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# Protection and Conservation of Cultural Heritage in the Mediterranean

A COMMON RESPONSABILITY

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PROCEEDINGS OF THE FORUM  
LIMASSOL, CHYPRE - NOVEMBER 22<sup>nd</sup> & 23<sup>rd</sup> 2012



Ordre Souverain de Malte



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Cyprus Presidency  
of the Council  
of the European Union



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



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in collaboration with UNESCO and the European Commission,  
with the help and financial support of the Fondation Française de l'Ordre de Malte  
and the Foundation Futur 21.*

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# PROTECTION AND CONSERVATION OF CULTURAL HERITAGE IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

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PROCEEDINGS OF THE FORUM



## CYPRUS FORUM – NOVEMBER 22<sup>ND</sup> AND 23<sup>RD</sup> 2012

The Mediterranean is considered « the cradle of civilizations.» At present, along its shores, one can find over 20 countries and territories, more than 20 languages, and all three monotheistic religions. If there is a place in the world where intercultural dialogue matters enormously, it is the Mediterranean. This region has an historical and cultural richness unparalleled in the world.

However, in recent years, cultural patrimony, shrines, Sacred Places, and monuments of worship have increasingly come under attack, been damaged or destroyed. Governments and political authorities, international organizations, civil society as well as armed forces have the duty to better protect the universal cultural and religious patrimony .

It is in this spirit that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Cyprus and the Chancery of the Sovereign Order of Malta, in collaboration with UNESCO and the European Commission, have decided to inaugurate the Cyprus Forum on the occasion of the Cyprus Presidency of the European Council, which will focus on:

### **Protection and Conservation of Cultural Heritage in the Mediterranean: A Common Responsibility**

We are confident that the exchange of expertise and ideas during the following two days will provide important outcomes for the Mediterranean States and communities who will engage to adopt common principles for the protection and the promotion of their cultural heritage.

We sincerely look forward to your participation and involvement in this exceptional meeting.



Erato KOZAKOU-MARKOULLIS  
Minister of Foreign Affairs of the  
Republic of Cyprus



Jean-Pierre MAZERY  
Grand Chancellor  
of the Sovereign Order of Malta and  
Chairman of the Fondation Française  
de l'Ordre de Malte



CARTE DES PAYS ou les Chevaliers de S<sup>t</sup>Jean de Jerusalem ont porté leurs armes Dressée pour l'Intelligence d







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Thursday, November 22<sup>nd</sup> 2012

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# OPENING ADDRESS

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- **H.E. George IACOVOU**  
**Commissioner to the President of the Republic of Cyprus, Former Minister of Foreign Affairs**
- **His Grace CHRISTOFOROS**  
**Bishop of Karpas, representing**  
**His Beatitude Chrysostomos II, Archbishop of Cyprus**
- **H.E. Jean-Pierre MAZERY**  
**Grand Chancellor of the Sovereign Order of Malta**
- **Christian MANHART**  
**Chief of UNESCO's Museums and Creativity Section**
- **Jean-Claude THÉBAULT<sup>1</sup>**  
**General Director of the Bureau of European Policy Advisers (BEPA) of the European Commission**

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**H.E. George IACOVOU**, *Commissioner to the President of the Republic of Cyprus, Former Minister of Foreign Affairs*

It gives me great pleasure to address you on the opening of this international conference organized jointly by the Sovereign Order of Malta, the European Commission, UNESCO and the Cyprus Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The chosen theme of shared responsibility for cultural heritage in the Mediterranean region is one that concerns us all. It is encouraging to see gathered together here today, despite the many problems that confront us – the economic and financial crisis, financial instability and conflicts in the Mediterranean – all the people who have agreed to come and devote time to our collective discussions. This is a very encouraging factor.

The organization of this forum by the Sovereign Order of Malta, which tirelessly dedicates itself to humanitarian work, is a sign of the interest the Order takes in culture and civilizations, for which we are grateful. It is an honour for us to be the guests of such a long-standing Order, which now has six centuries of history behind it. Towards the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> century, the Religious and Military Order of the Knights of Saint John, as it was known at the time, transferred its headquarters from the Holy Land to Limassol's Kolossi Castle in Cyprus. I would remind you that, during difficult times in the past, Cyprus has often offered hospitality to people who have had to abandon their countries. Even though the Order transferred its administrative headquarters to Rhodes in 1410, Kolossi remained a powerful centre of military administration, known as the Commandery.

The blue waters and sparkling light of the Mediterranean permeate the destiny of the people who live on its shores, helping them to meet and exchange ideas, producing an intercultural dialogue, promoting values such as acceptance of diversity and multiculturalism, tolerance, artistic creation and inclusiveness. These are important values for European civilization, values we need to preserve and protect for the future.

Cyprus has put a huge effort into playing a stabilizing role in the region. The excellent relations we have with neighbouring countries are based on respect and mutual benefit and illustrate our ongoing support for the European Union's values. I can promise you that we will continue to put every effort into seeking stability and consolidating peace in the region.

The Republic of Cyprus has a particular interest in protecting cultural and religious heritage, both on the island and throughout the Mediterranean region.

Regrettably, the continuing occupation of over a third of the island of Cyprus by Turkish troops and the systematic plunder of sites that represent our historical, cultural and religious heritage continues, and in many cases the damage is irreversible. It is vitally important for everyone to join this in effort to to stop the destruction of our cultural goods and monuments in the occupied region as to and prevent similar situations occurring in the Mediterranean area, especially during this period of instability and unrest.

I am confident that all your contributions to a dialogue based on goodwill, can make this conference a springboard for our efforts to protect, preserve and conserve our cultural heritage and promote international forums calling for far stricter legislation and its practical application. This is an area where it seems that we have fallen behind. I would like to wish you every success for your discussions during the seminar and an enjoyable stay on the island of Cyprus.

**His Grace CHRISTOFOROS**, *Bishop of Karpas, representing His Beatitude Chrysostomos II, Archbishop of Cyprus*

In the name of His Beatitude Archbishop of Cyprus, Chrysostomos II, I would like to address your conference on the theme “Protection and Conservation of Cultural Heritage in the Mediterranean: a Common Responsibility”.

### **The plight of cultural and religious heritage in the occupied area of Cyprus**

The monuments that belong to our cultural and religious heritage illustrate the history of our culture. These monuments are the central pillar of our historical journey across the centuries. They reveal our people’s views and development down through the ages. These monuments are part and parcel of our cultural and religious identity. Accordingly, the destruction, neglect, and plunder and illegal traffic of these goods are a violation of our cultural and religious identity, because these elements make up the very essence of our soul. They are a proof of our existence and an illustration of our identity as Greek Orthodox Christians in Cyprus. They bear witness to our presence and our existence on this land; and without them hundreds of years of history would be incomplete. There is no doubt that the barbaric Turkish invasion of 1974, in addition to the violation of international law, the ongoing occupation and the thousands of refugees and missing persons, the distress, plunder, destruction and disasters, has opened the door to thieves and illegal traders in antiques that, with the help of the occupying forces, continue to pillage the monuments of Cyprus Cyprus’ – these monuments that stand as proof of the Greek dimension of our island and the presence of Christians in our land for close to 2,000 years.

We are sad to see that over 550 religious sites and sacred monuments are still in the hands of the Turks and are being destroyed by the illegal regime supported by Turkey and the occupying troops. The monuments that have not been plundered are damaged by the passing of time. If they are not protected very soon, they will be lost forever. Some of them have disappeared, collapsed or have been demolished, and others have been turned into mosques. The sacred tombs of our ancestors are gone, destroyed by the occupying forces. As a result of this destruction and plunder a great works of art, relics, icons and other precious objects have been stolen and sold illegally overseas. Valuable mosaics and frescos have been stolen by unscrupulous thieves and taken out of the country. These acts of vandalism are usually carried out so violently that many walls are destroyed forever.

The Church of Cyprus has worked tirelessly throughout these years. We managed to repatriate a small number of the famous icons and mosaics from Kanakaria in 1991.

Our efforts culminated in the recent return of frescos from the church of St Euphemitianos of Lysi by the Menil Foundation in Houston, Texas. They had been smuggled from the occupied village of Lysi.

For the sake of our country we are pursuing our efforts and our combat to retrieve all the treasures and works belonging to our cultural and religious heritage from wherever they may be in the world. We strongly condemn the determination of the occupying forces to destroy and damage our monuments. We ask the civilized peoples of Europe and the USA to exert all possible influence on Turkey to ensure the restoration that religious freedom in the occupied area, the protection of our monuments and the end of this plunder. We feel that this will only be possible with the total withdrawal of the occupying forces and colonists. We would like to thank the relevant agencies in the Republic of Cyprus that are drawing up an inventory and methodically listing our Cypriot religious and cultural monuments, both on the island and overseas, thereby helping to protect them and secure their return.

In conclusion, I would like to congratulate the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Sovereign Order of Malta for their initiative in organizing this conference. We would also like to thank the participants and express our conviction that their presence here will be beneficial, fostering as it does the exchange of knowledge and experience in order to promote the protection of religious and cultural treasures. We wish this illustrious meeting every success. God bless you.

## **The obstruction of religious freedom**

If you will allow me to add a personal comment, as bishop of the Karpas region, I would like to tell you about a serious problem I am facing.

Karpas is an enclave in the occupied north eastern peninsula, where 350 Cypriots are still living. I am the minister to these, Greek orthodox Christians. Until last March, the occupying forces allowed me to go to the area and take part in mass, though not to celebrate it or preach the gospel.

Since March, for no reason, I have been forbidden to visit Karpas. Despite efforts made by the government, the United Nations and even the Vatican and other authorities, we have made no progress. You can understand the sorrow caused to me and by this prohibition. I cannot be present, as a priest or bishop, for my flock that is suffering under the rule of the Turkish occupation. I cannot be by their side to console them, guide them and give them the hope they need to keep going until the day that freedom returns. If you can help me end this injustice, this violation of my religious freedom, this obstacle preventing me to do as I wish in my own land, preventing my freedom of movement and free access to my congregation, if you can contribute to this struggle, your forum will bring us vitally important support. Thank you.

**H.E. Jean-Pierre MAZERY**, *Grand Chancellor of the Sovereign Order of Malta*

Thank you Your Grace. We are all aware of the obstructions to religious freedom that is under attack throughout the world, particularly, but not only, the religious freedom of Christians. It is the theme of the two half days we are spending with you here at Limassol.

The Grand Chancellor of the Order of Malta is expected to deliver a speech on this topic. I will be giving the speech in English as I prepared the documents together with the Grand Master of the Order, who is himself English. I had a moral responsibility to prepare it in this language. But I am pleased that the European Commission representative who will speak afterwards, Jean-Claude Thébault, will be talking in French.

I would like to express our gratitude to the President of the Republic of Cyprus, the Government of the Republic of Cyprus, represented by His Excellency Vassos Shiarly and His Excellency George Iacovou, for having organized the first Cyprus Forum conference here at Limassol during Cyprus' presidency of the Council of the European Union.

The theme we have chosen to tackle, “ The Protection and Conservation of Cultural Heritage in the Mediterranean Region” corresponds perfectly to the fourth priority that Cyprus has set itself for its EU presidency. This priority is about developing relations with Mediterranean countries, with the goal of paying special attention to the southern dimension of the European Neighbourhood Policy.

Unfortunately, cultural heritage, holy and sacred places and religious monuments have been attacked, pillaged or destroyed over recent years. The political authorities, international organizations and civil society all have a responsibility and political obligation to save cultural heritage and help towards the peaceful development of the entire region.

### **The Order of Malta and the protection of religious and cultural heritage**

In addition to its original mission to help the poor and the sick, the Order of Malta has now undertaken to help in the protection of this universal heritage, with the goal of upholding the multi-cultural and multi-religious nature of the Mediterranean while promoting peace and stability in the region. With this goal in mind and the benefit of long-standing links between the Order of Malta and the island of Cyprus, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Cyprus, the Order of Malta, UNESCO and the European Commission decided to inaugurate a new forum in Cyprus and dedicate the first meeting to this vital subject. The excellent idea of organizing this forum on the protection of cultural heritage in the Mediterranean was proposed by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mrs. Kozakou Marcoullis, and enthusiastically supported by the Order of Malta.

I am very happy to be welcoming such illustrious experts and guests to this historical site, which forms the backdrop to our discussions on the Mediterranean region.

It gives me great pleasure to welcome Takis Hadjigeorgiou, member of the European Parliament and the European Commission delegation. I am also pleased to be welcoming the delegation from UNESCO and member organizations of the UNESCO family, and I thank their representatives for their participation and the organization of this meeting. We are very honoured to be welcoming representatives of the Orthodox Church of Cyprus, the Russian patriarchate, and the Holy See. In particular, I would like to thank Bishop. Marcelo Sanchez Sorondo, Chancellor of the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences in Rome, for having agreed to introduce the conference when he has to attend a meeting with the Holy Father tomorrow.



The development of this long-term task of protecting cultural and religious heritage, the most recent episode in an ambitious project coordinated by Professor Silvio Ferrari from the University of Milan on the protection of cultural and religious heritage, relies on the contribution and support of the *Fondation Française de l'Ordre de Malte* and the Baldi Foundation of the Order of Malta. Special thanks for the forum also go to Fondation Futur 21 for this forum.

We feel sure that the sharing of ideas and knowledge during these two days will produce important results for the Mediterranean communities, the states that will have to adopt the principles and collective regulations for protecting and preserving their cultural heritage, as laid out in the final declaration proposed to this assembly. A draft declaration has already been given to each participant. The draft must be studied closely based on our forthcoming discussions. We would ask you to communicate your comments and proposed amendments to Ambassador Ugo Leone, who will present the final text of the declaration tomorrow so that it can be sent to all the key institutional actors and all people of goodwill.

I would like to wish you good luck, and would also like to thank the interpreters.

I am now handing over to the UNESCO representative, Christian Manhart, Chief of Museums and Creativity Section at UNESCO.

**Christian MANHART**, *Chief of UNESCO's Museums and Creativity Section*

Dear Representatives of the Republic of Cyprus, the Sovereign Order of Malta, the European Union, the Pontifical Academy of Sciences, ALECSO, ICCROM, ICOMOS, ICOM and all the other outstanding institutions, Excellencies,

It is a great privilege for me to represent UNESCO in this important Forum for the Protection and Conservation of Cultural Heritage of the Mediterranean. I wish to extend to you the most cordial congratulations on behalf of Mr Francesco Bandarin, Assistant General Director for Culture of UNESCO.

I also wish to take this opportunity to pay tribute the continuous, growing and fruitful collaboration between UNESCO and the Sovereign Order of Malta, as well as to the high-level of the distinguished personalities and experts presents from many countries and organizations. The presence of all of you is a clear indicator of the high importance the international community attaches to the preservation of cultural heritage.

## **The main international conventions that protect culture**

The preservation of cultural heritage falls fully within the priorities of UNESCO, which is the only UN organization with a mandate covering culture. As you know, UNESCO has developed a set of legal instruments in the field of culture. Please allow me to very quickly introduce to you those which might be relevant for our meeting.

Under the direct impression of the devastating consequences of the Second World War and in a context of a heightened awareness on the need to protect heritage in times of war, the Convention for the Protection of Cultural Properties in the Event of Armed Conflict was adopted in The Hague, Netherlands, in 1954. This international treaty, introduced the expression “cultural property” as a comprehensive and homogenous category of movable and immovable property worthy of protection due to their unique cultural value. This includes architectural, artistic or historical monuments and centres, archaeological sites, museums, libraries and archives, works of art, manuscripts, books, and other objects of artistic, historical or archaeological interest.

It was however obvious that there were not enough means to conserve all heritage in the world and that a choice had to be made. Therefore, in 1972, the UNESCO General Conference adopted the Convention on the Protection of the Cultural and Natural Heritage of the World. This instrument focuses on immovable cultural property “of outstanding universal value” and also introduces the notion of “heritage of mankind”. At present, 962 cultural, natural or mixed sites from 157 States Parties are presently inscribed on the World Heritage List. Cyprus has three sites inscribed on the List, Paphos, the painted Churches in the Troodos Region and the archaeological site of Choirokhoitia.

I wish to emphasize that the inscription on the World Heritage List is an entirely democratic process: 21 elected Members of the World Heritage Committee, equally representing all regions of the world, vote for the inclusion of a site on the List – or its deletion as happened twice in the past. The World Heritage label has become a world respected designation, giving inscribed sites international recognition, protecting sensitive sites and attracting tourism. World Heritage sites serve as catalysts to raise awareness on the need for heritage preservation, and foster intercultural understanding through the appreciation of other cultures’ value.

The 1970 Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property does not aim to protect property for its unique cultural value, but to recognize the ownership of a pro-

perty. This Convention has become increasingly universal over the years and now counts 122 States Parties, including the USA, Canada, Germany, France, Japan and Russia, all large platforms for the antiquities trade. However, this Convention is rather limited in its application as it has no notion of retroactivity or efficient civil law provisions.

These issues were addressed by the creation of the 1995 UNIDROIT Convention, which is complementary to the 1970 Convention and which has powerful provisions to allow seizing illicitly trafficked cultural objects. This Convention however has only been ratified by a relatively small number of countries: 33. In particular in the “rich” developed countries there is much lobbying from the art market against its ratification.

In 1978, UNESCO set up an Intergovernmental Committee to facilitate State to State cooperation for the restitution of cultural objects when bi-lateral negotiations were not fruitful. Recently two cases have been solved by the Committee – after many years of discussions, the Makonde Mask was returned from a private Swiss museum to the National Museum in Tanzania and the Bogazkoi Sphinx was returned from the Pergamon Museum in Berlin to Turkey. However, the case of the Parthenon friezes, presently in the British Museum and claimed by Greece is still under negotiation and is likely to remain so for quite some time.

These concerns are covered by the themes of our present Forum, which will examine the core role of culture as vector to reconciliation in conflict situations, as tool for democratization processes in the Arab Spring and as economic factor in particular during the present financial crisis.

I therefore look forward to our discussions today and tomorrow, and wish to commend and congratulate the Government of the Republic of Cyprus and the Sovereign Order of Malta for having taken the initiative of organizing this timely Forum.

**H.E. Jean-Pierre MAZERY**

I am now handing over to Jean-Claude Thébaud, who is representing José Manuel Durão Barroso, President of the European Commission.

**Jean-Claude THÉBAULT**, *General Director of the Bureau of European Policy Advisers (BEPA) of the European Commission*

I would like to start by expressing my thanks for allowing me to speak in French, which is not always the case at the European Commission. I am very honoured and happy for many reasons to be with you today to represent the European Commission at this first Cyprus Forum for many reasons. In addition to the very warm welcome we have been given – and I would like to express my gratitude to the government of Cyprus and our friends in the Order – I have two major reasons to be delighted at this opportunity.

- The first is the fact that the initiative we launched with President Barroso and the Grand Chancellor Jean-Pierre Mazery at the seminar on 6<sup>th</sup> March 2012 in Brussels has continued to produce results concerning this highly important subject, which has taken on even more importance in the situation we are currently experiencing.
- The second reason is that this initiative has been given new impetus with prestigious sponsors, the Republic of Cyprus and UNESCO, and I thank them.

