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

TENTH MEETING OF THE HIGH CONTRACTING PARTIES

UNESCO Headquarters, Paris
16 December 2013 (a.m.)

**UNESCO's Standard Plan of Action
to Protect Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict**

1. During the ninth Meeting of the High Contracting Parties (Paris, UNESCO Headquarters, 12 December 2011), the Secretariat presented in an information document the “Standard Plan of Action to Protect Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict”.¹
2. Taking into account the main tenets of the discussion during the above-mentioned Meeting, along with the experience acquired during the conflicts in Mali and in Syria, the Secretariat proceeded with the improvements of the above-mentioned Plan of Action (in the attached annex).
3. In addition, it is necessary to highlight that the above-mentioned Plan of Action must be applied by the Secretariat according to the nature and specific features of each armed conflict.

¹ <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/culture/themes/armed-conflict-and-heritage/meetings-and-conferences/> (accessed 23 October 2013)

Annex

Secretariat's contemplated actions to be taken and implemented in conformity with specific features of any particular conflict

1. **Contacts with the warring parties in international and non-international armed conflicts**
 - a. Establish contacts with the warring parties (including States and non-State actors as applicable) and send letters to them signed by the Director-General regarding the protection of cultural property in the event of armed conflict:
 - i. Confirm whether they are party to the 1954 Hague Convention and its two (1954 and 1999) Protocols;
 - ii. Draw their attention to their obligations under the Hague Convention and its two Protocols, as appropriate;
 - iii. If one or more States are not party to the Hague Convention and its two Protocols, draw their attention to customary international humanitarian law protecting cultural property;
 - iv. Urge and encourage them to ensure all appropriate measures are taken to respect cultural heritage;
 - v. List cultural sites to protect:
 - Cross-check the World Heritage List, List of World Heritage in Danger, the Memory of the World Register, the List of Cultural Property under Enhanced Protection established by the Second Protocol, and tentative lists of cultural property both under the World Heritage Convention and the Second Protocol (as appropriate) and possibly other pertinent lists (for example the European Heritage List);
 - Immovable cultural property identified by the distinctive emblem of the Hague Convention;
 - Include information, where appropriate, about refuges intended to shelter movable cultural property in the event of armed conflict;
 - vi. Refer to relevant UN Security Council Resolutions and decisions of governing bodies of regional agencies (as appropriate);
 - vii. Follow-up as appropriate on the initial letter with the relevant national authorities.
 - b. Consider dispatching personal representative(s) of the Director-General to the warring parties to ensure the protection of cultural property (in conformity with previous practice during the Iraq-Iran conflict and during the conflict in the former Yugoslavia);
 - c. Contacts will be established with intergovernmental organizations in case the operations are conducted under their direct command or responsibility.
2. **Support from the Committee for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict and partnerships with intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations**
 - a. Consult the International Committee of the Blue Shield (ICBS) and its constituent bodies (International Council on Archives (ICA), International Council of Museums (ICOM); International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), and the Co-ordinating Council of Audiovisual Archives Associations (CCAAA)); the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM); and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). These organisations could be capable of gathering and disseminating information, raising awareness, and providing expertise in the field of safeguarding and restoring cultural property;

- b. Determine whether it is possible for the Committee to grant international assistance by virtue of the Second Protocol;
- c. Invite the Chairperson of the Committee to propose to the warring Parties a meeting of their representatives, in particular the authorities responsible for the protection of cultural property, and possibly taking place on the territory of a State not participating in the hostilities (Article 36(2) of the Second Protocol).

3. Contacts with other concerned States, specialized organizations and other relevant actors in the framework of the implementation of the 1970 Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property

- a. Alert the following parties of the possibility of illicit trafficking:
 - i. other concerned States, such as the neighbouring countries;
 - ii. specialized organizations, such as INTERPOL, the World Customs Organization (WCO), and the International Council of Museums (ICOM);
 - iii. the relevant specialized police forces, such as the Carabinieri and the Central Office of the fight against illicit traffic-Office central de lutte contre le trafic illicite de biens culturels (OCBC).
- b. Alert the warring Parties to the possibility of transporting movable cultural property which is threatened to a State not participating in the hostilities, with a view to its protection.

4. Establish contacts between the Director-General and the UN Secretary-General

Send a letter from the Director-General to the UN Secretary-General:

- a. Informing him of the letters sent to the warring parties;
- b. Encouraging him to ensure that a reference to the protection of cultural property is inserted into any possible future UN Security Council resolutions.
- c. Requesting the inclusion of a mention of the need to protect cultural property in the mandate of peace-keeping missions.

5. Establish contacts with intergovernmental organizations for the provision of aid and assistance

Contact the intergovernmental organisations (e.g. the African Union, the European Union, NATO) involved in crisis and conflict management operations. Encourage the military command of the concerned intergovernmental organizations to ensure that respect for cultural property be integrated into the rules of engagement of each operation.

6. Launch a public relations campaign

Issue press release(s) on behalf of the Director-General which:

- a. describe the conflict;
- b. refer to the above-mentioned letters sent to the warring parties;
- c. list the cultural property in danger.
- d. draw attention to the following articles and texts, as applicable:
 - i. 1954 Hague Convention
Article 4 (Respect for cultural property) and propose UNESCO's assistance, as appropriate, under Article 23 (Assistance of UNESCO)
 - ii. Second Protocol to the 1954 Hague Convention

Articles 6 (Respect for Cultural Property), 12 (Immunity of Cultural Property under Enhanced Protection) and propose UNESCO's assistance as appropriate under Article 33 (Assistance of UNESCO)

- iii. Refer to relevant UN Security Council Resolutions and decisions of governing bodies of regional agencies (as appropriate).

7. Provision of assistance

- a. dispatch an evaluation mission as soon as the conditions allow for it and provision of experts in the field of cultural property conservation and preservation;
- b. update national inventories of cultural property;
- c. train military forces, law enforcement, security guards, review of security measures and proposals for their improvement.