



Culture Sector



**Expert Meeting and Extraordinary Session
In Celebration of the 30th Anniversary of the Intergovernmental Committee
for Promoting the Return of Cultural Property to its Countries of Origin or
its Restitution in case of Illicit Appropriation (ICPRCP): Its Past and Future**

25-28 November 2008, Seoul, Republic of Korea

Recommendation

The Intergovernmental Committee for Promoting the Return of Cultural Property to its Countries of Origin or its Restitution in case of Illicit Appropriation (ICPRCP), hereinafter mentioned as “the Committee”,

Expressing its appreciation to the Korean authorities for organizing this Extraordinary Session of the Committee commemorating its 30th anniversary;

Welcoming a recent increase in the number of returns of cultural property to its countries of origin, and acknowledging a rise in awareness of the general public, researchers and institutions, in the return of cultural property to its countries of origin or its restitution in case of illicit appropriation as well as the fight against illicit traffic;

Recognizing that in its 30 years of existence, the Committee has made substantial achievements in the raising of awareness concerning the return of cultural property to its countries of origin or its restitution in case of illicit appropriation and concerning the fight against illicit traffic;

Mindful of the need to further strengthen the role of the Committee as a facilitator for the return of cultural property to its countries of origin or its restitution in case of illicit appropriation, including through bilateral negotiations;

Taking note of the discussions and the Conclusions of the Athens International Conference on the Return of Cultural Objects to their Countries of Origin (March 2008) and of the meeting of the non-governmental experts held in Seoul in November 2008;

Reaffirms that certain categories of cultural property fully reveal their authenticity and unique value only in the cultural context in which they were created,

Encourages the States concerned to continue and intensify their efforts with a view to resolving disputes on the return of cultural property or restitution in case of illicit appropriation, by amicable means through bilateral negotiations complemented by other means, such as mediation and conciliation, bearing in mind that in many cases this may involve non-state actors;

Encourages international cooperation with a view to assisting developing countries in building their capacity to facilitate restitution of their cultural property;

Encourages States through international cooperation to develop inventories of their cultural property wherever located and to make better use of existing databases of stolen works of art;

Suggests collecting information on successful restitutions and setting up a database thereon;

Invites States to consider becoming parties to the international instruments relating to the return of cultural property to its countries of origin or return in case of illicit appropriation and the fight against illicit traffic;

Invites States to consider a more active use of the Committee;

Considers that adoption of rules of procedure on mediation and conciliation will be a significant step to strengthen the role of the Committee;

Urges the development of innovative ways to raise awareness for the return of cultural property to its countries of origin or restitution in case of illicit appropriation, and the fight against illicit trafficking;

Suggests that the International Code of Ethics for Dealers in Cultural Property be amended and considers that further efforts should be made to encourage the art market to respect it;

Encourages contributions to the International Fund for the Return of Cultural Property to its Countries of Origin or its Restitution in Case of Illicit Appropriation;

Invites the Director-General to include an item in the agenda of the Committee's 15th Ordinary Session concerning a strategy for the future work of the Committee, within the framework of its mandate, and to prepare a document to that end.