



did you know?

1954 Hague Convention

DISSEMINATION OF THE CONVENTION

Chapter VII: Execution of the convention.

Art. 25.

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.

This topic has been deeply analysed in the II Protocol of the 1954 Hague Convention. Chapter 7 Dissemination of Information and International Assistance, Art. 30.

<http://www.unesco.org/new/fr/culture/the-mes/movable-heritage-and-museums/armed-conflict-and-heritage/the-2nd-protocol-1999/>



A talk with...

Francesco Bandarin: "UNESCO could play an important role in EU projects contribution to heritage conservation"

December 16, 2011

UNESCO and the EU share the same views on the importance of cultural development, they cooperate actively for the 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, said Francesco Bandarin, the Assistant Director General for culture at UNESCO:

We look forward and welcome a reinforced cooperation in these fields and specifically in the protection of world heritage and in the protection of intangible heritage. I believe that UNESCO could play an important role in ensuring that the project effectively contributes to heritage conservation and sustainable development within the EU programmes.

In what areas of the world is Cultural Heritage currently most endangered by conflicts, ongoing or imminent, whatever their nature?

The Arab world today is faced with instability directly and/or indirectly threatening cultural heritage. Other countries such as Egypt, Libya, Yemen and Syria are facing difficult situations due to political instability and weakening of the administrative structures in charge. We are currently developing programmes with some of these countries to strengthen their capacities to manage heritage during a difficult transition. I believe that this could be an important area of cooperation with the EU.

UNESCO is continuing its action in other conflict and post conflict zones such as the Middle East, Congo, South East Asia. Of special interest for us is South East Europe as UNESCO has been involved in dialogue and heritage conservation (e.g. reconstruction of the Mostar Bridge) over two decades.

Recently the DG has launched a new programme for the region "A bridge to development" that is intended to mobilise the civil society and communities and reinforce the role of culture as a tool for dialogues and mutual understanding.

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What type of support can UNESCO provide to those NGOs that deploy their experts to alert parties engaged of the risks their heritage is facing?

UNESCO operates in strict cooperation with its many non governmental partners and especially those specialised in the area such as the Blue Shield, Interpol, the World Customs Organization and WATCH, both in the area of development of programme and activities and on the field. We support them on the field through our network and funding. We think that this cooperation is fundamental to create an effective network of expertise that is needed in these difficult situations.

Is there any plan at UNESCO level to provide additional support through the Committee, the Blue Shield and other NGOs engaged within the Convention such as WATCH?

The NGOs play an important role in supporting member states when this is requested. However, our support is provided making reference to the fund set within the 1954 Hague Convention which unfortunately is limited to cope with the number of situations of conflict to be addressed. We appeal to the member states to reinforce the fund. Moreover, as it is well known currently UNESCO is faced by contingencies due to budget cuts. This is why we must rely on the additional contribution by the member states. This, although an appeal was launched in this direction at the latest General Assembly and at the meeting of the 1999 HP Committee.

The World Heritage Convention and the Hague Convention have several points of contacts especially when dossiers are presented for listed sites. What is the level of operative reconciliation between the two Conventions at the level of the UNESCO?

The WHC managed very extensive monitoring system of the sites. We have every year 180 monitoring reports. We detect possible risks related to human or natural causes. Thus, there is a convergence between the two conventions as the extensive monitoring activities help identify needs for preventive measure to be implemented.

The two conventions have different objectives and lay on two different legal frameworks. It is the intention of UNESCO however, to establish a better exchange of information between the different conventions especially concerning the areas of conflicts.

Mr. Bandarin is the ADG for Culture at UNESCO. An Architect by education, Mr. Bandarin directed the World Heritage Centre at UNESCO for several years where he acquired a globally recognised professional reputation.

MP takes it over in Lebanon to promote ratification of 1999 Protocol of the Hague Convention.

Ghassan Moukheiber: "Byblos and other places in Lebanon need special protection status"



Member of the Lebanese Parliament Ghassan Moukheiber expressed his support to the WAR FREE WORLD HERITAGE LISTED CITIES project and promised to raise at a political level the issue of the ratification of the 1999 Second Protocol of the (1954) Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflicts.

I think that the protection of cultural heritage does require a large amount of political will because at first it requires engaging funds. And I believe there is no real protection without funds.

And with scarce resources in the third world countries with war torn countries the agenda, the priorities lay somewhere else. It is very difficult to find funds.

But does political awareness on cultural heritage exist in Lebanon?



Not yet. Because the competition is very high, this is why Lebanon is always as many other countries heavily dependent on foreign funds and foreign assistance. And it is very important to maintain foreign and international assistance so that some funds get matching finances. International collaboration can help develop political will through the sharing of funds and expertise that also has to be built especially for areas that are pretty large.

Do you think that Byblos really needs special protection status?

Yes. Because Lebanon is a country that had wars both international and internal. And it is very important to protect a right of individual citizens and also of citizens of the future concerning the most valuable things they own. It is cultural heritage. It is a right of future generations that needs to be protected.



The Lebanese Parliament house

Do you think that other places in Lebanon besides Byblos also need this special status?

Yes. Tyre, Sidon, Baalbek, Anjar. There are many such places including sites that are very dangerously threatened such as the Valley of Beirut and the Valley of the Kadisha. They are put on the list of the national heritage of the world and have been dangerously threatened as built heritage. I believe that Lebanon is starting to develop a will to protect that heritage.

Ghassam Moukheiber is a Member of Parliament in Lebanon. He is member of the Parliamentary Finance Committee and spokesperson for the Parliamentary Human Rights Committee.

Thematic Working Groups in Byblos (Lebanon) ... what was so good about it?

