

FINAL DOCUMENT - RECOMMENDATIONS -

REGIONAL MEETING

**“Prevention of Illicit Traffic
and Other Illegal Actions
Related to Cultural Properties”
Ohrid, March 15-18, 2006**



Thanking the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Macedonia and the UNESCO Venice Office for the successful organization of this Meeting,

We, the participants of the Regional Meeting “Prevention of illicit traffic and other illegal actions related to cultural properties” held in Ohrid, from 15 - 18 March 2006:

Deeply concerned by the growing phenomenon of the illicit traffic of cultural property in the South-Eastern European region;

Recognizing the need as well as the difficulties of institutional cooperation among the cultural authorities and institutions, police, customs and judiciary;

Aware of the problem of insufficient regional cooperation in fighting the illicit traffic in cultural objects;

Taking into consideration the provisions of the international standard setting instruments and notably:

- a. Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict and its first protocol of 1954;
- b. Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property of 1970;
- c. UNIDROIT Convention on Stolen or Illegally Exported Cultural Objects of 1995;
- d. Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage of 2001;

RECOMMEND that the concerned countries consider the following actions in order to fight the illicit traffic of the cultural property:

I. at the national level:

1. Enhance the relevant national legislation in order to reduce the illicit traffic of cultural property;
2. Enhance the national inventories and databases of cultural property by using standards which will make them internationally compatible;
3. Enhance the cooperation and provide an adequate training among the cultural authorities and institutions, police, customs and judiciary as a matter of utmost importance;
4. Become party to the relevant international conventions;
5. Encourage the creation of specialized police and customs units dedicated to the combat against the illicit traffic of cultural property;
6. Develop or improve the cooperation with INTERPOL, in particular by using the available tools for exchange of any information concerning stolen cultural property;
7. Enhance security measures for premises hosting cultural property such as museums, public collections, places of worship as well as archaeological sites in order to prevent thefts;
8. Regulate and monitor the art market by promoting the legal framework of the trading of cultural property;
9. Raise public awareness for the need of protecting cultural property through media campaigns and educational programs.

II. at regional and international level:

1. Promote the issues related to the fight against the illicit traffic of cultural property at various events such as meeting of the Council of the Ministers of Culture of SEE.
2. Promote cross-border cooperation among the services and institutions dedicated to the fight against illicit traffic of cultural property;
3. Exchange regularly information, expertise and experience relevant to the traffic of the cultural property;
4. Invite UNESCO to facilitate further promotion of the applicable international standard setting instruments as well as other activities in order to fight the illicit traffic of cultural property in the SEE region.