Our discussions today and tomorrow will serve to enhance and extend the work undertaken for several years on the question of access to and protection of cultural heritage in the Mediterranean region. This work has been driven by Professor Silvio Ferrari and I would like to pay tribute to him.

### **Values shared by European institutions and the Order of Malta: from dignity to solidarity**

I also wish to take advantage of the presence of the Grand Chancellor to pay tribute to His Most Eminent Highness the Prince and Grand Master Fra' Matthew Festing, who signed a memorandum of understanding in February 2009 alongside President Barroso – whom I am also representing in a personal capacity – highlighting the fundamental values that link the Order of Malta to European institutions. These values are respect for human dignity, democracy, the rule of law, solidarity, justice and tolerance. Religious freedom is evidently one of these key principles. The organization of the Limassol forum is part of the process of implementing the memorandum.

One of the major commitments we share, linked to the issue that has brought us together today and that is more relevant than ever at a time when we are facing an unprecedented economic and financial crisis in Europe and throughout the world, is the fight against poverty and social exclusion. Without going into the entire history of the Order of Malta, let us remember that nearly a thousand years ago, the Hospitaller Order dedicated itself to looking after the ill and helping the needy and disadvantaged. It continues this work today in conditions marked by armed conflict and natural catastrophes, such as in Haiti. In over 120 countries, the Order of Malta comes to the aid of refugees, displaced people, old people and poor children. It reaches out to all those who are vulnerable and left at the side of the road, those who need to find a solution. The southern shore of the Mediterranean, currently experiencing major upheavals, has not been left unscathed. I know that the Order is a key actor in bringing help to displaced communities who are suffering today.

The forum and its discussions on the protection of cultural heritage sites cannot overlook this worrying situation. For it is everywhere. I think that our discussions will allow us to step back and take a measured look at the situation in order to find solutions that are relevant and fair for everyone. Whether we are in the north, south or middle of the Mediterranean, we are all concerned by this struggle.

### **The importance of dialogue between Mediterranean cultures**

The other commitment shared by our institutions, and by everyone here, is at the heart of this forum: the promotion of dialogue between different cultures to protect and conserve this shared Mediterranean cultural heritage.

The Mediterranean is a unique geo-cultural area thanks to its diverse identities, rich history and the heritage handed down to us. This heritage, whether sacred or not, bears witness to the fruitful exchanges between Mediterranean peoples over the centuries. The bridges between them remain more numerous than the sources of conflict. I am convinced of this, and am not alone in my conviction. This dialogue between Mediterranean cultures could develop further, particularly in view of the events linked to the Arab Spring, which will be covered by one of our sessions. This dialogue is the foundation stone of our future – for all of us on both sides of the Mediterranean – that will promote our cultural and spiritual values, linked directly to our historical heritage.

The severe economic crisis should not change this. However tempting it may be, withdrawing into ourselves is not an option. This message must be conveyed by all of us, not only during these discussions but in their aftermath, when each participant returns home. You are all here as women and men of culture, eminent legal experts, writers, religious and political leaders, in short, people whose experience can only enrich the debate in order to help improve dialogue between Mediterranean cultures by putting the focus on the importance of cultural heritage.

The universal values that you adhere to have also, as of course you know, underpinned the building of Europe from the very start. It is our obligation as actors in European society – and I am also speaking now as a European citizen – to protect and promote these values. But it is also, to quote the title of this conference, “a common responsibility” that reaches far beyond Europe. It is therefore the duty of all citizens and leaders involved in protecting our universal heritage to fight off the temptation to adopt an everyone-for-themselves approach, particularly in response to the pressures of the economic crisis or, even worse, to all forms of extremism that seek to destroy this heritage and thus to destroy the long history that unites and connects us throughout the Mediterranean region. Thank you.



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# INTRODUCTION

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- **Msgr. Marcelo SANCHEZ SORONDO**  
**Chancellor of the Pontifical Academy of Sciences  
and the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences**





**H.E. Jean-Pierre MAZERY**, *Grand Chancellor of the Sovereign Order of Malta*

Bishop Marcelo Sanchez Sorondo, Chancellor of the Pontifical Academy of Sciences and the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences has published so many books and articles that I cannot mention them all – you will find them online. He is also Chaplain and a faithful friend of the Order of Malta. Your Excellency, I give you the floor to introduce this important debate.

**Msgr. Marcelo SANCHEZ SORONDO**, *Chancellor of the Pontifical Academy of Sciences and the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences*

Peace be with you. It is great pleasure for me to be among you today. I would like to express my gratitude to the government of the Republic of Cyprus and the Sovereign Order of Malta for having invited me to this important forum organized with UNESCO and the European Commission. I would like to thank the Grand Chancellor of the Hospitaller Order of Saint John of Jerusalem of Rhodes and of Malta, His Excellence Jean-Pierre Mazery, for his invitation, which is a great honour for me.

### **Cyprus: a symbol of what we wish to achieve today**

Cyprus is at the crossroads of history, cultures and religions. The Republic of Cyprus, which has recently joined the European Union, is beginning to see the advantages of closer economic and political ties with other European states. EU membership has already given your country access to markets, technologies and expertise. We hope that this membership will bring prosperity to your island and that other Europeans will in turn be enriched by the spiritual and cultural heritage that reflects your historical role at the crossroads of European, Asia and Africa.

Casina Pio IV, the villa where the Academies I serve as chancellor are headquartered, contains several representations of Aphrodite. It is usually said that she was born near Paphos on the island of Cyprus. In Plato's Banquet, Aphrodite represents profane and sacred love, Aphrodite Pandemos and Ourania. The ideologists of Casina Pio IV probably saw Aphrodite as a mythological anticipation of this sacred principle: to gather together with love and in a single volume all that is dispersed in pages and sheets throughout the universe.

The truth is that Cyprus was the first stage on Paul the Apostle's missionary journeys. The message of the gospel spread from here out across the empire, and the church, built on the apostolic sermons, was able to put down its roots. This decisive moment in the history of Cyprus should be a symbol of what we have to achieve today. As the Pope said, "If you want to cultivate peace, protect creation." We could add cultural heritage.

## **Culture needs protecting, just like nature**

Despite a great deal of success in creating a more stable and integrated world, the new report by the UN Secretary General's High-Level Panel on Global Sustainability, *Resilient People, Resilient Planet, A Future Worth Choosing*<sup>2</sup>, recognizes the failure of this world order, which does not have the capacity to implement the necessary changes for real sustainability.

The report begins by paraphrasing Charles Dickens: "Today our planet and our world are experiencing the best of times, and the worst of times." Humanity is experiencing an unprecedented degree of prosperity, making great strides forward in reducing poverty with technological advances that have changed our lives. Nevertheless, very significant inequalities remain and are growing in many countries.

Short-term political and economic strategies drive extreme consumption and heavy debts. With a growing population set to reach nine billion in 2040, all this threatens the natural environment. Despite major progress over the last twenty-five years, humanity has managed neither to protect resources, save natural ecosystems, ensure long-term viability nor to protect the priceless goods represented by its cultural heritage, particularly in the Mediterranean region. This is why humanity must find new ways to produce low-carbon-emission energy, ensure food security, build people-centred cities, encourage biodiversity and protect the atmosphere. Humanity also needs to make the world aware of the importance of cultural heritage throughout the planet. If nature is to develop, it needs protecting, as does culture. Without protection, it is not easy to achieve development. Creativity also depends on protecting our cultural heritage.

### **What does cultural heritage mean and why preserve it?**

The UN's definition of cultural heritage is as follows: this heritage is what we inherit from the past, what we live with today and what we hand on to future generations. Our natural and cultural heritage is an irreplaceable source of inspiration. Sites as varied as the Egyptian pyramids, Roman and Gothic cathedrals, Orthodox and Byzantine churches in Greece and Cyprus and the baroque cathedrals in Latin America are all part of our impressive world heritage. Cultural heritage, national heritage or just simply heritage is made up of physical artefacts, the intangible attributes of a religious or secular group from a given society that are handed down from past generations and maintained in the present, and that should benefit future generations. Cultural heritage includes the tangible cultural artefacts of buildings,

2 - The report of the United Nations Secretary General's High-Level Panel on Global Sustainability: *Resilient People, Resilient Planet, A Future Worth Choosing*, February 2012. English version online at: [http://www.un.org/gsp/sites/default/files/attachments/GSP\\_Report\\_web\\_final.pdf](http://www.un.org/gsp/sites/default/files/attachments/GSP_Report_web_final.pdf)

monuments and sites, religious or otherwise, archaeological excavations, museums, landscapes, books and objets d'art, and the intangible cultural artefacts of folklore, religious and secular traditions, languages, liturgy and knowledge.

We call the deliberate act of looking after cultural heritage for the present and the future “preservation” in American English and “conservation” in British English, the terms having more technical meanings in the same context but in other languages. When I was preparing this speech, I checked to see if the classical authors had thought about this concept. The only element I found was the conservation of books in the great Greek libraries. The concept of cultural heritage is therefore a highly important new element.

Why preserve cultural heritage? Objects are part of the study of human history, since they provide a concrete basis for ideas and can validate them. Their conservation is a sign of the recognition of our need for the past and the things that recount history. We can say that preserved objects validate memory in the same way as the books we have in our libraries. With digital acquisition technologies, we have a solution that can portray an artefact's shape and appearance with unprecedented accuracy. The actual object, in relation to its reproduction, gives us all the literal means of touching the past.

Unfortunately, this can be dangerous, since sites and objects are destroyed by the hands of tourists and by wars. This real risk underlines the fact that all objets d'art are in a constant state of chemical transformation. What we consider to be preserved is, in fact, being modified.

In the same way, the value that each generation attributes to the past, and to objets d'art that link them to the past, changes. I think that universities and schools have a special role to play in the new global knowledge network. In the past, the Church created universities and monastic schools to spread knowledge and preserve Greek and Roman heritage. Today, we need universities throughout the planet to help societies to deal with social upheavals, poverty and the challenges of food, clean energy and intellectual and moral education. We also need to help them to improve the protection of their religious heritage. By linking up online study programmes, the world's universities can become even more effective in making discoveries and applying knowledge to complex problems. Universities and schools are centres where legions of researchers and students work on solving many practical problems affecting communities and countries.

Businesspeople know that they cannot prosper, create wealth and motivate workers and consumers unless these people are part of the solution. I like to feel that in nature and culture there is a positive correlation between religious goods and

human goods. Catholic social doctrine is convinced that the challenge of globalization and cultural heritage requires a large number of economic, political, institutional and cultural measures but, at the same time, it believes that these measures must be rooted in ethical principles and deep-seated motivation.

### **The need for a new ecumenical approach or an overlapping consensus**

The main question here concerns the sources that currently contribute to these ethical values. It is important that in this context, Catholic social doctrine refers to a new ecumenical approach. This means that the Catholic Church is convinced that the globalization challenge cannot be met without an ecumenical effort by Christian churches, the world's major religions and all women and men of goodwill. Globalization has improved dialogue between the great religious traditions and cultures, which now know each other better and acknowledge each other. This dialogue is increasingly vital, mainly due to the appearance of new forms of fundamentalism seeking to use religions to promote selfish interests rooted in hatred. On the other hand, this dialogue can also provide the foundations for establishing universally applicable ethical principles and values based on justice and love.

Recent research in social sciences suggests that there is a positive correlation between the degree of religious freedom and the access to economic and social goods, whereas the withholding of religious freedom corresponds to the withholding of these goods. Conclusion: there is a link between the presence in a country of religious freedom on the one hand, and the existence of democracy on the other, with civil and political freedom, women's emancipation, freedom of the press, elimination of illiteracy, reduction in child mortality and economic freedom.

This all converges with the new concept of the overlapping consensus as proposed by the eminent philosopher John Rawls. Rawls said that we need a new balance that brings together the different metaphysical approaches in a globalized world. In the dialogue between Cardinal Ratzinger and Jürgen Habermas<sup>3</sup>, similar conclusions were reached when Habermas recognized that democracy can have specific pathologies, such as exacerbated individualism and the egotism displayed by the authorities and by lobbies. This is why religious tradition must lay down certain limits. He also argues that religion can suffer from its own pathologies: the fanaticism and irrational belief that call for limits to counter them. Habermas, like Rawls, suggests that religious and secular mentalities must learn the rules of global coexistence, each approach offering a remedy for the ills of the other. Cardinal

3 - *Dialectics of Secularization: On Reason and Religion* (2004 debate).

Ratzinger, who is now Pope Benedict XVI, intends to continue the efforts undertaken by Pope Jean-Paul II, working on reconciliation with Islam during his recent trip to Turkey and his dialogue with Cardinal Tauran.

### **Difficult times for religious freedom**

But we need to be careful! Religious freedom is also currently facing growing risks. Despite the considerable progress accomplished since the Universal Declaration, recent studies on the state of religious freedom in the world reveal bad news. Data from the biggest cross-cutting survey undertaken in the world paints a very gloomy picture: 70% of the world's population lives in countries that impose major restrictions on religious freedom; the consequences mainly affect religious minorities, especially Christian minorities. Behind the abstract figures is a harsh daily reality: intimidations, arrests, persecution and violence suffered by believers in many areas of the world. They are sometimes due to government policies, sometimes societal attitudes and often a combination of both. This repression underlines the need for greater freedom and greater democracy. After three decades of solid progress, democratic freedom worldwide peaked in 1998. It then went into a period of stagnation followed by a decline over the last five years. This is the longest decline in the 40 years of the Freedom House reports. Religious repression and, especially, wars are the main causes behind this negative trend that is curbing world progress and slowing down the protection of cultural heritage.

### **The appeal by Benedict XVI and Chrysostomos II**

On this topic, it is useful to recall, here in Cyprus, the common declaration issued by Benedict XVI and Chrysostomos II in June 2007. The declaration is still not very well known. It examined “the situation of division and tensions that have marked the Island of Cyprus for more than 30 years, with its tragic daily problems which impair the daily life of our communities and of individual families.” More generally, the declaration considered “the situation in the Middle East, where the war and conflicts between peoples risk spreading with disastrous consequences.”

The signatories said “We therefore address this appeal to all those who, everywhere in the world, raise their hand against their own brethren, exhorting them firmly to lay down their weapons and to take steps to heal the injuries caused by war. [...] It is the intention of our Churches to play a role of peacemaking in justice and solidarity and, to achieve all this, it is our constant wish to foster fraternal relations among all Christians and loyal dialogue between the different religions present and active in the Region”.

“We also ask them to spare no effort to ensure that human rights are always defended in every nation: respect for the human person, an image of God, is in fact a fundamental duty for all.”

“Thus, among the human rights to be safeguarded, freedom of religion should be at the top of the list. Failure to respect this right constitutes a very serious offence to the dignity of the human being...” The declaration also mentions cultural heritage: “Consequently, to profane, destroy or sack the places of worship of any religion is an act against humanity and the civilization of the peoples.”<sup>4</sup>

We would like to conclude with the idea that the social construction of on-going dialogue and cooperation between the world’s religions is also vital to protecting nature and conserving culture.

### **H.E. Jean-Pierre MAZERY**

Thank you for a splendid introduction. We are now moving straight on to the first round table, and Professor Bouchenaki will have all the freedom he needs to get to the very heart of the subject.

4 - For the text of the declaration, see: [http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/benedict\\_xvi/speeches/2007/june/documents/hf\\_ben-xvi\\_spe\\_20070616\\_chrysostomos-ii\\_en.html#COMMON\\_DECLARATION](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/speeches/2007/june/documents/hf_ben-xvi_spe_20070616_chrysostomos-ii_en.html#COMMON_DECLARATION)







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**ROUND TABLE 1:  
IMPACT OF NATURAL CATASTROPHES  
AND CONFLICTS ON CULTURAL HERITAGE**

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**Prof. Mounir BOUCHENAKI**, *moderator, Advisor to UNESCO and former General Director of ICCROM*

We are greatly honored that the Order of Malta has enabled us, for the second time this year, to participate in a seminar addressing the issue of the protection and conservation of cultural heritage in the Mediterranean in the face of the many challenges that confront this heritage.

During this round table, entitled *The impact of conflicts and natural disasters on cultural heritage*, we will be hearing from, in order, **Christian Manhart** from UNESCO, **Doctor Maria Hadjicosti**, Director of the Department of Antiquities of Cyprus, **Doctor Hayet Guettat Guermazi**, Director of Heritage Preservation at the Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization, **Professor Rohit Jigyasu**, visiting from India, who is President of the ICOMOS international scientific committee on risk preparedness and a professor at Kyoto University, Japan, and lastly my friend **Julien Anfruns**, General Director of the International Council of Museums and President of the International Committee of the Blue Shield.

### **The Mediterranean Basin, cradle of civilization, is experiencing far-reaching changes**

By way of introduction, I would simply like to state that if there is one area where real efforts have been made in recent years to further the cause of understanding between the different peoples and cultures of the Mediterranean Basin, it is in the preservation and promotion of a shared cultural heritage. I would remind you of the major international campaigns launched in Egypt by UNESCO to save the Nubian monuments at Abu Simbel and Philae, the campaign to save the site at Carthage, the campaigns to save Venice, the Acropolis and many other, right up to the very latest campaign, launched by Federico Mayor when he was UNESCO's General Director, to preserve the Lebanese site at Tyre.

The Mediterranean region possesses a matchless architectural and urban heritage, whose nature was so brilliantly described in the writings of Fernand Braudel. The ties binding the northern and southern shore of the Mediterranean go back to high antiquity and the voyages across the sea made by the Phoenicians, Greeks and Romans and, in a later period, the progress of Islam and the Arab influence which has made such a lasting impression on the southern shores of the Mediterranean. The colonial European regimes of the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries also led to continuing contacts with the southern shore of the Mediterranean. This means that there exist numerous and highly diverse vestiges left behind by the various

civilizations that developed, not always without upheaval, around the Mediterranean. Certain of these vestiges continue, even today, to form part of the urban fabric, woven over time and still in widespread use, although often badly deteriorated under the destructive weight of unbridled economic growth and a rate of demographic expansion quite unrelated to anything witnessed prior to the 20<sup>th</sup> century. This is especially true of the historic cities of the Mediterranean. A few years ago, the large number of historic cities led the United Nations Environment Programme to set up a programme called The 100 Historic Cities of the Mediterranean.

The entire Mediterranean is in fact characterized by the presence of major ruins scattered across wide areas and that were the work of civilizations that arose on both the northern and southern shores of the Mediterranean. In Libya, for example, one of the largest Roman centers of the Mediterranean can be found, at Leptis Magna, as well as one of the Mediterranean's largest Greek sites, at Cyrene. Countries such as Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Lebanon, Jordan, Libya, Morocco, Syria and Tunisia are littered with sites from the Roman and Greek eras. Archeological excavations carried out over the past hundred years and more by archeological students from countries of the northern Mediterranean have enabled us to accumulate – in countries scattered more or less all around the world but particularly in the Mediterranean region – collections of objects of inestimable historical and esthetic value.

In southern Mediterranean museums, the conservation and management of these collections, enriched daily as new discoveries emerge, poses problems that merit careful consideration. For over two decades, people charged with overseeing cultural heritage have understood the advantages to be had from developing tourism by opening up their sites and museums to travel agencies and operators. At the same time, they became aware of the dangers of inadequately regulated tourism and the issue of excessive visitor numbers that is familiar to us, for example, in Athens at the Acropolis and in the city of Venice.

