



Four-year cycle 2005-2010

## Mexico

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National report on the implementation of the Hague Convention of 1954  
and its two Protocols (1954 and 1999)

**ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT BY THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE  
OF ANTHROPOLOGY AND HISTORY**

**Article 3. Safeguarding of cultural property**

*“The High Contracting Parties undertake to prepare in time of peace for the safeguarding of cultural property situated within their own territory against the foreseeable effects of an armed conflict, by taking such measures as they consider appropriate.” Please inform the Secretariat of measures that have been taken or are planned.*

*Cultural Heritage Disaster Prevention Programme*

Since 2002, the National Institute of Anthropology and History (INAH) has been implementing the Cultural Heritage Disaster Prevention Programme (PREVINAH), under which prevention and remedial action has been taken to protect movable and immovable cultural property that could be affected by a natural or anthropogenic disaster.

In regard to potential damage to cultural property, PREVINAH distinguishes three types of socio-organizational threats:

- (a) those derived from *social and economic development* – these are the negative results of urban growth, land-use planning and the generation of urban infrastructure and services;
- (b) those derived from the *exercise of protection and conservation* – these are the result of an inadequate protection framework (cultural policy, legislation, conservation practices and financial resources) and unsatisfactory performance by specialists in terms of training, capacity building and professional ethics;
- (c) those derived from *collective social behaviour* – these are the result of unorganized behaviour (migrations, displacements, marches and rallies), anti-social behaviour (vandalism, organized crime, corruption, religious fanaticism, trafficking and theft), violence (wars, terrorism and sabotage), unmanaged tourism (mass concentration of persons, unregulated alternative uses and overdevelopment) and general social problems (political models, unification of world culture, demography and consumerism).

PREVINAH has identified the following *prevention measures*:

- avoid exhibiting cultural property without taking security measures;
- promote the viewing of cultural property by small groups of people in order to control the space where it is located;
- implement awareness campaigns to prompt society to reflect on the cultural significance and value of heritage;
- establish links among all bodies responsible for the custodianship of cultural heritage in order to ensure its conservation;
- encourage compliance with restriction signs and restricted areas;
- design and implement control and management measures for mass visits;

- promote the recognition of cultural diversity and its heritage aspects;
- develop a broad educational basis to strengthen cultural identity within its global context.

INAH has published two texts that support the achievement of PREVINAH goals: the *Cultural Heritage Disaster Prevention Programme*, which establishes general work strategies for the prevention, supervision and restoration stages; and the *Supervisory Policies Handbook and Guidelines on Cultural Heritage Affected by a Disaster*, which refers to specific procedures for attending to heritage damaged by a disaster. To complement the previous texts, a book entitled *Protection of Cultural Heritage in the Event of Disaster* was published, addressing specific events that affect cultural heritage.

#### **Article 25. Dissemination of the Convention**

*“The High Contracting Parties undertake, in time of peace as in time of armed conflict, to disseminate the text of the present Convention and the Regulations for its execution as widely as possible in their respective countries. They undertake, in particular, to include the study thereof in their programmes of military and, if possible, civilian training, so that its principles are made known to the whole population, especially the armed forces and personnel engaged in the protection of cultural property.”*

In December 2009, a link entitled “Mexico at UNESCO” was added to the INAH website ([www.inah.gob.mx](http://www.inah.gob.mx)), providing access to all available information on the protection of cultural heritage, including the Hague Convention of 1954 and the two Protocols thereto (<http://unesco.cultura-inah.gob.mx/index.php?option=com-content&task=view&id=42&itemid=167>).

**ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT  
BY THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF ANTHROPOLOGY AND HISTORY  
SECOND PROTOCOL TO THE HAGUE CONVENTION OF 1954**

**Article 5 – Safeguarding of cultural property**

*“Preparatory measures taken in time of peace for the safeguarding of cultural property against the foreseeable effects of an armed conflict pursuant to Article 3 of the Convention shall include, as appropriate, the preparation of inventories, the planning of emergency measures for protection against fire or structural collapse, the preparation for the removal of movable cultural property or the provision for adequate in situ protection of such property, and the designation of competent authorities responsible for the safeguarding of cultural property.”*

***Preparation of inventories***

**1. *Public Register of Archaeological Monuments and Sites***

In May 1972, the Federal Law on Archaeological, Artistic and Historical Monuments and Sites was passed and it provides that “Movable and immovable archaeological monuments ... produced by cultures before the establishment of the Spanish Empire in the national territory, are the inalienable, imprescriptible property of the Nation”. It further provides that INAH is responsible for keeping a record of the country’s movable and immovable archaeological monuments and, for that purpose, Article 21 of the same law provides for the establishment of the Public Register of Archaeological Monuments and Sites.

