

Statement of the Chairperson on behalf of the Committee for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict

The Chairperson of the Committee for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (“the Chairperson”) welcomes the #UNITE4HERITAGE High-Level Conference and Technical Expert Meeting, held 9 – 10 June, 2016 in Brussels, Belgium.

The targeting of cultural heritage and ongoing attacks against cultural property, cultural diversity and cultural pluralism has become emblematic of the ongoing struggles, we as a global community, continue to face. Respect for, engagement with, and the protection of cultural heritage on an individual and community basis not only aids in the prevention of crisis but is essential for reconciliation, national dialogue and recovery in post-conflict and transitioning societies.

The Chairperson commends the high level participants on their efforts to strengthen policies and strategies for the protection of cultural heritage, reconstruction and peacebuilding, and calls on all participants to continue to contribute to the protection of cultural heritage with the same vigor that has established momentum in the international community’s efforts to protect cultural diversity, safeguard cultural heritage, and nurture humanism worldwide in pursuit of sustainable peace. These efforts have renewed impetus in light of the adoption of the Post-2015 Agenda, in which the links between culture, sustainable development and lasting peace are recognized and promoted.

Last, but certainly not least, the Chairperson calls upon all UNESCO Member States which are not yet party to the 1954 Hague Convention and/or its two (1954 and 1999) Protocols to join them at their earliest convenience with a view to substantially reinforcing the protection of cultural property in peacetime and armed conflict, including occupation.

23 May 2016

Artemis Papathanassiou
Chairperson