As we start the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the Mediterranean region, crucible of civilizations, is experiencing profound change, unprecedented urbanization as well as what are, sadly, many instances of irremediable destruction of its cultural heritage. Occurring at the same time are phenomena linked to climate change and natural disasters like earthquakes and floods, such as occurred in Italy recently at Aquila, which damage the heritage and risk causing lasting changes to the tangible and intangible witnesses to the past that are so much a part of everyday life for the people of the Mediterranean. Entire collections, housed in museums, libraries, archives and historical monuments may disappear or be damaged, victims of uncontrolled

climatic forces, poor storage, inadequately planned displays, lack of maintenance, inadequately prepared staff and, unfortunately, worst of all, the armed conflicts the have afflicted our Mediterranean region for the past 30 years. After the Second World War, we thought that the era of warfare had come to an end. Sadly, the past 30 years have seen the bombardment of the world heritage-listed city of Dubrovnik and the destruction of the bridge at Mostar. We have witnessed the devastation of the churches and monasteries of Bosnia-Herzegovina, an episode to which I was sadly witness, being at the time on the ground on behalf of UNESCO to examine the situation facing these monuments. I went to Vukovar, which had seen very heavy damage to both the Orthodox and Catholic churches as well as the Vukovar museum, which was utterly destroyed.

This is one aspect of the international cooperation that UNESCO has fostered around the world. UNESCO created an institution in Rome called ICCROM, set up to provide training principally for architects and museum curators, and one of its key programmes in recent times has addressed issues of preventative conservation and risk management.

### **Cultural heritage as an instrument to bring communities together**

Finally, a few closing words before opening the debate on these issues. The integrity of all aspects of a cultural heritage, tangible and intangible, plays an important role in nation-building. Too often cultural heritage becomes a target because of its value. We heard earlier the very moving speech given by His Grace Bishop Christoforos. We remain convinced that cultural heritage can be an instrument for bringing people together, a starting point for a resumption of dialogue and the construction of a shared future. This is the challenge that we face, affecting all those institutions charged with protecting cultural heritage: UNESCO, the Council of Europe, ICOMOS, ICOM, International Federation of Archives and Libraries, Europa Nostra, the Preservation Institute, the Global Fund, the world heritage committees and other newly formed bodies such as Patrimoine Sans Frontières and the International Committee of the Blue Shield. In the preface to his book<sup>5</sup>, Professor Jiri Toman wrote: “War is the enemy of man. It is also the enemy of the best that man has made: art, culture, monuments and the whole cultural and historic heritage. Many works of art have been destroyed over the centuries, works that we have never known and that we shall never see again.”

This is why this round table is important, setting out to analyze the impact on cultural heritage of natural disasters and of the conflicts that have occurred around

5 - Jiri Toman, *The Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict* (Paris: UNESCO, 1996)

the Mediterranean, particularly in the past three years. We have witnessed the attack and looting of the Egyptian museum in Cairo. In Libya, we have seen, and continue to see, numerous illegal excavations. Syria is seeing the destruction of important sites such as Aleppo, the Krak des Chevaliers, the old city of Damascus and Byzantine-era villages in the north east of the country. Our colleagues will be discussing these urgent concerns with us.

I will now hand over to Christian Manhart, for many years a colleague of mine at UNESCO, and its representative at this forum.

**Christian MANHART**, *Chief of UNESCO's Museums and Creativity Section*

I will be saying a few words about UNESCO's strategy for preserving cultural heritage in conflict and post-conflict situations.

### **Cultural heritage: driving peace, reconciliation and social cohesion**

The Preamble to UNESCO's Constitution which states that "Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defenses of peace must be constructed....» and Article I of its Constitution which assigns the task of "the conservation and protection of the world's heritage of books, works of art and monuments of history and science....», give the Organization the double mandate for peace building and heritage conservation. The safeguard of all aspects of cultural heritage, both tangible and intangible, including museums, monuments, archaeological sites, music, art and traditional crafts, is of particular significance in terms of strengthening cultural identity and a sense of national integrity after periods of civil unrest or armed conflict. In recent years, cultural heritage has increasingly become the target of deliberate military and non-military destruction, aimed at harming the opponent's cultural identity or trying to sever the cross-cultural connections between different ethnic groups. However, cultural heritage can also become a point of mutual interest for former adversaries, enabling them to re-build ties, to engage in dialogue and to work together in shaping a common future. On the basis of UNESCO's double mission to build peace and to protect cultural heritage, UNESCO's strategy is to assist in the re-establishment of links between the populations concerned and their cultural history, helping them to develop a sense of common ownership of monuments that represent the cultural heritage of different segments of society. This strategy is therefore directly linked to the nation-building process within the framework of the United Nations mandate and concerted international efforts for rehabilitating countries after armed conflicts.

## **Four elements of UNESCO's cultural heritage strategy**

During the last decades, UNESCO has acquired a strong experience in post-conflict activities in many countries immediately after hostile action had ceased. This led to the development of a post-conflict strategy for cultural heritage which comprises four complementary and simultaneous elements:

- conservation and restoration of monuments of high symbolic significance.
- Reconciliation of conflict groups in cultural processes.
- Emphasis on the socio-economic impact of heritage projects
- Recreation and strengthening of the cultural identity of a people.

With reference to UNESCO's Constitution and the 1972 Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, policies and activities for the safeguarding of cultural heritage focus on training and capacity-building activities related to the preservation of cultural heritage. Perhaps one of the most important activities in the aftermath of armed conflicts is the conservation - and in rare cases even the reconstruction - of symbolic monuments.

### **Conservation and restoration of monuments of high symbolic significance**

Perhaps one of the most striking examples of the reconstruction of a highly symbolically charged monument is the Old Bridge of Mostar. The bridge designed by the renowned architect Sinan, connects the Croat and Bosnian areas of Mostar and was destroyed in 1993 during the armed conflict. Since 1998 many restoration projects were carried out, most notably the rebuilding of the Old Bridge under the aegis of UNESCO and the World Bank. The rebuilt bridge was solemnly inaugurated on 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2004 by UNESCO's General Director Koichiro Matsuura. In the following year, the bridge and old town centre of Mostar were inscribed on the World Heritage List under criterion (vi): "With the 'renaissance' of the Old Bridge and its surroundings, the symbolic power and meaning of the City of Mostar - as an exceptional and universal symbol of coexistence of communities from diverse cultural, ethnic and religious backgrounds - has been reinforced and strengthened, underlining the unlimited efforts of human solidarity for peace and powerful co-operation in the face of overwhelming catastrophes." The symbolic act of joining both areas of Mostar with the bridge provides a first step to building peace and mutual trust in the local community thus hopefully laying the foundations for a lasting reconciliation between both groups.



Another recent example is Bamiyan in Afghanistan. Immediately after the collapse of the Taliban regime in December 2001, UNESCO started with the consolidation of the niches where the Buddha statues had previously been situated, the surrounding cliffs and the remains of the statues. All these activities were generously funded by the Japanese government with over five million dollars and the German government with over one million, under UNESCO coordination. During the First Plenary Session of the International Coordination Committee for the Safeguarding of Afghanistan's Cultural Heritage (ICC) organized in June 2003, it was recommended to give priority to the consolidation of the remains without reconstructing the Buddha statues. At present all fragments of the Giant Buddha statues, including decorations, were salvaged from the two niches, sorted, documented and stored in temporary shelters. The UNESCO-Japan Funds-in-Trust project successfully completed the emergency consolidation of the two niches and the adjacent cliffs. The project also continued to document the numerous Buddhist caves and conserve the mural paintings inside prioritized caves.

### **Reconciliation of Conflict Groups**

Despite the involvement of international specialists and organizations, all safeguarding measures are implemented in close collaboration with the local communities which are at the same time directly involved in activities on site. Local participation in safeguarding activities becomes frequently a significant factor for the local economy, thus contributing to the overall economic regeneration and political stabilization of a region.

In 1999 and 2000, during the war, UNESCO was able to install gabions for the protection of the foundations of the Minaret of Jam. With the precious assistance of Professor Andrea Bruno and the two NGOs SPACH (Society for the Preservation of Afghanistan's Cultural Heritage) and HAFO (Help to Afghan Farmer's Organization), a week-long ceasefire was negotiated, and warring combatants from the Mujahedeen and the Taliban factions were hired to install wooden and metal gabions around the minaret's foundations. They stopped fighting to work together on this project and resumed fighting again after one week. This shows that warring groups may under certain conditions even work together for the protection of cultural heritage. Since the protection of cultural heritage is mostly considered to be apolitical, joint protective efforts are frequently able to bring warring groups together, letting them set aside their political differences temporarily. These joint efforts can thus serve as a starting point for reconciliation and peace initiatives.

## **Emphasis on the socio-economic impact of heritage projects**

UNESCO missions to safeguard cultural assets try to source material and labour locally in order to reduce project costs and provide income to the local communities. These funding considerations have a significant socio-economic impact on the local community in the short, medium and long term. Local workers and guards are paid directly from project funds, frequently making them, in certain regions the only members of their families who receive a regular income. Wages for the local workers thus contribute directly to the livelihood of the local community, being a significant source of revenue for the local economy in the short term.

Even though the scope of funds and project duration is limited, cultural heritage conservation projects have significant long-term effects on the local economy. Moreover, the reconstruction and rehabilitation of cultural heritage sites creates per se added value for cultural tourism. Restored monuments will attract visitors while destroyed ones would not. Heritage conservation may bring together conflict groups and restart a constructive dialogue between the involved parties, thus contributing to the stabilization of a region after conflict.

## **Rebuilding the Cultural Identity of a People**

The inscription of a site on the UNESCO World Heritage List is perhaps internationally the most visible form of acknowledging the cultural identity of a people. However, such measures in the international arena have to be flanked by activities in the country which serve the ultimate aim of reconstructing the cultural identity of a people.

The cultural identity of a people is frequently targeted in revolutionary wars or in armed conflicts between ethnic groups to establish a new social, political or religious order. Such conflicts often give rise to deliberate destruction of cultural heritage and to looting of museums and illicit excavations of archaeological sites, thus directly affecting the cultural integrity and identity of a people. Given that the prevention of illicit excavations and illicit traffic is a major challenge in many countries, UNESCO supports the efforts of local and national governments to ban illicit excavations and to control borders to prevent smuggling of illicitly acquired movable cultural objects. By trying to ensure the repatriation of illegally acquired objects, UNESCO seeks to support the rebuilding of a people's cultural identity.

## Conclusion

The previously described elements of UNESCO's post-conflict strategy may help to restore symbolic assets as well as the social and economic foundations of peaceful coexistence. Even though UNESCO's post-conflict management strategies have achieved remarkable successes under frequently precarious conditions, armed conflicts and civil unrest continue to threaten the world's cultural and natural heritage. UNESCO's post-conflict management strategies, though tried and tested, cannot prevent conflicts from flaring up again, particularly in light of the frequent multinational involvement and the highly politicized nature of some conflicts. Post-conflict management invariably operates in a wider framework, which cannot be controlled by heritage managers. Thus, many challenges remain. Complementing UNESCO's operational activities, the Organization is promoting existing and developing new normative instruments for the legal protection of tangible and intangible cultural heritage.

I would like to contribute these elements to our discussion.

### Prof. Mounir BOUCHENAKI

Thank you, Christian. Perhaps our debates will also touch on a few actions currently undertaken in collaboration with Afghanistan's only woman governor, in charge of the Bamyan valley. Now we will hear from Doctor Hadjicosti.

### Dr Maria HADJICOSTI, *Director of the Department of Antiquities of the Republic of Cyprus*

I will be using slides to illustrate my points about the illegal trafficking of Cypriot antiquities and our government's efforts to repatriate them.

Cyprus, the third-largest island in the Mediterranean, has the good fortune to be located in the eastern Mediterranean. The island has developed a major civilization since Antiquity, sitting at the heart of the ancient civilized world at the point where east meets west.

### **The Department of Antiquities of Cyprus and the fight against illegal trafficking**

In Cyprus, the body responsible for antiquities is the Department of Antiquities at the Ministry of Communications and Works. It is responsible for all the island's archeological sites, ancient monuments, public museums and other cultural activities.

We are responsible for excavations as well as the preservation and conservation of archeological sites and ancient monuments, from the Neolithic period to the 20<sup>th</sup> century, as described in the Antiquities Law. The department is also responsible for the maintenance and expansion of archeological museums and the creation of new museums. We promote and use the sites for educational purposes and to develop cultural tourism. Our department arranges seminars and exhibitions, and is always looking for ways to promote the cultural heritage of the island of Cyprus.

The discovery of archeological treasures on Cyprus began in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, with diplomats and amateur archeologists transporting works to Europe and the United States of America that now form part of the most important collections in a number of prestigious museums, such as the British Museum, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Berlin Museum and the Louvre, as well as in the hands of private collectors. The creation of the department in 1935 put an end to these illegal activities. Scientific excavations in Cyprus, such as those conducted by the Swedish Cyprus Expedition between the years 1927-1931 did much to help develop archeology in Cyprus. We have organized exhibitions of Cypriot artifacts in Europe and the USA which have attracted widespread public attention, bringing new generations of young academics to the island to continue the research process.

Since its creation, the Department of Antiquities has been aware of the need to compile an inventory of cultural artifacts and take measures for their protection, especially since Cyprus signed the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict. The list of monuments is structured around a permanent database. Today more than 1500 monuments and archaeological sites are recorded digitally using the GIS system. Private collections and objects from the state museums are also recorded digitally. Thirteen Cypriot monuments, in three nominations, were inscribed on UNESCO's world heritage list between the years 1980 and 2006.

Aside from UNESCO, the department works very closely with ICOM, ICOMOS, ICCROM, the Council of Europe, the British Sovereign Bases Administration and the United Nations. To avoid pillage and trafficking of antiquities, we work very closely with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the legal department, the customs department and the cultural heritage office of the Police.

### **Cypriot authorities' efforts to retrieve art works**

The main sources of illicit trafficking are robberies from graves, museums and church monuments in the occupied northern part of the island, and the vandalism that has occurred in parallel with the 1974 war and subsequent occupation. After

1974, despite international treaties, illegal excavations occurred, monuments were destroyed and private collections looted. Some of the most serious and large-scale destructions have occurred in churches and monasteries.

Many artifacts – icons, frescoes and mosaics – have surfaced on the illegal market around the world. We try to achieve the repatriation of these works in cooperation with other governmental agencies and the Cyprus House of Representatives. We also call on international bodies to help save the island's cultural heritage. The Cypriot government is unrelenting in its efforts to repatriate these scattered objects. We are often confronted with complex and lengthy legal proceedings, as was the case of the church at Kanakaria, dating from the 6<sup>th</sup> century, whose mosaics were returned on 30<sup>th</sup> August 1991. A further example: on 10 October 1997 police in Munich arrested a Turk living in Munich in an apartment that contained stolen ecclesiastical treasures, which are currently in the process of being returned. 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> century murals from the Famagusta District, removed in 1984, turned up in the USA. In accordance with the protocol signed in 1992, the Menil Foundation in Texas returned the murals to Cyprus in March 2012. Seeking out and repatriating our antiquities is a never-ending process.

Since 1974, and as a result of efforts made by the Department of Antiquities, Cypriot diplomats stationed in various European countries have succeeded in tracing many antiquities and other objects stolen from the occupied zone: pottery, silver and gold jewelry, statues, and other precious objects dated from the Neolithic period to the 19<sup>th</sup> century, all stolen from the museum in Famagusta, the Kyrenia Shipwreck Museum, the Kyrenia Folk Art museum and from various private collections.

Objects from the Hadjiprodomou collection, a private collection registered with the Department of Antiquities under the terms of the 1973 Act, were transported to France, auctioned in London and others, acquired by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, were returned to their legal owner.

During the period 1974-76, objects from the same collection were confiscated by UK customs at Dover and Harwich, and returned to the government of the Republic of Cyprus. Sixteen artifacts from this collection, including pottery with geometric and figurative patterns, clay and bronze figurines, were repatriated and are now in the Cyprus Museum's collection. Many other objects located in auctions and antique markets in the European capitals have also been returned.

## **The importance of international cooperation and public awareness**

International cooperation is essential if we are to reduce, although probably not stop entirely, the trafficking and transport of antiquities from the occupied part of our country. Locating stolen antiquities is something that we need to develop in order to improve the effectiveness of the repatriation process, working with other countries.

In order to meet this objective, Cyprus signed a memorandum of understanding with the USA in 2002, which was renewed in 2007 and 2012. Similar agreements have also been signed with China, Russia, the antiquities authorities in Israel and Palestine, and Switzerland.

Another extremely important aspect of our work is the actions we undertake to raise awareness among the general public of the importance of saving cultural items. Leaflets and posters in five languages are displayed in museums, hotels, airports, ports and other public spaces, the idea being to prevent illegal trafficking and to increase people's awareness of the importance of preserving our heritage. Other documents have also been produced to address issues surrounding the protection of our underwater heritage.

All these measures that we are constantly undertaking are aimed at the protection and conservation of the natural heritage of the Mediterranean. Mediterranean States should take all necessary measures to establish and finance national units focused specifically on preventing illicit trafficking of antiquities. Also legislation should demand that museums and collections refuse acquisitions of illegally exported cultural objects and accept policies that facilitate repatriation.

### **Prof. Mounir BOUCHENAKI**

Thank you, Doctor Hadjicosti. We salute the work achieved by your country. We have seen examples of the important works that have been victims of this illegal trafficking.

I now hand over to my colleague, Hayet Guettat Guerhazi, Director of Heritage Preservation at ALECSO.

**Dr Hayet GUETTAT GUERMAZI**, *Director of Heritage Preservation at ALECSO*

May I start by presenting greetings from His Excellency Professor Mohamed El Aziz Ben Achour, General Director of the Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization, ALECSO, who was unable to be here today to attend this highly important forum. It is in my capacity as ALECSO's Director of Heritage Preservation that he has given me the great honor of representing him. I must also take this opportunity to address my heartfelt thanks to the organizers of this meeting, and especially to the government of the Republic of Cyprus, our host country, for the warm welcome extended to us on the wonderful island that sits at the crossroads of the history of humanity.

### **Dramatic situations in places such as Jerusalem**

ALECSO, in its role as a specialist intergovernmental organization of the Arab League, has longstanding concerns about the combination of political and social instability that has become a feature of certain Arab countries on the eastern coast of the Mediterranean basin. I would like to briefly mention the alarming situation in Palestine, the west bank of the river Jordan and the occupied territories, the city of Jerusalem, a world heritage site that continues to suffer the grave consequences of the political decision with irreversible consequences, taken by the government of Israel, to Judaize the city by a variety of reprehensible means: destruction of historic quarters, hemming in with a separation wall and poorly organized archeological excavations beneath the Esplanade of the Mosques.

May I at this point also remind you that it is not only stones, monuments and the urban architectural fabric that are endangered; the entire urban culture of tolerance, cohabitation between different beliefs and religions and mutual respect is now under attack and under threat. Neighboring Arab countries too suffer from problems relating to this situation; here I would mention Lebanon and, to a lesser extent, Iraq.

