

THE DANISH NATIONAL REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 1954 HAGUE CONVENTION¹

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1. Safeguarding of cultural property

The Danish Ministry of Culture has during this process been in contact with the stakeholders (the various ministries, museums, archives, libraries etc.) to gather information for the completion of the national report.

The Danish cultural institutions have all invested in different security measures, mainly in the interest of protecting the cultural property from criminal actions in peacetime as well as keeping the cultural property in a state in which it will last for future generations to come.

After the Second World War, there were build several evacuation bunkers for the cultural property in Denmark. The thought behind this was to evacuate the cultural property to these bunkers if an armed conflict should arise once more in Europe.

As the museums grew larger and implemented better security measures the evacuation plan was cancelled in the late 1980's. Today the bunkers serve as very sturdy storage facilities for The National Museum amongst others.

Because of the political climate today the Danish Government does not expect an armed conflict on Danish soil. This attitude echoes throughout Denmark and might explain the reason to why the cultural institutions have not implemented more than the above-mentioned general security issues.

2. Military Measures

The Danish military personnel are taught the rules of international law including the rules of safeguarding of cultural property. Knowledge of the conventions' distinctive emblem is included in the education.

The defence command has issued a guide in which it states that it is prohibited to attack objects of cultural significance. All military personnel are fitted with a pocket-size copy of this guide and military personnel are required to have the necessary knowledge of its content.

In the planning of missions concrete measures are made to prevent the destruction of cultural property. An example of such a measure was in Iraq where the Danish military personnel were instructed to assist the national cultural agencies in the safeguarding of cultural property.

In addition to this the missions are planned by the officers in charge accompanied by advisors with special knowledge in military and international law. This precaution has been made so strategies can be planned to avoid any cultural sites.

Any offence against the convention is sanctioned by the military penalty law.

3. The distinctive emblem

¹ This report was received in a letter from the Ministry of Culture of Denmark dated February 10, 2011. It has been reproduced in this annex in its entirety.

The Danish Red Cross has published a book concerning international law such as the Hague Convention. In this book the emblem of the Hague Convention is displayed so it will be recognizable for the general public as well as the Red Cross workers who are stationed all over the world.

As above mentioned, are all Danish military personnel familiar with the distinctive emblem as it is a part of the military personnel's training.

Some of the Danish state museums will begin the task of marking the most important pieces with a distinctive mark during the near future as a part of a greater registration process.

1. Dissemination of the Convention

As part of various initiatives to disseminate information, the Danish Government, including members of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Defence, have participated in numerous events throughout the country informing the general public on the laws of armed conflict

International law is also a very important part of a military education, and all personnel receive lessons about Denmark's international obligations.

2. Official translations

Enclosed is an official Danish translation of the Hague Convention of 1954.

3. Sanctions

The Danish military operates under the duties and responsibilities stated in the military penalty code. The Ministry of Defence informs that a breach of the international commitments can be punished by life imprisonment hence the military penalty code § 36, 2.

4. First Protocol

It is very important for the Danish military to preserve cultural objects in the countries where they belong. It is therefore stated in the general regulations for military personnel in international missions, that it is prohibited to take any souvenirs of historic or archaeological importance.