



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



Convention for the fight  
against the illicit trafficking  
of cultural property

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Paris, 5 October 2020  
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**Subsidiary Committee of the Meeting of States Parties to the UNESCO Convention on  
the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of  
Ownership of Cultural Property  
(UNESCO, Paris, 1970)**

**Eighth Session  
Paris, UNESCO Headquarters, Room I  
27 and 28 October 2020**

CHECKLIST OF ACTION TO BE FOLLOWED BY THE CONCERNED INSTITUTIONS AND AUTHORITIES OF STATES PARTIES IN THE EVENT OF CULTURAL THEFT

Before Theft (Precaution Checklist)	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Inventory all of the cultural property in the museum/gallery/collection etc.; enrich the inventory records with as many photos as possible
<input type="checkbox"/>	Role play the thief and identify the security risks of the museum/gallery/collection etc.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Make sure that the security precautions such as CCTV, lights, bars, fence, monitors are in a good condition and function properly
<input type="checkbox"/>	Train all of the members of the staff on security
<input type="checkbox"/>	Identify the objects that are most open to risks and could be targeted by thieves whether due to their significance or easy access
<input type="checkbox"/>	Fix the objects as much as possible even temporarily so they cannot be easily moved
<input type="checkbox"/>	Use unbreakable windows and display cases
<input type="checkbox"/>	Lock the display cases
<input type="checkbox"/>	Keep the case or storage keys under seal and assign a staff as a custodian
<input type="checkbox"/>	Make random controls on the objects kept at the storages to make sure that the objects are not changed with fakes/copies etc.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Undertake a security protocol document prepared specifically for the museum/gallery/collection etc. in question
<input type="checkbox"/>	Check the displays periodically to make sure that all of the objects are in the right place
<input type="checkbox"/>	Consider the advantages of technological developments organic barcode, QR code, RFID, etc.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ensure strong relationship between the cultural institution and the local law-enforcement authorities
<input type="checkbox"/>	Consider conducting a security clearance on the personnel that work for a public collection/institution etc.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Make sure to have access to a network, composed of relevant authorities, for immediate communication in case of a theft
<input type="checkbox"/>	Make sure the national law on protection of cultural property is clear enough especially regarding State ownership both for collections and undiscovered cultural objects and that the national law criminalizes offences against cultural property
<input type="checkbox"/>	Become a party to and make effective use of the UNESCO 1970 Convention, the UNIDROIT 1995 Convention and the CoE Convention on the Offences Relating to Cultural Property

After Theft	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Inform the relevant authorities (police, central authorities, members of the network) as soon as possible
<input type="checkbox"/>	Cooperate with the law-enforcement authorities for crime-scene investigation and evidence search
<input type="checkbox"/>	Distribute the photos of the objects among other museums, collectors, customs, central law-enforcement, foreign missions (unless otherwise advised by the law-enforcement authority)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Register the object on your national database on stolen cultural property
<input type="checkbox"/>	Inform the UNESCO 1970 Convention Secretariat
<input type="checkbox"/>	Register the object on the INTERPOL Stolen Works of Art Database
<input type="checkbox"/>	Circulate information on the object and the incident through the WCO ARCHEO Communication Platform
<input type="checkbox"/>	Make sure to archive all the documents including all images, videos, papers, notes related to the object and the incident
<input type="checkbox"/>	Keep an eye on the auction catalogues, online sale platforms, any information of museum or private collections, publications (including restoration and conservation related articles, etc.)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Use the image of the object at every possible occasion in order to make sure that it will not be forgotten by the art and antiquities circle
After Locating the Object (abroad)	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Apply to the relevant authorities of the country where the object is located through the proper channels to request (i) support for the investigation (ii) the return of the object (Foreign Missions, INTERPOL, WCO, UNESCO, Judicial Cooperation) <sup>12</sup>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Information Exchange: attach to your request the following</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Collect key documents that might prove useful towards identifying the object and prosecuting those responsible for stealing the object either through criminal or civil measures (such as photos, inventory and/or theft records, newspaper articles, publications, results of online databases, paper files, local documents etc.)</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Prepare technical reports on the origin and history of the object, if needed</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Prepare information/a report on the laws and regulations (such as regarding the ownership, export prohibition on the cultural property)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Translate the documents, if needed</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Contact unofficially your counterpart in order to ensure all necessary information is being sent</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/>	If the authorities are not in a situation to facilitate the investigation and return the object without legal assistance, submit a rogatory letter to the relevant authority of the State where the object is located
<input type="checkbox"/>	If the rogatory letter is not an option and a criminal investigation cannot be conducted, consider negotiations by focusing on cooperation in cultural matters

<sup>12</sup> Please refer to paragraph 10 concerning the identification of the right channels.

	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Collect any document and information that proves (even secondarily or indirectly) the origin of the object including technical/expert reports, photos of similar objects, evidence of looting in the region in which the object originates, etc.</b>
	<input type="checkbox"/> Identify list of opportunities for cooperation (exhibitions, excavations, restoration projects, research, museology studies, joint publications, media/social media coverage etc.)
	<input type="checkbox"/> Bring International visibility to the case
<input type="checkbox"/>	If the negotiations fail, consider taking a legal action
<input type="checkbox"/>	If the legal action is not an option, consider submitting the case to the ICPRCP