### **ALECSO: providing early warnings and helping to set programmes in place**

ALECSO is well aware that, although it is far beyond its means and remit to hope to indicate the path to a just solution to the question, it is, however, its duty and responsibility to alert public opinion to the dangers facing a heritage that, in the unanimous view of specialists, constitutes one of the jewels of our universal civilization. Against this background, ALECSO has already taken steps to redesign its organization, creating the heritage protection programme in late December 2010. The newly created team is in charge of implementing a range of medium -and long-term projects designed to protect archeological, historical and cultural

heritage. The programme is promoted and incorporated into a process of sustainable development in Arab countries by means of a number of measures including, to name just a few, producing an inventory and computerized records of heritage, training professionals in risk management skills, education, communication and raising awareness of the importance of heritage as a symbol of identity but also as a driver for development, a role that entails a shared responsibility for its protection.

In 2012, the creation of this programme coincided with the events known as the Arab Spring occurring on the opposite shore of the Mediterranean. This spread from Tunisia to Egypt, via Libya, reaching Syria where every day we hear of tremendous human suffering and serious damage to cultural heritage. These recent Arab revolutions did, at times, lead to a state of anarchy that encouraged acts that can only be described as irreparable damage to heritage: plunder of museums, destruction of historic places and scientific, religious and cultural monuments, destruction of books, archives, manuscripts and so forth.

ALECSO, while continuing to condemn and clearly denounce these heritage crimes, added its efforts to those of UNESCO and other international and regional organizations and specialist institutions to play a part in every project or programme intended to protect and restore heritage in at-risk regions.

Ladies and gentlemen, our meeting, under the auspices of the government of Cyprus, the Sovereign Order of Malta, the European Commission and UNESCO, represents an opportunity to invite experts and leaders to put forward proposals and recommendations concerning some of the issues I have mentioned.

I would like to conclude by recalling two principles of utmost importance to ALECSO: first, putting the focus on working together; second, working to encourage decision-makers to take the decisions and measures needed to facilitate the work of cultural heritage professionals and specialists. This is what we tried to do during the recent meeting of Arab Culture Ministers, held in Bahrain on 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> November. Thank you for your attention.

**Prof. Mounir BOUCHENAKI**

Thank you very much for your excellent contribution. We will now hear from Rohit Jigyasu, President of the ICOMOS scientific committee.



**Prof. Rohit JIGYASU**, *President of ICORP, the International Committee on Risk Preparedness of ICOMOS*

As highlighted by the previous speakers, cultural heritage is increasingly a victim of natural disasters. Climate change has altered the amplitude and frequency of climate-related incidents and poses ever greater risks to cultural heritage, especially in coastal areas. These incidents are increasingly complex and can no longer be considered as isolated incidents, such as a flood or earthquake.

### **How best to organize against the risks to cultural heritage?**

It is a fact that ill-conceived development plays a major role in exposing cultural heritage to danger. It is important to closely examine the links to development.

Paradoxically, heritage is even more vulnerable during the period that follows a natural disaster, as demolitions occur without proper forethought and in an absence of clear guidelines for the agencies immediately charged with identifying appropriate solutions.

Because of the scale of these challenges, it is no longer enough for specialists simply to talk among themselves. Reducing the risks faced by cultural heritage requires us to ensure that this issue is addressed as part of an expanded disaster preparedness checklist. This requires reinforcement of the links between heritage and risk management professionals. This entails making provision for cultural heritage within a wider political framework and a planned approach to risk reduction and sustainability. During the reconstruction phase, there is a need for enhanced coordination between organizations responsible for managing cultural heritage and humanitarian aid agencies; sadly, this is not the case at present. Agencies delivering humanitarian assistance often have little coordination with cultural heritage managers.

I must mention here the work of the late Professor Herb Stovel, a specialist in cultural heritage risk preparedness and an important member of ICCROM, who died recently. His position was that the most important factor in reducing the risk of loss was to include heritage within the command chain, to make sure that protocols were in place, that every community should designate a body to take charge of preserving cultural heritage in the immediate aftermath of a disaster. Cultural heritage protection has to be integrated within the chain of command.

## **Cultural heritage, a force for resilience: Geneva, May 2013**

We often hear critical voices protesting that when human lives are at risk it is not the time to worry about preserving cultural heritage. However, it remains important to understand that cultural heritage is not only a victim of disasters; it can also be a force to strengthen community resilience. This is an aspect that needs to be stressed. There are innumerable examples of the role of cultural heritage in structuring traditional knowledge, in indigenous territorial management and organizational systems and social networks, all of which plays a significant role in reducing the risks of natural disasters.

In order to raise awareness of this issue and develop the broadest possible community of risk-reduction specialists tasked with protecting cultural heritage, ICOMOS, via its scientific committee and in partnership with UNESCO and ICCROM, is staging a special session on resilience and cultural heritage, which will be held during the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in Geneva, in May 2013<sup>6</sup>, an event organized by the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. For the first time heritage will be listed as one of the major topics on the agenda for a meeting of the risk reduction experts' community. I would like to invite the participants and institutions represented at this forum to join in this initiative.

ICOMOS-ICORP, via its members representing 50 institutions from 25 countries, is ready to undertake scientific studies and develop tools and guidelines, working in collaboration with institutions such as ICCROM and ICOM.

We are currently working on an initiative to develop practical training for heritage managers to help them safeguard cultural heritage during difficult times. This is a major challenge, but we must persevere.

### **Prof. Mounir BOUCHENAKI**

Thank you for setting out these important points that you develop at the UNESCO World Heritage Centre. A book has already been published on prevention where necessary. We will now hear from Julien Anfruns.

6 - <http://www.preventionweb.net/globalplatform/2013/>

**Julien ANFRUNS**, *General Director of ICOM, President of the International Committee of the Blue Shield*

I would like to comment on some of links between the themes raised by the speakers.

Christian Manhart underlined the legal arsenal established via a range of international conventions, 1954, 1970, 1972 and 1995 – even though the latter is not widely ratified – conventions that provide a background to the topics touched upon during this first session, notably the impact of armed conflicts and natural disasters. But these are only partial and fail to resolve all the points under discussion.

Hence the second tier that takes the form of intergovernmental dialogue, mainly within UNESCO, but also within ALESCO for regional intergovernmental organizations, vital actors in resolving problems of this type point by point.

The third tier: implementation. This is the area that I wish to address. The International Committee of the Blue Shield, in accordance with the 1954 convention, sees itself as a form of Red Cross for heritage in terms of monitoring, and responses (doubtless one of the weaknesses at present: how to respond rapidly to an armed conflict or natural disaster in heritage terms?), as well as various missions concerned with assessment and restoration. The same applies to ICOM: one of the consequences of armed conflict is the trafficking of art works, as illustrated by our colleague from Cyprus. All the work carried out with police forces around the world, Interpol especially, as well as the ICOM Red Lists of categories of art works at risk in various countries around the world is a vital part of working for their return.

### **Six concrete issues that need to be raised**

- 1. What about preparedness?** When an armed conflict or natural disaster occurs, if we have failed to prepare then we can only watch helplessly. Today, fighting is going on around major cultural sites at Palmyra, Krak des Chevaliers and Bosra. These sites are unprotected, unlike in Libya. We are relatively powerless in the absence of documentation, photographs and inventories. A major part of what we can do in this regard is to have a preparedness and prevention programme, providing training to professionals and other participants. This is essential. An example: the American Blue Shield committee set up a partnership with the US Department of Defense that meant that all troops heading to Iraq and Afghanistan received information about risks to cultural heritage.

2. **What levers to use?** Protection is clearly important, but is it always easy? In the Libyan case, we were able to provide NATO with geolocation data for all sites in need of protection. Strikes were surgical, and we sent two missions to confirm this. The system worked in this case because NATO is a grouping of democracies receptive to this issue. In the Syrian case there are no similarly easy levers available, and we are dependent on meticulous geopolitical analysis of specific locations. There is no comparison possible between the two cases.
3. **How to organize?** From an international perspective, methods certainly require improvement. All too often we act after a crisis. Take Haiti for example: lots of emotion, then stakeholder conferences, and time keeps passing... One year on, and we are beginning to see possibilities for taking action. In fact, for crisis-related issues such as these, and exactly because it is crisis we're talking about, you have to be prepared for a crisis that hasn't occurred. When a new crisis hits, we prepare for the next one, including in financial terms. For all the subjects covered by stakeholder conferences, we need to work on creating funds for fast action on a rotating basis, not only for problems on the ground but also for the credibility of these actions. Here we are at the heart of the emergency response issue.
4. **Funding?** Never enough. In Haiti, of every 2,000 dollars spent, just one dollar goes to culture. There are issues of proportionality to bear in mind in sectors where there is more than just one problem: there are health problems, economic problems, infrastructure problems, so culture is just one of a number of priorities.
5. **Post-conflict situations.** Mostar was mentioned earlier. Today, the Dayton Accords have created an institutional architecture that relies on a very speedy rotation of executive powers. If you take this and apply it strictly to the cultural field alone, cultural institutions become impossible to manage. In Sarajevo today, eight museums have recently closed. So heritage is not always preserved, even once the fighting ceases. This is a real problem: what happens next?
6. **Finally, what choices to make?** Restoration always arrives at the head of the list. Dresden was rebuilt, as was the bridge at Mostar. But there also exist situations identifiable by an absence. In the case of the niches formerly occupied by the Bamyian Buddhas, perhaps – and this is where the choice currently lies – it will be an absence that best bears witness to the unspeakable nature of attacks against culture.

## **Prof. Mounir BOUCHENAKI**

Thank you for the concise manner in which you have summed up the problems under discussion during this round table; we have listened closely to details of the particular situation in Cyprus, along with the experiences in the Arab world, as described to us by Doctor Guettat Guermazi, as well as hearing of UNESCO's international actions working through normative regulations and operational actions. We now have time for a short debate and some comments.

## **Prof. Michel Veuthey**, *Vice-President of the International Institute of Humanitarian Law*

There are two points I would like to raise.

- One example of cultural heritage as a mechanism for reconciliation is the church in Dresden Frauenkirche, destroyed by Anglo-American bombing in 1945 and restored thanks to donations from America and Great Britain, including the Duke of Kent. This is a good example of an informal yet effective gesture that helped to build reconciliation.
- I would be very keen to discuss matters further with the president of the Blue Shield. The ICRC has carried out numerous tests into identifying levers for action. One of these is the use of satellite images. The UNOSAT programme developed by UNITAR is an instrument that could be used to monitor cultural monuments and send an alert if they are threatened with destruction. It would, of course, be necessary, in both national and international conflicts, to identify those who would be able to exert influence over state and non-state actors.

## **Christian MANHART**

Dresden is a very good example of the point I was trying to make.

## **Julien ANFRUNS**

Thank you for your comments about satellite imagery.

## **The importance of satellite imagery**

In cases where it is impossible to send a mission, as is currently the case in Syria, it is extremely useful to collect and monitor satellite images. This is why, just over one year ago, I initiated contacts with UNOSAT. A trial project is already underway for Syria, enabling at-risk zones to be surveyed at the same quality as is available to the military. But this comes at a price, since UNOSAT is run on a self-financing model, although the cost is relatively low when set against the capacity to provide data on these issues that might turn out to be of international public value given that the world's foreign ministries are not necessarily equipped to provide the ability to analyze the status of at-risk heritage sites.

### **Prof. Mounir BOUCHENAKI**

I'd like to add to what Julien has said by reminding you all that satellite images were taken of the pyramid plateau in 2009 and 2011. The visible differences are the result of illegal excavations at the site. In Syria, we know through our contacts that major clandestine excavations are taking place right now, and that artifacts have already left the country. On Monday, I attended a meeting organized by the Italian foreign ministry and chaired by its General Director, Ambassador Melani, which will be attended by Italy's ex-ambassador to Syria as well as the heads of Italian archeological missions to Syria. Each of these academics has contacts with Syrian partners and site managers. They unanimously described the situation as catastrophic, saying that neighboring states must be asked to strengthen border surveillance to halt the outward flow of objects.

Something along these lines occurred during the Iraq war, when with Interpol's help we sent a circular to all Iraq's neighbors, which achieved some positive results. For example, the Jordanians seized over 2,000 stolen artifacts at the frontier that came from either illegal excavations or were looted from Iraqi museums.

### **His Grace CHRISTOFOROS**, *Bishop of Karpas, representing His Beatitude Chrysostomos II, Archbishop of Cyprus*

I'd like to mention education. All our leaders and you, the leading organizations, know that the situation is critical. It's the same as with climate change, the specialists are convinced, but as for the wider public, a massive effort is needed to spread these new ideas.

## **Prof. Mounir BOUCHENAKI**

I will answer in the name of Professor Stefano de Caro, my successor at ICCROM. This is a theme we were working on together just last week. Aided by the Italian Ministry of Culture, we have launched a course entitled First Aid for Cultural Heritage in Conflict Situations, offered in association with the Sapienza University of Rome. Similarly, at UNESCO, working with the University of Seville, we have established the University Heritage universities group, which now boasts over 200 member universities.

### **The need for an emergency fund**

Awareness of this need is very real among experts, who tend to be professors of architecture, art history and archeology. The problem is that, when we have to intervene, we also must have the means. But state budgets allocated to their culture ministries have absolutely no provision for unplanned events. This is something we at UNESCO have been aware of on a number of occasions. We need to find a way to create an emergency fund that would enable universities and others with appropriate conservation and protection skills to intervene when necessary.

## **Kelia Koskeliakou**

I represent Cyprus' green parties and I would like to congratulate you for the initiative in holding this forum. We hope that its conclusions will be published, so that Cypriots will find out about what is going on here in Cyprus, as well as elsewhere in the world.

We were intrigued by what Julien Anfruns had to say: how can we attempt to anticipate what might occur in another country? My question concerns the creation of what I will call, to borrow a military phrase, a Blue Shield task force. One week ago I was in Jerusalem, at the invitation of the Palestinians, to commemorate the 5-year anniversary of Arafat's death. There were rockets and explosions; we had no idea what was going on. How can we predict what may happen?

## **Julien ANFRUNS**

We can't predict events such as those you describe. But what we can do is ensure that we have a broad-based preparedness network. This means relying on various committees, including the Blue Shield, that maintain a local network in a range of

countries. Then, you need to have a corps of qualified volunteers ready for action, as well as a projection capability similar to an army's, in order to visit multiple sites. In any given year, we may need to respond to eight armed conflicts or natural disasters. With an organization like this in place, ready for when a crisis arises, we can react. There are, of course, a number of hot spots around the world that must be closely watched.

### **Prof. Mounir BOUCHENAKI**

Jerusalem is a listed World Heritage site, and it is also on the Heritage in danger list. These problems, and any actions taken, are something that we discuss at every meeting of UNESCO's World Heritage Committee or Executive Committee. But it remains true that, in times of crisis such as today, UNESCO has not been able to be present on the ground, as is necessary.

### **Dr Asma-Hoda Kassatly, Saint Joseph University, Beirut**

I wish to speak about the Lebanese experience. I think that we have a consensus about preservation of heritage and religious artifacts. But there are other aspects of cultural life, such as architectural heritage, where the ravages of the post-conflict period are far greater than those of the war itself. This is Lebanon's situation. No effort was made to raise awareness of the importance of preserving our cultural heritage. It was urgent to rebuild fast and to meet vital needs. And we forgot about our architectural heritage. The consequences for the city are felt today in the phenomenon of gentrification that is in the process of creating a social crisis in Beirut.

### **Prof. Mounir BOUCHENAKI**

Thank you for sharing your experience. We organized missions to Lebanon in the immediate aftermath of the Taif Agreement, and then reconstruction commenced. You are correct, we encountered several problems. At the request of one of the ministers for culture, and especially Michel Eddé, I set up a commission of experts including leading figures such as Professors Laronde and Weiss among others, who worked with the Lebanese Department of Antiquities to ensure that the destruction, of the city centre in particular, would serve to reveal ruins of great importance. We found a previously unseen Phoenician wall in Beirut. However, there was a great deal of reconstruction going on at the same time, much of it driven by the Solidere company. I was called personally to appear before the



parliament to explain why we wanted to retain these ruins, while continuing, of course, to rebuild so that life could resume in the centre of Beirut.

**H.E. Pierre MOREL**, *Former French Ambassador*

We have all seen how in recent years, especially at UNESCO, a culture of crisis management has emerged, bringing with it its own tools and limitations. Progress in this area has been relatively swift, and it is interesting to see UNESCO and all its various branches adopting processes similar to those of political organizations such as the UN, EU, and NATO and so on. There is a way to learn from crises that makes it possible to then create structures we had not originally foreseen. Regarding rapid deployment, this is something important that the EU has successfully driven, creating a civilian crisis management capacity.

I am convinced that we should be sharing expertise between organizations, drawing up beforehand lists of experts and teams able to deploy at short notice, each country committing itself to make them available within one to two weeks, with the appropriate resources, including vehicles; for we are not just talking about people, there is an entire logistics chain that has to follow. These are the reflexes that we need to develop so that, where previously it took 6 months to negotiate a force of UN peacekeepers, we are now able to mobilize three or four hundred people within four weeks. I've seen this happen. You don't perhaps realize it when you start the process, but it is possible.

Post-conflict management is of equal importance. We all know how the news cycle focuses on a specific crisis, then moves on to the next one, whereas, as we've seen, the damage after a conflict or a disaster can be as great as anything that occurred during the event itself.

**Prof. Mounir BOUCHENAKI**

Thank you very much Ambassador Morel. I should like to draw your attention to the fact that over twenty years ago a Belgium proposal led to meetings being held to examine the question of adding cultural heritage protection missions to the peace-keeping mandate of UN forces. This proved very hard to introduce in any systematic manner, although there are many examples of successful implementation. In Cambodia, UN forces helped with mine clearance in temples, and assisted missions to identify rehabilitation projects; the same occurred in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Sadly, we are powerless in the face of a conflict such as that in Syria. It is no secret that Irina Bokobva has held two or three meetings at UNESCO attended by all the bodies I mentioned earlier. She asked me to lead a mission in Syria. I have the visa in my passport, but we do not currently have the safety assurances needed to make travel to the country possible. There are situations where it is necessary to appeal in advance to any authority able to provide logistical and security support. There have sadly been two recent crises, in Yemen and Syria, where no organizations, neither UNESCO nor any NGOs, have been able to intervene.

**H.E. Jean-Pierre MAZERY**

Thank you all for your contributions, and especially to our facilitator Professor Bouchenaki.



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**ROUND TABLE 2:  
NEW PERSPECTIVES FOR CULTURAL  
HERITAGE IN THE LIGHT OF THE ARAB SPRING**

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**Sir Paul DUJARDIN**, moderator, General Director of the Centre for Fine Arts, Brussels

Thank you Jean-Pierre Mazery. And I would like to thank the Republic of Cyprus, which has assumed presidency of the EU for this six-month period and is our host for this meeting.

Time is passing quickly and nearly two years have gone by since the Arab Spring was set in motion. Has the Arab Spring opened up new prospects for the issue of cultural heritage that concerns us today?

Speakers for this round table will be:

- **Mona Khazindar**, General Director of the Institut du Monde Arabe in Paris and its former Contemporary Art Director;
- **His Excellence James Moran**, Ambassador and Head of the European Union Delegation to the Arab Republic of Egypt;
- **His Excellence Frédéric Grasset**, Ambassador of the Sovereign Order of Malta to the Kingdom of Morocco, former Ambassador of France;
- and **Prof. Mounir Bouchenaki**, Advisor to UNESCO and former General Director of ICCROM.

