institution

International Confederation of Art Dealers (CINOA)

International Foundation of Art Research (IFAR)

XIV. ADOPTION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SESSION

44. The draft recommendations approved by the Bureau and submitted by the Chairman were examined one by one. Having considered the amendments proposed by several members, and after endorsing a number of them, the Committee adopted the recommendations contained in the Annex to this report.

XV. CLOSURE OF THE SESSION

45. The Chairman thanked all the participants for their co-operation and for the many contributions they had made to the work of the session of the Committee and declared the seventh session closed.

ANNEX

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1

In respect of the claim of Greece for the return of the Parthenon marbles, the Committee,

Recalling Recommendation 1 of the Committee at its sixth session in Paris in April 1989,

Recommends that the Secretariat, with the advice and assistance of ICOM, seek the opinion of a panel of independent experts of international repute which, after studying conditions in their present location and those specified in the plans of the new Acropolis Museum in Athens, will advise the Committee as to where the Parthenon marbles could best be situated;

Further recommends that the Secretariat explore possible funding outside UNESCO's regular budget for the cost of this procedure; and

Invites the Secretariat to take initiatives for the implementation of this Recommendation.

Recommendation 2

The Committee,

Noting with satisfaction the continued close co-operation between UNESCO and UNIDROIT in the preparation of the UNIDROIT draft preliminary Convention on Stolen or Illegally Exported Cultural Objects designed as a useful complement to the provisions of the 1970 UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property,

Emphasizes the need to ensure a linkage between the UNIDROIT draft and the UNESCO Convention;

Calls on all Member States to give careful attention to each article of the draft preliminary UNIDROIT Convention; and

Invites the Secretariat to keep the Committee informed as to the progress of the UNIDROIT draft.

Recommendation 3

In view of the experience of certain Member States and of the appropriate international organizations, in the preparation of inventories of cultural property, the Committee,

Invites the Secretariat to prepare for the Committee a paper concerning inventories with a model form which could be used by Member States.

Recommendation 4

The Committee,

Recognizing that recording and dissemination of information about the legal status of cultural items and about crimes against cultural heritage are important means of combating international illicit traffic in movable cultural property,

Noting with satisfaction the development of data bases such as those established by ICPO-INTERPOL, the International Foundation for Art Research (IFAR), New York, jointly with Lloyd's of London and of nationally administered data bases such as those established by Canada,

Noting with appreciation Canada's offer to provide Member States with access through international networks to data bases documenting stolen and illegally exported movable cultural property as well as information concerning national law related to its protection,

Strongly endorses the resolution 'on the use of automated information exchange to combat crimes against movable cultural property' adopted by the eighth United Nations Congress for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders at Havana on 7 September 1990 concerning the role of the Secretary-General of the United Nations as to the establishment of appropriate data bases; and

Urges the UNESCO Secretariat to continue extending to this area its co-operation with the United Nations Office at Vienna.