For us in the municipality of Byblos "War Free World Heritage Listed Cities" is the first project in co-operation with CIUDAD and I hope not the last. We are also in the process of coordinating with other associations to conduct other projects with the EU. We hope to develop other projects because we lack

financial backing at the local level for implementation of such projects. This project will help other municipalities to proceed with similar projects, to manage these projects at the local level and to take Byblos as a model. Our municipality is willing to offer further aid for any future collaboration for the welfare of the community.



Najwa Bassil, Counsellor with a portfolio for Culture at the Municipality of Byblos.

Representatives of five projects within the EU CIUDAD programme clustered under the thematic of Cultural Heritage and Tourism at urban level, met for two days and exchanged their experiences with representatives of projects implemented within the EU Euromed Heritage IV programme. Two very hot issues strongly interlaced were tackled at this first Thematic Working Group meeting addressing the often unbalanced and at times difficult relation and coexistence between cultural heritage management and tourism development. Both sectors need to reach acceptable levels of sustainability which is often hard to secure due to lack of appropriate conditions on the ground (e.g.: legislative, regulatory, institutional, entrepreneurial). The meeting aimed at but was not limited to promoting horizontal interaction among programmes / projects to:

1. Share and compare the experience made within projects giving a multifaceted vision of thematics addressed;
2. Identify spaces for cooperation between projects and partnerships aimed at adding to the intrinsic value already expressed by each of the project gathered;
3. Generate multiplier effects by building awareness on and transfer of experience made in each project.

Governance, Sustainability, Impact, and many other definitions are all key words widely used and have a very clear meaning when conjugated to a specific sector. Nevertheless, whatever the context key words are applied in, several queries were stimulated and represented a common denominator around these words during this meeting.

Some recurrent cross cutting issues were found in most projects that highlighted the perceived need to secure a concrete positive impact on the local communities improving quality of life in areas where heritage needs to be protected and/or tourism to be promoted, whatever the nature and dimension of the human settlement where they lay.

The meeting represented also an opportunity to consider where do exactly projects stand with a wider perspective, in an attempt to identify good practice that could apply well above the borders of a



specific partnership. Value for money is not only a commercial motto. Especially in times of global economic constraints it is an ethical duty for each partnership to perform coherently to their project mandate and try to maximise the use of funds available to secure the highest possible impact especially to improve the level of governance. It may be the inspiration got from the beautiful ancient scenario hosting it, surely the Thematic Working Group in Byblos was an opportunity for a genuine, straight and useful exchange of experience.



Participants to the Thematic Working Groups in Byblos

In search for the Golden Fleece: Georgian exhibition in Rome

An exhibition entitled "The Golden Fleece. Ancient treasures of Georgia" is being held in Rome at the Museum of the "Mercati di Traiano". With a display of 185 precious artefacts from November 2011 through February 2012, this exhibition confirms once more that the Caucasian countries are a cultural bridge between Europe and Asia.

The Argonauts, were a group of heroes led by Jason aboard the Argo boat, according to the Greek mythology. Their aim was to conquer the Golden Fleece and they went to the ancient Colchis (now included within the borders of the Republic of Georgia - the far-off and fertile land, but also rich in gold) where the legendary Golden Fleece was preserved.

Prof. Tiziana D'Acchille, Curator of the exhibition, gave us more details about this cultural event.

This exhibition was already shown in various countries, however, in Rome it was enriched by unique pieces never displayed before out of Georgia.

Prof. D'Acchille could you tell us something about the exclusivity of the Italian exhibition on the Golden Fleece?

A series of very old objects are exposed in Rome for the first time out of the Georgian territory. Among them necklaces and ornaments from the kurgans in the Trialeti region, dating back to the third millennium B.C.

They are unique, rare and perfectly preserved objects, discovered in the 40s by the archaeologist Boris Kuftin during a legendary campaign of excavations. In addition to the first examples of the goldsmith's kurgans Trialeti's art, the exhibition is enriched by bronze original articles of the second millennium B.C., almost all of them are ritual objects that testify the existence of a cult of a solar Caucasian deity.

What about the findings displayed coming from the area of Mtskheta? Are they precious or particularly meaningful pieces?

Many pieces in the exhibition come from the area of Mtskheta, which remains one of the most important archaeological sites in the country. In particular, there are locally produced jewels but with a strong Persian Achaemenid influence. They are precious objects, which are part of the national treasure.

Visiting the exhibition we can note a systematic narrative referred to the myth of the Golden Fleece. Could you explain us in details how the exhibition was conceived and how the space was organized within the museum of the "Mercati di Traiano"?

The exhibition is chronologically displayed, ranging from objects of the third millennium, deriving from the culture of the first burial mounds and the Kurgan Trialeti, up to goldsmith's art of the third century AD during the kingdom of Kartli. The pieces come from various branches of the Georgian National Museum and have been given exclusively for this exhibition. The exhibition is placed on the second floor of the "Mercati di Traiano" museum, in a space normally used for major exhibitions.



Buttons, gold. II-III c. - © Georgian National Museum

The presence of the Georgian Minister of Culture at the opening ceremony is a sign of the importance given to this event in Rome. Could you tell us whether other future such activities of cooperation between Georgia and Italy are foreseen to further spread the knowledge about the artistic and aesthetic values of that region of the world?

The first such initiative that I can mention, is one day of studies focusing on the ancient Georgian gold to be held on February the 3rd in the Hall "Pietro da Cortona" of the Capitol in Rome, with speeches by famous Italian and foreign experts. We trust in the consolidation of Italian-Georgian relationships for the development of further future fruitful collaborations.

Tiziana D'Acchille is the Curator of the exhibition "Il Vello D'Oro". She is a professor at the Accademia di Belle Arti of Rome.