I would like to briefly introduce our debate. Cultural heritage is essential in understanding identity. In this context, the Arab awakening has triggered vast political, social and economic changes in these countries. It has helped citizens to better express their identities and understand their role in a globalised world.

### **The challenges currently facing cultural heritage in Arab countries**

Paradoxically, cultural heritage, as one of the main elements in helping citizens recognize and understand their identity and their place in the world down through the centuries, is subject to risks and challenges.

Even if there is reason to be hopeful, cultural heritage in the Mediterranean region has remained comparatively unexploited, despite the added economic value for society, Arab citizens and the development of tourism. The archaeological and cultural heritage in the Mediterranean is unique in its richness and abundance. We all know that cultural heritage in the Arab world is now facing a period of uncertainty. Archaeological sites, libraries and museums in Iraq, Egypt and Syria are unprotected

and lack effective management. In Syria, the impact of the civil war is visible in the historic town of Aleppo and the medieval Krak des Chevaliers castle. Twenty-five of the country's museums are vulnerable to plunder. And I hardly need remind you of the situation facing Sufi holy places and Mali's mosques.

At the same time, when a country returns to relative stability a fairly stable state we have every reason to be hopeful. In Iraq, almost 9,000 objets d'art have been returned to their owners thanks to the UN resolution and efforts undertaken by Washington. And how encouraging it was to see Egyptian citizens spontaneously gather in the streets and on social networks to collect the archives that were scattered by the wind, having escaped from the fire at the Institut d'Egypte, an establishment founded by Napoleon Bonaparte!

In the light of these few examples, we can see that the Arab Spring has created a number of challenges for cultural heritage. These challenges include the need to provide support to staff at public administrations and cultural organizations and help in preventing illegal trafficking, repatriating works of art, documentation, developing collections and involving the public, the importance of mapping and documenting cultural heritage sites and museum collections, the need to raise the visibility of these objets d'art and sites for the countries' citizens, and the international community's role in supporting the Arab Spring process. The list of challenges is long...

### **« Bozar » in Brussels: a broad intercultural range**

The Centre for Fine Arts in Brussels<sup>7</sup>, known as Bozar, has portrayed the Arab world and Mediterranean world with a range of major cultural and intellectual events. The Mediterranean Arab world, neighbouring Europe, is a key region, not only because of its diverse cultural history, but also on a political and economic level.

As a Belgian, European and even international cultural centre, Bozar has been focusing on multi-lateral projects since 2002, involving high quality international partners with whom we work hand in hand. The field of activities has expanded to cover a wide range of artistic disciplines, including cultural heritage. One of our recent projects in this area was the open air exhibition, Visionary Africa: Art at work, presented this year at the Al Azar Park in Cairo in cooperation with the European Commission and local contemporary art centres such as Darb 1718.

These challenges require international cooperation to explore new directions in the sphere of cultural heritage and to support the main operators in the Arab world, from civil society to decision-makers. It is essential for the entire region to be able to conserve

7 - <http://www.bozar.be/home.php?>

its collective memory and make it visible to all its citizens and the rest of the world. This also raises the question of how to ensure that the Arab Spring does not only benefit Arab citizens but, more generally, also serves the rich cultural heritage that has had a profound effect on all civilisations over the centuries.

### **Elements to be included in our declaration: education, training, exchanges**

I feel that the difference between large international institutions and the Centre for Fine Arts is the platform element. Since our goal today is to finalize our declaration, the elements that I personally would like to add concern primarily the presentation and mobility of works. When France created AWI over 25 years ago, the project featured three major elements: a platform element, an educational element and a communications element. These are the three elements we should add to our programme for raising awareness among the international community.

- It would be useful to discuss the education of the middle classes in the Arab world, the people who work hard and for whom it could represent a benefit. This is a new community we see emerging in China, South Korea and the BRICS countries, marked by its respect for the authorities and cultural heritage.
- One aspect of educating the middle class is the education of its youngest members. We know that a third of the population is young, that in Cairo 250,000 students attend university. This is the concept behind Erasmus, based on promoting exchanges and mutual learning of cultures and of the roots shared by the north and the south of the Mediterranean world.
- Another element for discussion should be the education of international civil society that visits these countries, both for tourism and business purposes, to promote respect for cultural heritage and, with the support of diplomats and politicians, dialogue between cultural sectors and the new regime.
- The protection and promotion of the cultural heritage of minorities is another element we should take into account.
- I would also like to see how cultural heritage could be maintained and made more visible to citizens. Here again, we need education and training. We know what the challenges are in this area, and perhaps Professor Bouchenaki will be able to give us some answers on the education, training and lifelong learning of these communities that need to save their cultural heritage.



- A major theme of our discussion concerns exchanges, the fellowships and visas that allow people to come to universities to study archaeology and history. It is important not to be limited to archaeology but also to study modern history in order to get a better grasp of relations in today's world. I have seen the plan for a new museum in France, in Marseilles, where the idea is to see what is being done in other areas of the world where tensions exist, such as Korea, the Balkans and the Black Sea, in order to carry out a benchmarking exercise.
- My own experience of Cyprus, with an exhibition that we organized in Brussels, concerns shared narrative. Usually we only consider works and their protection, but to attract the interest of civil society we need a narrative. That is what we have done with the exhibition currently at the Louvre. We stressed the universality of 12<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> century icons, based, of course, on their beauty, but also on the importance of our shared history during the Crusades and the cultural dialogue between the different religious communities of the Mediterranean. We placed it in contemporary context. The educational approach to presenting cultural heritage is important for both shores of the Mediterranean.
- It would be useful to introduce into our discussion the ethnic question raised by cultural heritage. This is not a question we always ask ourselves in the world of art. It is particularly important when we compare contemporary art and cultural heritage. We know that, including the Balkans and the various Turkish communities, we now have 25 million Muslims in Europe; some of these roots are shared with Christians and other communities..
- The platforms provided by the AWI and Bozar have twenty-five and eight years of interdisciplinarity respectively. I have not heard this term used in our discussions. We need to bring together people with different skills to take cultural heritage to another level and onto a platform. The platform provided by museums is useful not only in showcasing but also understanding our shared images. In the last exhibition at the Metropolitan six months ago on Coptic art and Islamic art during the Coptic period, it was interesting to see all the iconographic bridges and realize that the same story was being told. Building bridges between different organizations in Europe is an important element of cooperation.

### ... **Budget, multilateralism, new actors ...**

- The European summit in Brussels tomorrow will be discussing the EU budget. How will the budget be used to protect cultural heritage in neighbouring countries in the south? It will be a huge challenge. And it will be vital to lobby

the EU for continued support of the work in progress. These are questions for our colleagues who represent the EU here. The economic crisis is exacerbating the risks: the question of solidarity arises. There is of course the Arab Spring, but since it is already difficult for us to maintain our cultural heritage in good condition in the EU's southern countries, how will we manage it in the Arab countries? A major challenge is facing the European Union in its efforts to provide support.

- Diplomacy tends to be multilateral rather than bilateral. But in Arab countries, we are seeing mainly bilateral relations – British, German, French and so on. We need to bring people together as part of a more multilateral approach, to build bridges and do so locally in order to create greater solidarity between European organizations in each country as part of their field work. One problem is that each organization initiates its own actions and there is no collective strategy.
- New local powers are emerging forcefully in the wake of the Arab Spring. New museums, new collectors and new markets are emerging from Doha to Abu Dhabi and Dubai and increasingly collecting works. One issue is knowing whether this is a positive or negative factor for cultural heritage. We have just inaugurated an exhibition in Doha, on Friday, which features major works from museums in the Mediterranean world. The AWI and Bozar are working together on a major research programme. Twenty years ago, it would have been unimaginable. It is therefore important to assess the influence of the Middle East and new actors like the Emirates.

### **...Information, communication, democracy...**

- And then we need to be better informed. There are too many things we know nothing about. We need statistical data. When you are informed, you also have the power to act.
- Communications and the media are very important. How can the two communities communicate? In my view, the President of Egypt recently made the right sort of gesture. When he came to Brussels, he gave each president three books: one on archaeology, one on Coptic culture and one on Arab culture. It created a different perception. It could be a good start for cultural dialogue between the different Mediterranean communities.

- How can cultural industries, the new paradigm that we are defending in Europe, function?
- And last but not least, having listened to the European Commission President's speech on the State of the Union, is inclusion of the Mediterranean citizen. To what extent are citizens responsible for their actions? What effect can intellectuals, teachers, and artists on cultural heritage, working alongside the organizations represented here? How can we work with communities from the bottom up? It is a means of building democracy, and this is certainly an area where Europe is currently setting the pace.

I would like to conclude with the words the President of the Commission pronounced at Tripoli in December 2010: "You need to go quickly when there is danger, but if you want to go far, go together." This African proverb could be an element in our panel's discussions. We need to work together for the situation to change.

**Mona KHAZINDAR**, *moderator, General Director of the Institut du Monde Arabe, Paris*

First of all I wish to thank the Republic of Cyprus, the Sovereign Order of Malta, the European Union and Unesco for inviting me. I will speak about the Institut du Monde Arabe, and I will not go into the details on the effects on cultural heritage of events that occurred during the Arab spring in Tunisia, Egypt, Yemen and so forth.

### **The main lines of the Institut du Monde Arabe's work**

The Institut du Monde Arabe is an institution with the aim of promoting and popularizing the heritage as well as the culture, language and arts of the Arab world. We are an interdisciplinary institute, which is the result of a co-foundation between France and the countries of the Arab League. We endeavour to represent the past and the present and to anticipate the future. As in any area of civilization, there is continuity between past and present. I will mention but a few examples to emphasize that, in the Arab world, continuity with our past is essential, and this fully justifies the preservation of our cultural heritage.

The teams of the Institut du Monde Arabe work along different lines and on various aspects of our heritage.

- **To begin with, there is the museum**, whose collection is still quite modest; I wish to point out in this regard that the Institute was established at the beginning of the 1980s and that its main vocation was the presentation of the French

national collections of Islamic art, which at that time were poorly showcased in the relevant museums, completed by an ethnographical approach to Arab societies (a novelty at that time) and an introduction to contemporary Arab creativity. In 1995, a new programme was launched under the title “a museum of Arab museums” with the ambition of showing Paris the richness of the Arab world’s heritage through various works chosen in tandem with persons in charge of the on-site collections. The works were selected primarily among those kept in the museums’ stocks, so as not to deprive them of their masterpieces. In 2008, the decision was taken to proceed to a reorganization of the Institut du Monde Arabe’s museum by posing the question of its pertinence within this institution. The project was implemented with the goal of highlighting the great variety of the ethnic, linguistic, religious, cultural and heritage variety that through the ages contributed to the formation of an Arab identity. On this occasion, we requested and obtained the loan of artworks for a term of four to five years from various Arab countries: Tunisia, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Syria, Jordan and in the near future Yemen generously contributed to the museum’s new programme. The AWI will make a point of restoring and documenting as precisely as possible each work received, (particularly with detailed photographs). In this way we will contribute, albeit modestly, to an inventory of the Arab world’s artworks.

- **Our second field of work is education.** The Institute has a duty to those Arab countries that lend us their works of art, as it commits to training professionals. Interns of the museums or heritage departments are welcomed as trainees in the various departments of the Institute where they spend a few months.
- **A third line of the studies regarding the heritage of the Arab world,** on which we are currently working, is the website “Qantara”<sup>8</sup>, Mediterranean heritage, Eastern and Western crossings”. This project was developed in the framework of the Euromed Heritage programme financed by the European Union. The website, which is constantly augmented, came into being through the active cooperation of the partner countries, including: Algeria, Jordan, Morocco, Tunisia, Lebanon, Egypt, Syria and Spain. It promotes intercultural dialogue and makes an inventory of the cultural heritage covering the whole region around the Mediterranean Sea. Over 1500 entries are documented with texts, images (fixed and animated), charts and other data provided by experts in various fields: historians, art historians, archaeologists, etc. You can find the site on the Internet<sup>9</sup>.

8 - Qantara means “bridges” in Arabic.

9 - [http://www.qantara-med.org/qantara4/index.php#/em\\_3\\_28](http://www.qantara-med.org/qantara4/index.php#/em_3_28).

I wish to insist on the continuity that must be developed between the historical heritage and contemporary artistic creation. This is of special importance to our museum, which has adopted a thematic rather than chronological approach in order to present an overview of Arab civilization. The genesis of Arab identity in its geographical birthplace, i.e. the Arab peninsula, the relationship to religion and images of the divine, the Arab city in its functions and organization, the expression of beauty, the relation to the body and others through the values of hospitality - these are the five stages of the museum's itinerary covering a floor area of 2000 square meters. The showcases display objects and works of different areas and epochs: archaeology, medieval art, ethnography, modern and contemporary artworks in dialogue with each other and thus presenting a thought, a philosophy, a notion of Arab civilization, which has never stopped developing through the ages. For instance, in the area exploring the relations between the Arabs and the sea around them, the archaeological evidence of the Dilmun culture is shown side by side with the tools used by pearl divers of the past century and with the work of a contemporary Yemenite artist, Fuad al-Futaih - *The Fisherman* -, which makes reference to the many legends told along the coasts of the peninsula, a crossroad of exchanges. Ongoing bonds with the past are required to understand one's present and outline the future.

Cooperation remains an essential aspect and is mutually profitable for all those involved. Institutions and the entire scientific community must work together to encourage exchange of know-how, professional training concerning preservation of artworks and the safekeeping of our countries' cultural heritage. This kind of international cooperation is all the more necessary since it is the basis for the actions of the World Heritage Committee. Thank you for your attention.

### **Sir Paul DUJARDIN**

Thank you for your presentation of intercultural dialogue rooted in a contemporary viewpoint.

### **H.E. James MORAN**, *Ambassador and Head of the European Union Delegation to the Arab Republic of Egypt*

The European Union sets great store by diversity and promotes dialogue at every level, particularly the cultural level, and the respect of cultural diversity is integral to the values we hold dear. This is something we have tested during these times of great upheaval in the Arab world. Since the Barcelona process was launched in 2005, we have constantly promoted cooperation in the field of cultural heritage.

This concern can be seen at the highest level of our dialogue. President Barroso discussed this theme a few months ago. This is not unusual; every year there are several examples of how seriously the subject is taken, including on the political level. The theme of cultural heritage is part and parcel of cultural cooperation and our relations with our Mediterranean partners.

The current situation throws up a number of challenges and a great many dangers, but it also offers an opportunity as far as cooperation is concerned. In the Middle East, in the medium term, once the dangers have receded, maybe we will be able to take a new approach in this domain, a more long-lasting approach than in the past.

### **Strengthening dialogue and raising awareness among new emerging powers**

We have increased cooperation with, in particular, countries that have experienced the Arab Spring. We have created a series of task forces (not to be confused with military task forces) in Tunisia and Jordan. Last week there was a similar event in Egypt, very ambitious, on political and economic questions as well as cultural cooperation, particularly in terms of its links with the economy. We believe that it is vital in this context to strengthen dialogue. It is especially important to take cooperation with emerging authorities and political powers to a new level.

I have the feeling that the tendency in Egypt is to describe the situation as business as usual. But naturally, it is not business as usual. What we are seeing is a major political upheaval and, in some countries, rebuilding of the bureaucracy, including ministries for antiquities – but they are working in a vacuum. We need to cover all the different aspects if we are to create authentic dialogue with the new authorities, and we are trying to do so at our level. But I think we need to do more. In the Egyptian context, maybe the international community needs to put more effort than in the past into involving the Islamists in dialogue.

### **Heritage under threat, tourism under collapse**

The situation is highly fragile. This dissociation between political power and bureaucracy affects all aspects of the transition. It is a constraint that I feel is very much underestimated. Apart from the construction of democracy, this specific problem will haunt the new authorities, and ourselves, for many years to come, and it is important to understand this.

You have previously mentioned the dangers facing cultural heritage. In 2011, I was in Libya to set up the EU mission. I visited two or three sites including Leptis Magna. It was very alarming to see to what extent heritage had been neglected. That was, of course, during the Gaddafi era, but it seemed to have gotten worse. The sites were totally open. A few months before, no one had really been taking this heritage into account. It seemed that very little had been done to keep these cultural goods safe.

The national and international media convey very negative images. This is terribly worrying, since it affects tourism – the interface between cultural heritage and tourism is well known. The worrying security situation created by events has had an enormous impact on tourism, particularly archaeological tourism. Louqsor, Assouan and so on have been badly affected over the last two years.

The already fragile public services that should be protecting these magnificent sites are under enormous pressure. Income is low, bureaucracy, already suffering from lack of funds, is even less well funded. A whole range of dangers are springing up. This is not an easy situation to solve, but it is a situation we need to be aware of.

### **The added value of our responses and our partnerships**

What responses can we offer? We have been adopting different approaches for several years now. The EU Euromed Heritage programme is an excellent example of what we need to do. But the 2005 programme is coming to an end in 2013. We can only hope that Euromed Heritage will be included in the next programming period. But I do not want to enter into a discussion of European finances, a discussion likely to be very long. The fact is that it will be increasingly difficult to find the funds for external actions. From this viewpoint, I think that programmes for the Mediterranean region will certainly enjoy the most protection, for obvious reasons; however, within these programmes, cooperation and cultural heritage will be areas where more cutbacks are made than in the past. On the other hand, it could be said that we do not do enough. We can see that this is a whole area for debate.

In a situation of this kind, we need to focus on demonstrating the added value that this type of partnership can produce. We have many examples of such value and it is important to make them visible. The declaration that we will be adopting tomorrow may serve to attract attention and help us. This is important for us and could have a positive result.

We run other programmes. The Anna Lindh foundation, located in Alexandria, does a good job. Without going into detail, I would like to tell Paul Dujardin, who mentioned young people, that the foundation's Young Arab Voices programme in Egypt

and now in Morocco is doing a great job. There are also cultural aspects and we are going to step up our funding.

We run other regional programmes and bilateral partnerships. We have just agreed to 21 million euros of funding in Algeria for cultural heritage protection.

I would like to stress the fact that it is very important for the future to clearly show the added value of such partnerships. I know that everyone in this room is convinced of this, but there are many other people out there who need convincing.

I therefore have two messages.

1. Firstly, as regards dialogue and involvement: let us make every possible effort to fully involve the new emerging authorities in these countries, in Egypt and Tunisia and other countries where people have been isolated for so long, but where full participation is necessary for the future.
2. We need to do our best to show to what extent this type of partnership is beneficial. Thank you.

### **Sir Paul DUJARDIN**

Thank you for having contributed these elements. Recent figures from Egypt indicate that income in the tourist sector has dropped by 2 billion US dollars. If we want to protect living cultural heritage, what role can Europe play? A declaration could have a degree of importance, but also some added value, the return on investment that is not always mentioned. Not many economists talk about it because there are many other areas where investments can be made. And it is value that counts more than return on investment. It is a very sensitive topic. We need to invest in the Mediterranean world and not only for economic reasons.