The Public Register of Archaeological Monuments and Sites is administered by INAH’s National Archaeology Coordination Department under the ongoing project entitled Cataloguing and Registration of Archaeological Sites, through which more than 1,000 archaeological sites have been registered each year. In 2009, the National Catalogue of Archaeological Collections contained 1,410,393 items, described on some 419,940 fact sheets.

A single system for the Public Register of Archaeological and Historical Monuments and Sites is being constructed to store all of the information. The system is the outcome of a collaboration agreement between INAH and the National Autonomous University of Mexico, which will provide an IT tool for data verification, updating, administration, storage, safeguarding, security, retrieval and reproduction.

**2. *National Programme for the Protection of Movable Historical Property***

The purpose of the National Programme for the Protection of Movable Historical Property is to coordinate and consolidate the national inventory of movable cultural property owned by the Federation and held by religious associations. INAH’s National Cultural Heritage Conservation Coordination Department conducts this programme in which public universities, higher education institutions, federal agencies, state and municipal governments, and civil society as a whole participate.

**3. *Collaboration with state governments and other bodies***

In September 2001, INAH, the Government of Puebla and the Archbishopric of Puebla signed a framework collaboration agreement in order to carry out the detailed registration of movable historical monuments owned by the Federation and held by the Church. By July 2009, 185 churches in 35 municipalities had been catalogued.

In April 2002, INAH, the Government of Tlaxcala, the Tlaxcala Institute of Culture and the Bishopric of Tlaxcala signed a specific implementation agreement for the registration and cataloguing of movable property located in churches and religious buildings. Under this instrument, more than 10,000 items had been catalogued by April 2008.

In March 2003, INAH, the Government of Durango, the State Attorney General's Office, Juárez University and the Archdiocese of Durango signed a collaboration agreement in order to carry out joint activities for crime prevention and the preservation and defence of cultural heritage located in the State. By December 2008, a total of 629 items of seventeenth-, eighteenth-, nineteenth- and twentieth-century sacred art had been catalogued by INAH in the State.

### ***Emergency measures for protection against fire or structural collapse***

#### **1. *General Safety Rules for INAH Museums***

INAH has General Safety Rules for Museums, Article 14 of which provides that "Museums must have the necessary fire-prevention equipment and devices, as well as adequate emergency exits, taking into account their structure and the cultural property they house, in the event of an incident of that nature".

Similarly, Article 19 of said Rules stipulates that "A programme of practice drills for the operation of fire-fighting equipment and evacuation of buildings must be established in order to ensure that there is personnel qualified to deal with this type of incident".

Courses have also been held, for example entitled the "Fire prevention, detection and control", course held on 23 and 24 July 2009 in Mexico City and attended by staff from all INAH centres in Mexico. The course covered topics such as risk prevention in laboratories, processing of hazardous waste, preventive measures in archaeological buildings and sites, and fire prevention and fire-fighting.

#### **2. *Handbook on Fire Prevention in Religious Buildings***

INAH's National Cultural Heritage Conservation Coordination Department has compiled a Handbook on Fire Prevention in Religious Buildings.

#### **3. *Handbook on Preventive Conservation in Archaeological Sites***

In relation to emergency measures to prevent structural collapse, INAH has a Handbook on Preventive Conservation in Archaeological Sites, which explains that walls, roofs and other architectural elements may collapse because of the passing of time or direct or indirect human action.

The handbook also mentions that measures for avoiding collapses include masonry work to repoint stones that have lost their mortar and have become loose, thus posing a risk to visitors. Such work must be performed by qualified staff, as each site has different needs that require different techniques and materials.