**H.E. Frédéric GRASSET**, *Ambassador of the Sovereign Order of Malta to the Kingdom of Morocco, Former Ambassador of France*

### **New perspectives for cultural heritage in the light of the Arab Spring**

Having the honor to represent the Sovereign Order of Malta in the Kingdom of Morocco, I shall take from this experience the opportunity to focus on the Moroccan ways to deal since a long time with the sensitive but essential issues of the time being.



## **Arab Spring**

When observed from Rabat, “Maghrib al Aqsa”, the boiling Arab Islamic world, one is struck by the similitude of backgrounds and the diversity of outcomes, but falls short of emphasizing a so-called Arab Spring.

What appears is more the resurgence of an old stream of powerful underground ferments. An isolated island, an erupting volcano, do not appear suddenly. Everyone bears the intuition that these powerful and seasoned forces create a new world. But nobody knows where will stand the balance, the center of gravity between tradition and modernism, furthermore between Islamic inspired political parties and political formations based on secularism.

Was Morocco better prepared to dodge the storm that struck neighboring Algeria in 1990, followed by the old “Ifriquia” (Tunisia, Libya), Egypt, beacon of the Arab world, before reaching Damascus in the very heart of the Machrek.

Not even mentioning the Iranian Islamic evolution and more recent Iraqi turmoil. A long chain of events unwinding as the burn out of discredited outworn regimes was coming to light. By contrast, Morocco reaps the benefits of an old monarchy renewing its course, vision, and purpose after a long authoritarian period, though endangered by the same pitfalls plaguing the Middle East.

A successful transition flourishing perhaps on the strong roots of a multi-faceted Islam, alive in cities as in the countryside, nurtured in glowing places of Muslim culture (Kerouan, Cordoba, Fes) and also expressed by mystical brotherhoods. The monarchy was born from this historical compromise, and shelters it today, weaving all the threads of that special fabric.

A successful transition also because the pride of an old nation is strengthened by the revolving replacement of Moroccan Elite wisely connected with changes and world motion previously imported by colonial exposure, now engineered by the Moroccans themselves. This connection with the outside world is the key of the future, and wisely managed to avoid blockage and decline.

Morocco has built a complex network of relations with Africa, the Arab world, the West, and a particularly strong partnership with Europe, displaying on the whole a fine array of supports and alliances.

Successful transition at last, because the country is fully aware of its economic weakness and the burdens of social miseries. So far, a consensus exists. This could be described under the following terms: Going forward, to avoid regression, continuous absorption of claims, self-assertion to fight criticism.

With scarce natural resources, without oil and gas reserves, with a hardworking and skilled population, Morocco is a brilliant example of resilience and centuries of continuity. In other words, and as a matter of political conclusion, the kingdom looks more like a genuine balance of its own historical forces than a media assisted byproduct of a Tahir Square revolution.

### **Political transition and cultural Heritage**

This background allows a better understanding of the mechanics of compromise. Between hostile populations, conflicting religions, war like situations destroying identity symbols. Morocco went through all this and drew helpful conclusions that could be described with two principles.

First of all, respect for differences in the coexistence of each and every one. Of course priority is given to Muslim identity, Islam being source of both faith and society but respect of other creeds as long as they stay in their own sphere.

Secondly, spirit of tolerance seen as a religious necessity and also a political precaution useful for the life of the city. At this stage, I would like to bring back some memories of Moroccan history.

1912: the kingdom is invaded by French military forces, starting a Protectorate that lasted forty-four years under the leadership of a great man, Marshall Lyautey.

He declared, in April 1925, at the end of his term of duty in Morocco: "... in 1912, I found myself completely lost in absolute emptiness in Fes. People were turning their backs, giving me the cold shoulder, spitting on my steps. I endeavoured myself to break the ice. I explained to the Moroccans 'we fully respect your faith, your way of life, social places, Protocol rules' and I never stopped building a satisfactory understanding, a deep personal and everlasting friendship. This was the key to the future".

Beyond political fortunes, this choice was the right one, based on scrupulous respect of places of worship ping and sacred sites. The Policy of the French Resident gave Moroccans the feeling that this respect was paid to their History, Identity and Future.

At the same time, Lyautey initiated the rehabilitation and construction of Mosques, a joint project with French architects and Moroccan craftsmen.

This reminder is not to be lenient with the French colonial past, but to show that management of both religious and cultural heritage, closely intertwined in the Middle East, may be the best foundation for peace between individuals, religions, nations. Morocco set a life-long standard. Naturally, the issues of proselytizing and religious freedom cannot be eluded. They are difficult in most Muslim countries. Nevertheless, the prerequisite for any understanding on protection lies in concepts of respect and tolerance, including practical conditions of religious practice.

Nowadays, this issue will not be raised only in historical conflict zones. With mass immigration, coexistence and respect are also difficult in many other places, including European countries that settled in the nineteenth century the thorny question of relations between the State, Society and Religion.

In other words, and to conclude, reciprocity comes as a capital concept. One cannot demand what one is not ready to give, this being valid not only for all the Muslims in the world but also for all the other religion of the Book in the East, especially Christian minorities in the Middle East and Africa.

### **Sir Paul DUJARDIN**

Thank you to His Excellency the Ambassador. You have spoken passionately about a country that you love. It is very important that alongside the work of high level officials, the technical aspects and the complexity of making choices, are citizens who contribute vital testimonies that could be of value to international organizations. We have talked about platforms that create contemporaneity such as the AWI, the work carried out by individuals and by Europe. We will now listen to Professor Bouchenaki, who is familiar with the work carried out by the international organizations that are important to the Arab Spring.

### **Prof. Mounir BOUCHENAKI**, *Advisor to UNESCO and former General Director of ICCROM*

I would like to take an optimistic view of the situation despite the extremely serious and sometimes appalling events, such as when elements attack symbols of the same religion, as happened in Mali. When UNESCO included Timbuktu on the list of World Heritage in Danger, the reaction of extremist groups was to start destroying a number of mausoleums that belonged to the Islamic religion. This is an example of a conflict within the same religion.

## **Reluctance to accept all components of heritage**

When I was young and looking after heritage in Algeria, I was asked an important question: how do communities take into account the entire breadth of their heritage?

It was an issue I knew because I was part of the generation that began to excavate and publish information on Algerian heritage after the French left. But it was the French who taught us... The initial reaction by workers and people in the villages – because we do not tend to work in urban areas when we are carrying out archaeological activities – was to say, for example, to one of my colleagues working on Byzantine mausoleums: “but why are you doing this work? It’s not for us, it’s for the French.”

Similarly, I was lucky enough to discover a site at Tipaza that had been dug for over 100 years by eminent French researchers who are our role models, Gsell, Albertini and Leschi.

Due to Fernand Pouillon’s project to build a hotel, I was lucky enough to discover a paleo-Christian necropolis that I excavated for four years. I discovered new elements that improved our understanding of the Christian religion’s development in North Africa in the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> centuries. I was immediately visited by experts in the Christian world, such as Professor Henri René Marrou, Bishop Saxer from the Pontifical Institute, one of the leading specialists of that period, and also Georges Duby.

It was not until I presented my thesis that the Minister of Culture, Ahmed Ibrahim – who is a highly cultured man, the son of a great scholar, whose house is a veritable library - called me to say: “But why have you been working on the ancient Roman period? Can you not see all the Islamic heritage we have here?” That is when I realised that that on the political level, especially in Algeria (it is less visible in Morocco and Tunisia), French colonization and the French scholars who worked in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries wrote in their publications that they were there to ensure the continuity of the Roman era, in other words, colonization and the Roman presence, the civilizing role the Romans played in North Africa.

Unfortunately, this influenced the attitudes of the political leaders. When I was heritage director for Algeria, I had a lot of trouble stopping destruction, for example, of a Byzantine wall in Tébessa, the ancient Theveste, one of the places where the Third Augustan legion was stationed. The sub-prefect (it has now become a préfecture) wanted to widen the road and therefore demolish the walls. I came to stop it.

Later on, when I arrived at UNESCO in 1982, where I have been working for 25 years, particularly on projects in Libya, Egypt, Yemen, Lebanon, Syria and Jordan as head of projects in the Arab region, I noticed that in all these countries, the pre-Islamic period is not seen to belong to the national heritage. It took me ten years, working with the Saudi Arabian authorities, to present the Mada'in Saleh (Al-Hijr) case so that it would be recognized as a World Heritage site, since it is a Nabataean site that traditional religions do not recognize as belonging to the country's heritage.

### **Improving people's understanding of their own heritage and the culture of others**

We therefore have important work to do in this reawakening, this movement where young people from the Arab world are taking action and rising up against certain structures, and we need to work with non-governmental organizations and the European Union, such as with the Euromed Heritage programme, which is doing an excellent job of raising awareness among different groups and communities of their heritage.

This year Japan organized two important meetings, one in February and the second in November, when the focus was on the role of communities in conserving world heritage. It took a global rather than a regional approach.

- The first point we need to work on to make progress with the forum's goal is to ensure the participation of all those who could contribute something on an interdisciplinary level and the inter-regional level, from both the northern and southern Mediterranean, to ensure that communities feel concerned by the full range of their heritage.

Back in the 1970s I wrote a book, *Cités antiques d'Algérie* [Ancient Cities of Algeria], in which I tried to show that all the heritage in Algeria, from the prehistoric legacy to the inheritance left by colonization, was part of all of these communities' heritage.

- The second point covers archaeology, restoration and the promotion of museums, which need skilled personnel. In recent years, the Arab world has been lacking in a tradition of research and training in the cultural heritage preservation field. We can therefore see that to create real dialogue between researchers, between the specialists and those in charge of heritage in Northern countries and Southern countries, there needs to be a solid training basis.

When I arrived at ICCROM in 2006, Italy had launched a heritage training programme in three countries, Lebanon, Jordan and Syria. I thought that the programme should be extended to cover the entire Arab world, since it would not be right to

train just a few regions and neglect the others. We worked with ALECSO – Doctor Guettat Guermazi took part in the discussion process with Arab universities – and organized a meeting in Sharjah with the Arab universities that offered heritage studies – there are not many of them! The Emir of Sharjah felt that the work we were doing was interesting. He himself put considerable efforts into the Emirate of Sharjah by creating museums, including a very interesting contemporary art museum, as well as a contemporary art festival. We must not forget that we need to look at all aspects of heritage: ancient, contemporary and intangible heritage.

Last year ICCROM signed an agreement with the Emirate and its two universities, the American University and the University of Sharjah, to train young officials and experts from the Arab region in all areas of heritage conservation.

This is the direction we need to take: on the one hand, by raising awareness among communities, which is a central task that the media and sociology experts and so on need to undertake, and on the other hand a long-term educational project that is not visible. When I look at Jean-Claude Thébaud I tell myself that it would be wonderful for Euromed Heritage to continue since lots of people have already been trained thanks to these programmes. We are working with Jean-Louis Luxen who is a driving force in the field and the former secretary general of ICOMOS.

This is how we will be able to overcome the two obstacles facing us.

1. The first obstacle is the lack of knowledge among local communities about their entire heritage. I am often surprised to see that Algeria only organized an international seminar on Saint Augustine in 2003. And yet, Saint Augustine was born in Thagaste, he was bishop of Annaba (Hippo Regius) and Carthage. He did of course spend many years in Milan, but he came back when the Vandals arrived in Hippo Regius to overturn the reigning authorities. Teaching in our schools and our universities has not taken the entire breadth of this heritage into account. This lack of knowledge means that communities know nothing of some parts of their heritage
2. But neither do we know about other people's heritage! If you ask students, even those who have studied for many years, on the foundations of Christianity, the way the religion developed and its values, they know nothing about it. The same applies to the Jewish religion. If we want to benefit from what is called the Arab Spring, it is extremely important that people open up their minds. Knowledge of others will prevent excesses – terrorism in particular – and ignorance. Knowledge of others is a key to understanding shared values and creating a common responsibility for heritage, as stated in the title of our conference. Thank you.

## **Sir Paul DUJARDIN**

All the participants will convey this message to their organizations, to UNESCO, in Europe and in civil society. I would like to use a word that the President of the Commission employs in all his speeches, the “agora,” to describe today’s interdisciplinary meeting between diplomats, heritage specialists, directors of cultural centres and so on. Teaching should be a key point in our declaration tomorrow. Education on every level, and respect for education. Understanding together. Not exporting a museum according to traditional Western, European museum studies. We should try to create “people’s centres” for cultural heritage with their own language: education, citizenship, dialogue, communication and understanding are all elements that can be found in a place where people gather. And we could say that the way you have organized this conference is a form of agora!

## **H.E. Frédéric GRASSET**

I would like to add the word “reciprocity”. In respecting everyone’s traditions. Because an exchange cannot be in only one direction. This affects Christian minorities in the East, it affects all the migratory movements that will take place around the Mediterranean and will concern millions of people.

## **Sir Paul DUJARDIN**

And against all forms of appropriation and propaganda. We could restore heritage in the Balkans at the request of the diaspora but in a context of mutual respect.

I have here the text that has been decided upon, James Moran’s words on dialogue with the political world, the new political community, the new generation of decision-makers: The task force proposes launching the European Union-Egypt Cultural Platform of discussion to all regular meetings and designing a joint strategy in this respect. This would also be important for all the other multilateral and bilateral relations in the Mediterranean region.

I hope that we have been able to make a modest contribution this afternoon to your conclusions tomorrow.







Friday, November 23<sup>rd</sup> 2012

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**ROUND TABLE 3:**

**THE SPECIFIC ISSUES  
OF SACRED HERITAGE**

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**Prof. Silvio FERRARI**, moderator, University of Milan, Coordinator of the Order of Malta's *Sacred Places and Intercultural Dialogue* project

In March 2012, during the meeting convened in Brussels by the Order of Malta and the European Commission on the topic of Protecting the Sacred Places of the Mediterranean: a contribution to intercultural dialogue, we reached three conclusions.

1. Sacred places are a living heritage that contribute to creating a sense of identity and may play a crucial role in sustaining cultural diversity and social cohesion.
2. Sacred places are an expression of the fundamental right to collective and individual religious freedom. They should be protected as such, and be included in world cultural heritage where appropriate.
3. The sacred places of the Mediterranean share cultural and religious roots that are reflected in daily life and enable a specific framework for protection to be identified.

These conclusions are consistent with the general recommendations drawn up two years ago at the Kiev conference, *The Role of Religious Communities in Managing World Cultural Properties*, organized by the Ukrainian Ministry of Culture in collaboration with UNESCO. The final statement stressed, and I quote, that “safeguarding religious heritage of outstanding universal value for future generations requires new forms of action”. The statement declares that: “The significance of such sites and the interests of associated religious communities should be duly recognized in sustainable management processes” with a view to long-term management. It argues for the development of a theme-based world heritage programme on religious heritage, within which an action plan for protecting cultural heritage at the international level should be prepared.

### **The “return of religion” makes it more urgent to identify the characteristics of sacred places**

In view of this conjunction of aims, one of this round table's objectives could be, within the broader framework of the World Heritage Convention, the identification of a number of guidelines that would reflect the specific characteristics of sacred places in the Mediterranean and ensure that they be adequately protected. This means discussing subjects such as the definition of sacred place, the right to access to these places and its legitimate limitations, the harmonization of cultural and religious use of a sacred place, the relationship between believers from a religious community and protection of the religious site, the case of places that are sacred for more than one religion, and so on. These questions are specific to sacred places. Taking a uniform approach to tackling them in a context such as that

of the Mediterranean could help in finding answers that would serve as points of reference on the international level.

Finding answers to these questions is far more urgent than it was a few decades ago. Religion has re-emerged in the public space and, in the wake of the Arab Spring, in the political arena. In the past, international organizations were reluctant to address religious issues. Maybe because they feared opening a Pandora's box. This unwillingness sometimes resulted in the specific features of these questions being neglected and the impact of religions on international relations underestimated.

Yesterday I heard some extremely interesting comments. Professor Bouchenaki stressed that cultural heritage is becoming a target since it is an expression of identity. I fully agree. Religious heritage is even more exposed to this danger, as we have seen with the destruction of the Bamiyan buddhas. Ambassador Grasset told us that the restoration of mosques was the first step in modernizing Morocco. This is a remarkable attitude, since we are accustomed to religion and modernity being considered as mutually exclusive categories. These examples show that we are facing a new reality that we need to understand.

To return to the theme of this round table, I invite you to explore the specific aspects of sacred heritage. Are they really specific? What are they? Do they need to be treated in specific terms within the broader context of cultural heritage protection? And if so, what are the best tools for doing so?

I am now handing over to our five speakers:

- **Professor Gerhard Robbers**, who teaches at the University of Trier and is President of the German Evangelical Church Congress;
- **Bishop José Manuel del Río Carrasco**, Undersecretary of the Pontifical Commission for the Cultural Heritage of the Church;
- **Professor Ismini Kriari**, who is Vice-Rector of the Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences in Athens;
- **Maryna Zlobina**, Deputy Secretary General of the National Ukrainian Commission for UNESCO;
- and **Reverrend Savvas Hadjionas**, Secretary of the Synodical Committee for Monuments of the Church of Cyprus.

**Prof. Gerhard ROBBERS**, *University of Trier, President of the German Evangelical Church Congress*

It may well seem that Germany does not have much reason to be taking part in a conference dealing with the Mediterranean, but I feel that my presence is justified since Germans have always yearned after the Mediterranean. I am therefore delighted to be with you today.

I would like to raise three points: what roles do religion and sacred heritage play? Are these roles taken into account in international treaties on heritage? And lastly, which principles are needed to protect religious heritage?

### **The role of religious heritage in constructing identity**

1. What roles do religious heritage play? I cannot mention all of them, so I will simply cite those I feel are most important in meeting the challenge of protecting this heritage.

Religions and religious sites are an expression of individual identity. They are a factor that is also a component of the expression of national identity. Above and beyond the identity of nations, it is the identities of communities that are also at stake. Sacred places are a factor in transnational construction. Many religions have a global dimension.

In addition to the secular sphere, religions touch the world of transcendence, in the sense of life itself. This dimension is expressed in architecture, building and works of art that are linked to religion.

Religion is not associated with only one role, a single interest in life. It touches on all aspects of life, public and private, past, present and future. This is one characteristic of religion and religious sites. They also communicate the development of life, an important role.

### **Sacred places are threatened because they are religious**

2. The methods used to protect and consider places of worship and religious heritage should take into account the multiplicity of their functions. Sacred places are not threatened in the same way as other cultural heritage sites or objects, which are subject to neglect or ignorance of their worth, but precisely because they are religious, because of the roles they play. They are at the heart of danger because they are sacred and religious sites, and not because they have been forgotten or neglected. This is the crux of the problem and must be taken into account when we address these questions.

While full of respect for the task accomplished by international organizations, I must say that international law has not really tackled these problems. Although the Hague Convention refers to sacred places, it is on the same basis as other property. The UNESCO World Heritage Convention does not even mention them. If we take a close look at the criteria for including an element on the list of protected sites, monuments and objects, we will only find one incidental comment on the religious content of a given object or site.

### **The responsibility of taking into account sites' religious dimension**

3. In the few minutes I have left, I would like to make an appeal to the international community for the development and drafting of documents that take into account the religious dimension of sites and heritage to a greater extent than in the past.

When we try to identify which fundamental principles should be used to create international instruments on religious heritage, we need to recognize that not only material objects and sites are at stake. This heritage is a living thing, a developing thing, which links into the people around it. It is not only about a wall and stones, it is about human beings. This is why specific approaches are necessary. These approaches must take into consideration religious freedom, mutual respect among religions and peaceful development, and they need to involve the actual religions. It is not feasible to always act on behalf of religions; it is also the responsibility of religions themselves to deal with these questions. Instead of putting the problems in the hands of international organizations, they need to do the work themselves. One idea could be to ask religions to develop instruments internally to answer these questions.

To sum up, we need to be aware and respectful of the religious context of the problems that are arising. Professor Ferrari mentioned the right of access to sacred places. Then there are the difficult issues such as the religious use of these objects. They can be antagonistic and cause problems within religions. It is vital that we have a clear vision of these challenges.

**Msgr. José Manuel DEL RIO CARRASCO**, *Undersecretary of the Pontifical Commission for the Cultural Patrimony of the Church*

I should point out that I am no longer the Undersecretary for Cultural Patrimony, as the Pope has grouped together the Pontifical Commission for the Cultural Patrimony of the Church with the Pontifical Council for Culture to form a single organization at the Vatican. I will talk to you about the Catholic Church's cultural heritage.

## **The three functions of the Catholic Church's cultural heritage: liturgy, catechism and charity**

The Church's patrimony has been produced throughout the centuries, and is still produced today, for essentially pastoral reasons. As such, they have to be maintained, protected and developed. The functions these cultural goods were created for are very important to us. There are three of them: worship and liturgy, catechism and charity. The Order of Malta has put great efforts into charity work by caring for the ill. It is a practice that has produced many cultural goods throughout the world.

We feel that the Church's cultural properties, especially sacred properties, should be preserved with the purpose they were originally built for. This is a major problem in Europe today. It concerns, for example, the deconsecration of churches. What should be done with churches that no longer function as churches? In certain European countries, we are working with other religious denominations, which can result in a transfer of properties, for example, with the Muslims. A closed church can become a place of worship for another religion.

In our view, the Church's heritage expresses a deep-seated cultural value. It represents processes for transforming the environment that the human community has implemented over the centuries. They are specific because they have been created as a form for expressing liturgy, instruction and charity, inspired and informed by Christianity.

The Church has been given the task of spreading the Gospel by means of a process of acculturation of faith that was in charge of the appropriate means, in other words, the Church's cultural heritage. This is the context behind the Pope's desire to create a dicastery to look after the Church's cultural heritage and develop it on the international level, to establish contacts with all the churches around the world and provide guidelines concerning art, archives, libraries, music, museums and sacred representations.

We often talk about built heritage. But the definition of cultural properties is much broader.

## **The Church's *ad intra* and *ad extra* actions: building heritage knowledge, training and cooperating**

Since we do not have much time, I will speak briefly about what we do *ad intra*, within the Catholic Church, and *ad extra*, the actions we undertake with international organizations and civil authorities.



- *Ad intra*: as all the speakers said yesterday, training is all important. The Pontifical Commission for the Cultural Patrimony of the Church has done a lot of work in this area. We feel that it is very important to raise awareness among the members of God's people within the Church about these questions, especially in terms of developing sacred heritage. We must undertake this task of awareness-raising because those of us who form the Church have the duty to develop our heritage, not only in critical situations but day to day.

The first task that needs doing is to build up real knowledge of this heritage. In 2012, we have not yet finished the inventory of all the Church's properties. Yesterday I asked my colleague at the Moscow Patriarchate if he had carried out an inventory of this kind. He answered no. I am asking all the other religions the same question. We need to improve knowledge of our heritage, because if we do not know what it is, we cannot protect it. We have to start by training people who work directly with heritage: priests and clerics who directly manage the heritage in their parishes, dioceses and monasteries. We also need to train everyone who works in the field: volunteers, specialists who work directly with heritage. So, we need training and knowledge.

- *Ad extra*: our first duty is to work with the civil authorities. The Church, wherever it is in the world, respects the laws of each country. We cannot do what the law does not allow. But we also have the law of the Church, and we can have our heritage, the Church's heritage, which must be respected throughout the world. And the Catholic Church is very happy to collaborate with all the international organizations that work in this area.

**Prof. Ismini KRIARI**, *Vice-Rector of the Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences, Athens*

I would like to add to what has already been said about protecting the sacred places of the Mediterranean with some concrete ideas linked to two questions.

### **Create a register of all data on Mediterranean heritage and circulate the data**

1. Firstly, the creation of a register or observatory that would gather all information on all the Mediterranean's sacred places should be obligatory. How are they protected? What are their specific problems? How many people visit them? How is spiritual life practiced at these sites? What influence do they have? And so on.

Creating a register of this kind would meet the goal of transparency and provide an overall view of what is happening at all these sites. As things currently stand, some people know what is happening in sites in Cyprus, the Kosovo monasteries, the Vatican or Israel but know next to nothing about the Mount

Athos or other places. A register of this kind would make it possible to have access to in-depth information on all sites. The information would then be easy to circulate. Because while it is important to have the information, it is equally important to tell the public about it.

The register could serve two purposes.

- Recognize the importance of sacred places in terms of European identity and their contribution to our shared European nature. It could then serve to illustrate the fact that protecting these sites contributes to multi-culturalism and tolerance. To quote the European Court of Human Rights: “The harmonious interaction of persons and groups with varied identities is essential for achieving social cohesion.”
- The register could serve as a centre for circulating information, organizing collective events, collecting archives and organizing exchanges between scientists and scholars. The internet could be used to include tangible and intangible elements of heritage in multimedia inventories. This information would encourage diversity and facilitate documentation of all these sites.

### **Shaping public opinion on the importance of heritage and shared history**

2. The second type of action we should undertake involves taking measures to influence public opinion. We know that there is awareness of these sites in certain circles. But we should not delude ourselves. Many people have no real idea of how important these sites are, their contribution to the history of humanity. The things that have been said during this marvelous seminar should be very widely communicated to the public. A few years ago, an interesting conference was held in Cairo on the perception of the Crusades in books from the Muslim world. We also talked about the perception of the Muslim world in books from the European Union. But I wonder how many students, how many history teachers in the Arab world, in Jordan, Egypt, Syria and Algeria, benefited from the results of the conference.

A great deal of material on these topics exists. The Council of Europe initiated a project for recording the history of five Black Sea countries, Russia, Romania, Turkey, Georgia and Bulgaria, written collectively from the different points of view. There are books on the history shared by France and Germany and, under preparation, by Germany and Poland. UNESCO is launching other initiatives, for example, on the Silk Route and the Salt Route. But how many of these initiatives are familiar to the general public? I feel that it is essential that we take formal and informal measures to give the public access to them. It would involve training teachers, who could then serve to multiply these initiatives.

Another interesting element would be to find a way of reconciling antagonistic memories. For it is difficult to restore walls and icons when people's memories are still in conflict. These are critical questions for humanity. We need to pay more attention to shared values, to shared history, to a shared past and future. It needs to be taught. We cannot depend on individual initiatives alone. We need to take on board the fact that Europe is not a unit, but a fragmented collection of nations, countries, people, political systems and perceptions of the world with a central point of reference: the nation state.

### **Europe: a cultural community**

The history of European modernity intersects with the history of nations, national history, national interests and national economies. Nevertheless, a feeling of community does exist. We refer to European history, of the creation of European awareness that exists in parallel to national awareness. This shared awareness owes many of its characteristics to the religious doctrines that emerged and flowered in the Mediterranean. Europe has to draw up a new set of principles that can unify these countries, not as a nation, since Europe is not a nation, but as a cultural community, a *Kulturgemeinschaft*. This is what it is, thanks to its Greco-Roman political and philosophical past, its religious beliefs originating in the three monotheistic religions. I think that the cultural traditions that have been created by ideas and laws, and practised in these sacred places, should serve as the basis for implementing policies to protect them. Cultural values provide the key we need to transcend the nation state and create our shared European identity, leaving behind our national divisions and making progress towards European unity.

Thomas Jefferson said that the purpose of all thought was action. Khalil Gibran said the same thing: "A little knowledge that acts is worth infinitely more than much knowledge that is idle." What we need to do is define our objectives and set up procedures for taking action, as time is running out.

**Maryna ZLOBINA**, *Deputy Secretary General of the National Ukrainian Commission for UNESCO*

Each of us has come here today to share our experiences, talk about our concerns and work out the best solutions and effective recommendations and mechanisms for improving protection of the priceless treasure known as world cultural heritage. Today's agenda shows that many questions remain unanswered and that new questions are appearing in response to new challenges and threats.

If you visit Ukraine, you will see that churches are included in its national treasures. The history of these churches stretches back to the 9<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> centuries. They are recognized for their architectural beauty and artistic value. They tell us the story of the nation, the dialogue between cultures and generations, the pain and hardship of the

past. What would happen if this heritage was neglected, badly cared for and vanished? What are communities, including religious communities, doing to maintain these sacred places and their spiritual significance in the face of the challenges of a fast developing and globalized world?

With these questions in mind, and in line with the decisions of the World Heritage Committee regarding the state of conservation of one of our sacred places (the site formed by Saint Sofia Church and the Kiev Pechersk Lavra monastery buildings), the Ukrainian authorities made a proposal to UNESCO, offering to host the international seminar *The Role of Religious Communities in the Management of World Heritage Properties* as part of the United Nations International Year for the Rapprochement of Cultures in 2010.

The seminar was held in Kiev from 2<sup>nd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> November 2010 and established a platform for dialogue and exchange of knowledge among stakeholders involved in the preservation of our common heritage. The seminar supported the idea of creating a new theme-based programme on religious heritage. In addition to 50 national participants, 45 international guests attended the seminar, representing numerous world institutions, governmental organizations, religious authorities and NGOs<sup>10</sup>.

The final document, the Kiev Statement, reflects the intention of its organizers to strengthen implementation of UNESCO's 1972 World Heritage Convention, to establish dialogue between all stakeholders with the aim of identifying, preserving and promoting local and world religious heritage as well as supporting them with sustainable management and guaranteed legal protection. The Forum launched a new topic for the discussion: the role of religious communities in protecting sites.

### **Following up on the Kiev Forum**

The ideas that emerged during the Kiev Forum have triggered similar initiatives in Europe, Africa, North and South America and the Asia-Pacific region. Clergy representing different groups took part in this intercultural dialogue on how better to preserve the cultural, historical and spiritual value of sacred places. This movement is getting stronger and more established. The input of the Kiev international seminar brings its own contribution to this context. We are currently analyzing the effects of the 2010 seminar with a view to future follow-ups.

1. The online discussion on the protection and management of religious and sacred properties and places launched with the support of the Ministry of Culture of Ukraine immediately after the closure of the Forum has proved to be effective. We hope this internet forum can be boosted by organizing further meetings of religious heritage experts.

10 - The seminar was proposed by the Government of Ukraine with the support of UNESCO. It was organized jointly by the Ministry of Culture of Ukraine, the National Preserve of Kiev Pechersk Lavra and the Ukrainian National Commission for UNESCO.

2. The Kiev Seminar recommendations on the role of religious communities in the management of cultural heritage properties as well as the Kiev Statement approved by the participants have been included in the UNESCO World Heritage Committee's resolutions for its 35<sup>th</sup> and 36<sup>th</sup> sessions. The Kiev initiative has developed further with the creation of a theme-based programme on religious and sacred heritage as part of the World Heritage Convention. With the emergence of more powerful world movements for protecting religious heritage, the idea has become more feasible and could be relaunched.
3. The idea of holding a second round of the Kiev seminar in Rabat (Morocco) in 2013 was raised in Vienna in June at the international conference entitled Euro-Arab Dialogue: Contribution to a New Humanism. The Ukrainian initiative has received support from the Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization. We hope to establish a productive cooperation process in the future and contribute to enhancing the role of religious communities in their work on protecting religious sites.
4. An international scientific committee on religious and sacred heritage, if it is set up, could help gather scientific knowledge and apply it to monitoring, assessing and checking the condition of heritage.
5. The creation of a system of integrated training programmes for managing sacred places in cooperation with the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM), International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) and International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) would help enhance the managerial skills of the representatives of religious communities. Ukraine could become an active participant in this area, by sharing its own constructive experience in managing religious heritage with other countries as well as gaining from the knowledge of other countries. Ukraine is continuing to implement this initiative with the goal of promoting interreligious dialogue and strengthening social cohesion, and it welcomes all new participants.

### **Introducing a theme-based questionnaire**

We have a growing understanding of the need to draw up principles, general norms and practical methods to foster effective protection and management of sacred places as well as the closer involvement of the religious community in this process. The work being done in this field will contribute to broadening the scope of the 1972 Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage and could provide additional protection for cultural monuments, including religious monuments, that are unique in their historic significance and symbolic value.

One of the first steps in developing a methodological platform for managing sacred places could be done by creating a theme-based questionnaire.

Taking into account that the corresponding work could already be in progress under the supervision of UNESCO's Secretariat and the World Heritage Committee, the document could be circulated among the Convention's signatory countries when the results included in the Committee's report are presented at its 37<sup>th</sup> session in July 2013 in Phnom Penh. Once the activities on the questionnaire are in place, the Ukrainian delegation could help to draw it up and submit relevant proposals on the concept and practical methods of managing sacred places.

To this end, Ukraine could call on the knowledge and expertise of governmental, academic, spiritual and non-profit institutions whose mission is to safeguard cultural heritage, both tangible and intangible, secular and religious.

This work could be seen as an invitation to the UNESCO member states to explore the best ways to guarantee protection of religious heritage as well as involve religious communities in the process.

We are approaching the end of the World Heritage Convention jubilee year. Forty years have passed since the day the document was signed. It is quite a long period of time, enough to judge the results of the Convention's implementation, reflect on the difficulties countries have encountered in providing proper protection of their sacred places and work out new approaches that could guarantee better protection of our common heritage.

We hope that the Cyprus Forum will become an effective platform for elaborating new methodological processes that will help protect cultural heritage in the Mediterranean and throughout the world. The initiatives we are examining together are increasing our feeling of responsibility and our understanding of the fragile the world we live in. Thank you.

**Prof. Silvio FERRARI**

Reverend Hadjionas, you have the task of concluding this round table. We are in your hands. The floor is yours.

**Rev. Savvas HADJIONAS**, *Secretary of the Synodical Committee for Monuments of the Church of Cyprus*

First of all I would like to thank you for your kind invitation to participate in this event. Bishop Porfyrios of Neapolis, who was invited to represent the Church of Cyprus, is currently in Brussels, in his capacity as director of the Representation of the Church of Cyprus to the European Union, and consequently I was asked to replace him.

My approach to the issue of protecting the Religious Heritage of Cyprus, in the context of this brief presentation, will be first to give a brief history of the island, with reference to the tragic events of the Turkish invasion of July 1974 and the cultural destruction it caused, and then to take a look at the steps taken by the Church of Cyprus to protect, restore and re-use our religious monuments in the occupied areas of the Republic of Cyprus.

The island's strategic location in the Eastern Mediterranean, at the crossroads of Europe, Africa and Asia as well as their people and civilizations, is the main reason why Cyprus was taken over by various empires such as the Hittites, the Assyrians, the Egyptians, the Persians and the Romans. In 395 AD, when the Roman Empire was split into its Eastern and Western parts, Cyprus came under the Byzantine Empire and remained a part of it until the time of the Crusades, some 800 years later. Under Byzantine rule, the island's Greek orientation, which had been witnessed since antiquity, developed into the strong Greek-Christian element which continues to characterize the Greek Cypriot community. Over the following centuries, Cyprus found itself under the rule of the Lusignans, the Venetians and the Ottomans. In 1878, it came under British rule and remained so, until gaining independence in 1960.

The Turkish military invasion in July 1974 and the continuing occupation of 37% of the island had – and is still having – a disastrous effect, both on the thousands of Cypriots who became refugees in their own country and on our cultural heritage which is to be found in the occupied areas.

Victims of this well-planned attempt by the occupation regime to cut our historical roots are numerous archaeological museums, notable private collections and various archaeological sites, some of which have been looted or illegally excavated while others have been totally destroyed by the Turkish army.

The greatest victim of the continuing cultural destruction and looting, however, is the Religious Heritage of Cyprus. More than 570 churches and religious monuments – early Christian, Byzantine, Mediaeval and more recent – have been badly desecrated, mercilessly looted and left exposed to the ravages of time and the elements of nature. Many have been demolished by the Turkish invasion forces (Total of 19). Some of them are totally inaccessible, as they are enclosed in military zones. Others have collapsed. Still many others are on the verge of imminent ruin, in the event that they cannot be suitably repaired. Those that are in relatively good condition have been used or continue to be used as mosques (Total of 85) or turned into museums, cultural centres, tourist accommodation, granaries, stables and barns, warehouses, offices, artists' workshops, exhibition spaces, and military installations. One specific church is even used as a mortuary! The majority of our cemeteries have been desecrated and destroyed, with their crosses and tombstones broken and scattered. Any attempt to restore them is strictly prohibited.

It is worth noting that some of these monuments belong to the religious groups of Cyprus: Maronites, Armenians, Latins, Protestants and Jews.

Until today we are only allowed to visit some of these monuments. The exercise of any kind of religious worship is strictly prohibited by the occupation regime. It is only allowed after a written application is submitted through UNFICYP Civil Affairs Section, for less than twenty churches, on specific dates, usually once a year! In numerous cases the occupation regime refused the application without giving any reason.

From the majority of our monuments in the Turkish occupied area, all the movable and immovable items that could be sold or provide some kind of profit or benefit to the sacrilegious looters have been stolen, destroyed or illegally exported and sold abroad. These include more than 20,000 icons, murals, mosaics, Bibles, gold and silver vessels, chandeliers, iconostases, oil lamps, vestments, prayer books and other liturgical artefacts such as chalices, censers and crosses. In many instances this illegal commerce has been carried out through Auction Houses. Thousands of these objects are now in the possession of private collectors and art galleries in Europe and the United States of America. Only a very small number has been identified and repatriated by the Church of Cyprus, in many cases following time-consuming and costly legal action.

Unfortunately, our efforts to offer support and start restoration work required for the majority of our monuments have rarely yielded any positive results. For the last four years, after many meetings, agreements and announcements, the Bi-Communal Technical Committee on Cultural Heritage, which was established in April 2008, has actually achieved very little. The very first project that was undertaken, the restoration of Archangel Michael church of Lefkonoiko, is still at a standstill. The restoration of a number of other smaller monuments has already been announced and we truly hope and wish for a positive outcome.

The European Union has been actively involved and supported our efforts in close collaboration mainly with UNDP/PFF and contributed so far the sum of about 4.8 million euros for the creation of a detailed Inventory of Cyprus' monuments and restoration works for a number of relatively small projects. We are truly grateful for their support. Furthermore, we ask the European Union to exercise its influence on the Turkish government in order to allow free access to all monuments and to allow the free exercise of religious worship without any limitations regarding the frequency of these services. We also demand that restored monuments be used only for the purpose for which they were built, in accordance with the will of their legal owners and never for any other alien use. We have in mind the restoration of the Armenian Church and monastery in Nicosia, funded by USAID through UNDP/ACT. Instead of allowing its use by the legitimate owner, the Armenian Church of Cyprus, EVKAF intends to hand it over to the illegal "Near East University".