#### **4. *Trust for the Promotion and Conservation of Cultural, Anthropological, Archaeological and Historical Heritage of Mexico***

The Trust for the Promotion and Conservation of Cultural, Anthropological, Archaeological and Historical Heritage of Mexico has had a great impact on the protection of cultural heritage. The agreement establishing the Trust was signed in December 2008 by the Ministry of Finance and Public Credit, the National Bank of the Army, Air Force and Navy of Mexico, the Ministry of Public Education and the National Institute of Anthropology and History.

The Trust approved, among other things, the resources required to implement the initiative entitled "Projects considered for the 2009 period in the monument area of Teotihuacán". This site is included in UNESCO's World Heritage List and it was therefore considered essential to support measures to keep the area in good condition. The objectives of the initiative include maintaining the structures and buildings in good condition, eliminating water leaks inside the buildings, creating facilities for the analysis of archaeological materials, workshops for restoration, museography, photography, signposting and architecture, and repairing all pot holes in roads within the archaeological area.

In order to avoid structural collapse, authorization was given to change the roof of some buildings some buildings in the Citadel, the Avenue of the Dead and La Ventilla. It was important to do so, as some pre-Hispanic murals could be seriously damaged by exposure to the elements.

## **5. Management plans**

The Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the UNESCO Convention on World Cultural and Natural Heritage (Section II. F Protection and management, paragraph 118) provide that “The Committee recommends that States Parties include risk preparedness as an element in their World Heritage Site management plans and training strategies.”

In June 2009, INAH established the Evaluation Committee for the Management of Heritage Sites, the objective of which is to examine, recommend and approve management plans for archaeological sites, historical monuments and museums under the care of the Institute that are open to the public.

As a result of the Committee’s work, since 2009 the management plans for the archaeological sites of Chichén Itzá, El Tajín, Teotihuacán, Tula, Tulum and Chalcatzingo have been updated to incorporate protection measures designed to mitigate and reduce the actual and potential risks posed by nature and human action.

It has been proposed that management plans for Calakmul (Campeche), Malinalco (Mexico State) and La Ferrería (Durango) be approved for 2010.

### ***Preparation for the removal of movable cultural property or the provision for adequate in situ protection of such property***

#### **1. Removal of movable property from museums**

The Presidential Agreement establishing the minimum requirements for the safeguarding of cultural property housed in museums (19 February 1986) refers to security systems, responsible authorities, coordination among the three levels of government (federal, state and municipal) and the participation of civil society in security and protection programmes concerning cultural heritage kept in museums.

That Agreement provides that the removal of movable property from museums “shall be subject to the applicable provisions contained in the relevant regulations”.

In this respect, the Circular-Agreement circulated by the Director-General of the National Institute of Anthropology and History setting out the provisions for the transport of archaeological and historical monuments and other items from museums, within or beyond the Institute (11 October 1979), stipulates that the only authority competent to authorize the transport of museum objects is the INAH General Directorate or, where appropriate, the INAH Administrative Secretariat.

The aforementioned Agreement also stipulates that in order to transport collections or parts of collections, measures in respect of security, packing, insurance or deposits must be taken to guarantee their recovery, integrity or restoration in the event of loss or damage. It further stipulates that air, land and sea carriers require INAH’s written authorization to move monuments, subject to penalties provided for in the Federal Law on Archaeological, Artistic and Historical Monuments and Sites.

### ***Designation of competent authorities responsible for the safeguarding of cultural property***

#### **1. National Institute of Anthropology and History**

Under Article 2 of the Organic Law establishing INAH, the Institute is responsible for conducting research in the areas of anthropology and history, conserving and restoring archaeological and

historical heritage – including palaeontological heritage – and protecting, conserving, restoring, recovering and disseminating such heritage.

In performing these tasks, INAH is advised by the National for Disaster Prevention Centre (CENAPRED) and the Civil Protection Coordination Department of the Ministry of the Interior, coordinates action with the Civil Protection Coordination Department and the Mexican Army in order to support the protection of cultural heritage and makes a photographic record that shows the condition of the buildings and their contents.

Another competent authority in this area is the Federal Attorney General's Office, with which INAH signed, in November 2006, a collaboration and coordination agreement for the investigation and prosecution of crimes against the cultural heritage of the Federation, and for the protection, recovery and conservation of such cultural heritage.

Mexico City, 15 March 2010.