We are convinced that through a coordinated team effort by the Church, the responsible state services and intimate collaboration with the relevant authorities in other European countries, we can achieve much more in our efforts to protect the religious heritage of Cyprus, which belongs to European and, indeed, global culture.

### **Prof. Silvio FERRARI**

Before opening the discussion, Professor Leanza would like to speak.

### **Prof. Avv. Umberto Leanza**, *Vice-President of the Italian Society for International Organization (SIOI)*

From the viewpoint of international law, the main weakness of the legal options on the status of sacred places or sites lies in their fragmentation and dissimilarity, so determining quite different legal regimes notwithstanding the same function performed by all sacred places or sites. It should also be said that these variations relate to the different contexts in the field for each sacred place or site; diversified regimes can better take into account the particular features and problems of each one.

In terms of international law, the proposals to be put forward with the goal of protecting the sacred places or sites would be looking primarily at the unresolved situations of sacred places in Jerusalem, the orthodox monasteries in Kosovo and sacred sites of Cyprus.

The best solution in terms of the effectiveness and incisiveness of the regime is certainly to reach bilateral agreements between the concerned States as regards freedom of access to the site and forms of shared management of the site to guarantee religious freedom. The achievement of these bilateral agreements is by no means simple. It should come about via the diplomatic mediation of the United Nations or the European Union, organizations that could also assume the role of “guaranteeing powers” for respect of the obligations. The “guaranteeing powers” should monitor their observance to prevent the bilateral agreements from giving rise in the future to forms of “creeping sovereignty” that could lead to further territorial and/or interethnic conflicts.

First and foremost, it would be useful to come to an agreement under the aegis of the UN, possibly via UNESCO, centered on sacred places and sites in the light of their character and function.

This agreement would not deal with sovereignty claims but, on the contrary, establish a specific regime for the sacred place or site, to be applied in peacetime and war.

This regime should guarantee the unrestricted use of sacred place or site by worshippers, religious freedom, preservation of the sacred place or site for future generations and peaceful coexistence between local communities and pilgrims.

The international organization that backed the conclusion of the agreement or the relevant regional organization considering the geographical localization of the sacred place or site would manage this sacred heritage. It would also be responsible for public order and internal security.

Another solution would be to conclude a protocol annexed to the UNESCO 1972 Convention that would specifically target the protection of sacred places and sites. This protection would come under UNESCO's responsibility or be delegated by UNESCO to another ad hoc authority.

Another solution, which might be easier to accomplish, would be to broaden the 1972 UNESCO Convention's Guidelines, which are modified periodically. A global strategy for sacred places and sites would be included in the Guidelines, whose aim would be to guarantee full recognition of their specific value and stronger specific protection. Evidently this solution would be more modest, but it would certainly be more immediate.

Whereas this alternative solution could not be applied quickly, we could imagine a more immediate action: encourage UNESCO to develop a specific action by means of its Programmes with the goal of protecting sacred places and sites as religious sites with cultural value. UNESCO is currently setting up a similar programme relating to memorial sites.

This programme, supported financially, would teach the importance of respect for all values and faiths, and peaceful coexistence, regardless of religious and ethnic differences. It could also be a first step towards more trenchant international solutions.

The major goal is to guarantee freedom of access to sacred places, respect for their specific religious functions, religious freedom, protection of these places or sites for future generations and peaceful coexistence between local communities and pilgrims.

### **Prof. Silvio FERRARI**

We can open the debate on the different contributions concerning training, the relations between international authorities, proposals to create a register or observatory, the questionnaire, and so on. We have plenty of starting points for discussion.

**Julien ANFRUNS**, *General Director of ICOM, President of the International Committee of the Blue Shield*

I would like to comment on the proposals to create a specific legal instrument for protecting sacred heritage. Although I support the idea of a specific action targeting sacred heritage, I am far more doubtful about the creation of a legal instrument in this field, for a variety of reasons.

The first reason is pragmatic: it is very difficult to discuss these subjects with all the different religions together from an international viewpoint.

### **Legal heritage protection developed from the religious to the cultural dimension**

The second reason is that cultural legal instruments developed the other way round. Ideas about cultural heritage and international cultural rights derive from the law of war – Greek historians such as Polybius in the Hellenistic Period sought to protect religious heritage precisely because it was religious – and it was only with the development of new ideas, particularly with the work of 16<sup>th</sup>-century jurists<sup>11</sup>, that cultural heritage came to be protected as a form of artistic heritage and not only because it was religious. And all the national and international regulations embodied in conventions then centred on the universal dimension of this heritage. I feel it would be a little dangerous to take a step backwards where these points are concerned.

On the other hand, there are many possibilities in terms of actions. I feel that it would definitely be beneficial to specify that it is a form of heritage different from other forms. We need to separate the heritage of human remains from broken monuments and religious heritage and, in the latter category, distinguish living religious heritage from the heritage that does not correspond to living religions. Professional codes of ethics exist. The ICOM's<sup>12</sup> code has specific provisions for religious heritage. As Professor Kriari said, this plea for action could be a solution, but we must not confuse the means with the end.

### **Mediation: a tool for protecting religious heritage**

I have a second remark to make on the subject of the restorations mentioned by Reverend Hadjionnas. One of the worrying factors about religious heritage is that, in the latest European statistics, we can see that worldwide theft of this type of heritage

11 - Notably, the Polish jurist Prybloski.

12 - International Council of Museums.

remains unchanged, while there is a drop in thefts of cultural heritage. This means we need to take action to protect this heritage, which is the only area where theft is not being reduced. But when it comes to legal actions, which are indeed long and costly, they are often useful in a number of areas, when there is a significant underlying financial factor, but are less so when national or religious values are at play, which are not necessarily financial. One of the alternative routes, as recommended by the ICOM, is mediation. We have set up a mediation programme that allows us to tackle these subjects in fairly record times, once the parties involved mutually agree to submit to mediation. These are solutions that are more economical and, from an international standpoint, far easier to apply given that an international tribunal on these subjects does not exist, and that it is thus difficult to apply a legal decision from one country in another.

**Christian MANHART**, *Chief of UNESCO's Museums and Creativity Section*

I would like to get back to the very delicate question of religious heritage as a specific category in UNESCO's World Heritage Convention and the 1954 Hague Convention. The issue has been debated several times by UNESCO's Member States. The members are wary of seeing this sensitive topic specified in the convention. Member States want religious heritage to have the same basis as other forms of heritage. The World Heritage Convention encourages making original use of heritage properties, without going as far as turning them into hotels or business centres, but retaining their initial purpose. I agree with Julien Anfruns. It is not the UNESCO Secretariat that decides, but the State parties that ratified the conventions. This issue has already been discussed at UNESCO's Executive Board and its General Conference.

**Dr Maria HADJICOSTI**, *Director of the Department of Antiquities of the Republic of Cyprus*

I am here as a representative of Cyprus, as director of the Department of Antiquities, one of the most important bodies looking after the island's heritage, including for the last thirty-eight years in the occupied regions.

I agree with Julien Anfruns when he says that we need to treat monuments and sites in the same way. It is difficult to put monuments into different categories in international conventions. However, the question has been raised several times here regarding the condition of our ecclesiastical monuments and whether they are living monuments, linked to the memories of living people. This reality means that we need to develop greater awareness of the questions concerning their return or protection. Protection methods exist, but are not implemented. The 2<sup>nd</sup> protocol of the Hague Convention has not yet come into force in Cyprus' case,

insultingly.

Yesterday we talked about preventive measures necessary taking to protect monuments during periods of armed conflict. But what should we do during the post-conflict period? In Cyprus, destruction took place even ten years after the 1974 disaster without the convention being put into effect. No effort was made to do so. I think that we need to develop this consideration for ecclesiastical monuments; I would like to give you an example. Recently, the Lysi frescos were being repatriated from the USA and the inhabitants of Lysi were waiting impatiently for the event. They were told that the frescos would first be kept in a museum, but the inhabitants want them to be returned to their rightful place in their natural site, the church where they used to contemplate them...

I have a last remark prompted by my role as an archaeologist. We can see that the same places have been seen as sacred by different religions and forms of worship down through the centuries, ever since antiquity. Efforts have always been made to protect these places. In Cyprus, we have a striking example of this: the goddess Aphrodite was the island's goddess of fertility, and alongside sites dedicated to her we have churches dedicated to the Virgin, since the Virgin inherited certain elements from the goddess. These places are important for the memories of humanity as a whole.

**Prof. Michel Veuthey**, *Vice-President of the International Institute of Humanitarian Law*

Yesterday, the responsibility of humanitarian organizations in protecting sacred places was mentioned. This morning, the Grand Chancellor asked me if the Sphere Project's humanitarian charter refers to this responsibility. The answer is yes, but very generally. In principles 5 and 10, it mentions the need to respect victims' religious customs. It also mentions the obligation to help victims of a disaster to have their rights respected, particularly the restoration of the right to property.

My second comment is that attacks on sacred places may, under some specific conditions, be a component of genocide, a crime against humanity or a war crime. In these cases, all States that have ratified the Geneva conventions have universal jurisdiction to pursue these serious violations of the conventions. The International Criminal Court has broadened its jurisdiction as part of its Rome Statute, which now covers armed conflicts that are not international. And we should not forget the civil procedures that supplement these criminal procedures and make reparation possible.

**Prof. Gerhard ROBBERS**

As far as my suggestion to create international instruments for religious heritage is

concerned, I was not intending to criticize anyone. Quite simply, it is high time to stop overlooking the specific needs of religious heritage. Legal instruments have ignored religion until now. You said that it is the member countries that are proving to be reluctant. Reasons to doubt can always be found. I wanted to say that we should create new instruments that will support UNESCO's convention on protecting natural and cultural world heritage. I am not suggesting a new convention, but just a declaration. The problems that derive from an age-old situation should not be left to secular regulations, since they are the most affected by it.

### **Rev. Savvas HADJIONAS**

I have a few clarifications. In Cyprus, we have never had religious conflicts in the past. Problems relating to religious heritage arise in every Mediterranean country, but the difference here is the Turkish war and 1974 invasion. What we always say when we are talking to the UN and EU leaders is that we want to convince the occupation regime to cooperate and restore the monuments. This is our demand, and working together would help the reconciliation of the people of Cyprus. Thank you.

### **Maryna ZLOBINA**

A quick word about the follow-up work undertaken this year in Vienna and Saint-Petersburg by Ukraine. We obtained ratification by several countries at the 36<sup>th</sup> session of the World Heritage Committee. A debate took place on the strategy to be drawn up for protecting religious heritage. How can we get secular society and religions to work together? We listened to viewpoints expressed by Armenia, Greece, Israel, Russia, Serbia, the USA, France and Germany, countries that took part in this unofficial debate. The Armenians suggested that we organize, as we did at Kiev, a conference the following year for the protection of world heritage with a religious nature. We obtained the support of the Arab League delegation, which suggested that we organize a seminar in Morocco in 2013.

### **Prof. Ismini KRIARI**

One final remark. The greatest threat our societies are facing is fundamentalism. To tackle this problem, we need to ensure that religious freedom is suitably protected and that this freedom is guaranteed. It would be appropriate for the EU and UNESCO to draw up a recommendation on religious freedom, free access to places of worship and the importance of the sacred places of the Mediterranean as a vital component of our cultural heritage and a means of combating

cultural illiteracy.

**Prof. Silvio FERRARI**

To sum up quickly, I would say that we have a consensus on the work that needs to be done: there is plenty of it! This means that we need to identify the relevance of the religious heritage issue in today's cultural reality. The world is moving very quickly, and what was a given yesterday should be tested out today.

This is a two-phase approach. Following the identification phase, we need to provide a response, which could be done using several instruments. We need to gather information on our heritage and disseminate it. There is the question of training managers, the people in charge of protecting this heritage, and education of the general public. We need to define principles, directions and guidelines. The question is not whether religious heritage is more important than cultural heritage or vice versa. The question is about respecting the specific natures of the different forms of heritage. From this point of view, a convention is not such an important tool. A handful of guidelines could be very useful in helping people who have to deal with protecting sacred places. Thank you all.







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**ROUND TABLE 4:**

**THE RESPONSIBILITY OF MAJOR  
INSTITUTIONAL PLAYERS FOR  
THE CONSERVATION OF CULTURAL  
HERITAGE WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF  
THE ECONOMIC CRISIS**

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**Christian MANHART**, moderator, Chief of UNESCO's Museums and Creativity Section

The Forum's final round table session will examine the responsibilities faced by international heritage conservation actors during a time of severe economic crisis. Just yesterday, we were greeted by Cyprus' Minister for Finance, who has had to make a number of difficult choices to help solve Cyprus' financial problems.

Our forum is an ideal venue for discussing this question with the many institutions attending: representatives of governments, the EU, UNESCO, the Vatican, the Orthodox and Protestant churches, as well as the Sovereign Order of Malta, ALECSO, IMA, ICOMOS, ICOM and ICCROM, and many other research institutes and universities. We really have an impressive group gathered here in Cyprus.

### **The cultural sector: a source of wealth**

Every one of our countries and institutions has been hit by the economic crisis. UNESCO has seen its budget cut by 30%. The consequences of this crisis, which started in 2008, go far beyond its quantifiable effects on gross domestic product (GDP), employment and public debt. The crisis has triggered disillusionment with the model of economic development currently in force.

A positive effect is the search for other sources and sectors for economic development, among which culture and creativity undoubtedly have a new place. Culture and the arts are now viewed as a major resource for the global economy and as an essential requirement for social cohesion, democracy and diversity. Maybe the economic crisis could even be considered an opportunity for the entire cultural sector?

This meeting is mainly concerned with cultural heritage, moveable and immovable. Let us therefore examine all possibilities to help governments, in particular in the Mediterranean region, to better ensure the protection and conservation of their cultural heritage, i.e.: monuments, sacred places, historical buildings, archaeological sites and objects, museums, collections and movable objects. You have been handed over a non-exhaustive list of questions I have compiled. Our discussion of these questions should be very open.

### **Questions of funding, staff training and raising public awareness**

Funding is the first question. How to ensure that adequate funding and trained personnel are available for the conservation of cultural heritage? Then comes the question of training staff responsible for heritage. And how best can we ensure that the general public is aware of cultural heritage preservation issues? What subjects should be taught in schools and universities?

How to develop new strategies and policies, ratify the international cultural conventions (in particular the UNESCO 1954, 1970, 1972, 1995, 2001, 2003 Conventions)? What assistance should countries be given to implement these international conventions? How should these be translated into national legislation? And how should they be ratified? These conventions are extremely important. The UNIDROIT convention for example has only been ratified by only 33 countries. If it were to be ratified by most major states, key players in the trade in antiquities, we would be faced with far fewer illegal excavations and smuggled art works. We must encourage our governments to ratify this convention. Forty states have ratified the 2001 Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage.

How to prevent the looting of sites, theft in sacred places, and the illicit traffic of cultural property? We need to prevent looting and trafficking by training police forces and customs services, monks and church priests too. We have heard testimony about sites destroyed through a lack of maintenance. How can we best prevent the destruction of sacred places and places that embody cultural heritage? How can we improve inter-State cooperation to further a shared agreement by politicians and peoples? How can we improve dialogue, within the framework of international institutions, during all our statutory meetings, or at specialist gatherings such as this forum? How can we preserve the sector and promote it economically via cultural tourism? I'm talking about tourism that seeks more than just beaches, and that respects cultural sites and community rights.

And how can we maximize participation in the preservation process by the ethnic and religious groups living in these places? It seems to me that much could be done to embrace participation by local residents to ensure that these sites are living places, not dead zones visited only by tourists.

How to develop the cultural heritage sector as an economic factor for employment generation, capacity building and specialized training; and how to enhance sustainable, cultural and ecological tourism which is respectful of cultural heritage and traditions and which benefits both the cultural sites and local communities?

How international organizations and foundations can assist countries and governments in these processes and how to enhance State-to-State cooperation?

You will be hearing presentations from four eminent contributors. After **Jean-Claude Thébault**, **Miguel Palacio** the youngest of our participants will be speaking, representing the Russian Orthodox Church. He bears a Colombian name and tells me that he is a child of Perestroika. He will be followed by **His Excellency Alfredo Bastianelli**, the Italian Ambassador to Cyprus, and the final contributor will be **Francesco Siravo** from the Aga Khan Trust for Culture, an architect specialized in historic conservation who has a long association with UNESCO.

**Jean-Claude THÉBAULT**, *General Director of the BEPA of the European Commission*

I will not list all the measures that the EU takes to preserve and protect cultural heritage. This was covered yesterday, and I noted what Professor BouchenakI has to say about the need for EUROMED credits, which I will pass on to Brussels.

### **Budget cuts: no cause to be defeatist**

The financial and economic crisis means that budget restrictions and cuts cannot be avoided. Culture is often the first area to be hit. During this current crisis, even before 2008, we've seen this happening. There is as yet no white smoke from the Brussels discussions. There is still no agreement, but we know that a "large minority" is seeking drastic cuts to the EU budget, and thus to the credits allocated to culture and cultural heritage. We shall see what happens. I don't want to be defeatist. Whatever does happen, we must ensure that support from the EU is maintained as much as possible.

You are all well aware that this crisis is hitting both shores of the Mediterranean, meaning the member states on the northern shores too. Its effects are all too tangible. Just some examples: Italy, one of the countries most alert to these questions, now devotes just 0.21% of its budget to culture despite, so we are told, hosting half the world's heritage. Several globally renowned sites are threatened because of a lack of funds. Portugal hasn't had a culture ministry for over a year. In Spain, several major establishments have had their budgets cut dramatically. The world-famous Prado museum has lost 5 million euros from its budget. And Greece, as you all know, is facing acute problems, even though its heritage is a major economic challenge as it relates directly to tourism. I'm not trying to show that everybody is suffering, simply attempting to point out that this is a fight that we have to undertake together.

### **The link between cultural heritage and values strikes at confidence in Europe**

Leaving such obvious matters aside, we hope to put the crisis behind us, to enjoy better times once again, re-establishing expenditure that is currently being postponed.

But this is not simply an economic and financial crisis, it is a political crisis, a crisis of confidence. This is a crisis that is hitting public institutions almost everywhere. There is a link to the matters under discussion here. For if Europe and its citizens fail to rediscover a sense of trust in their institutions, in their countries, there is a risk that things will become very difficult, for culture and values cannot easily be disassociated. When certain universal values common to all of Europe are shattered, the risk becomes very great. The EU must be resolute and united

in its commitment to cultural development and the preservation of sites on both shores of the Mediterranean. There are real concerns: extremist and even xenophobic tendencies are on the rise in most countries of Europe. From a political standpoint, this is a very worrying development, thwarting the adoption of right-minded policies that we all need, policies based on our values. When values are shattered, the world is shattered too.

**Miguel PALACIO**, *Representative from the Department for External Church Relations of the Russian Orthodox Church*

I represent the Department for External Church Relations of the Russian Orthodox Church, which has 100 million members in 60 countries. It is a great pleasure to be here among so many of my brothers.

A meeting such as this can but serve to improve the quality of the Orthodox Church's advice and comments to governments and society at large on issues of economic and social policy. We are a serious and active partner at all levels – local, regional, national and European – for the development of effective and lasting solutions to the challenging economic and social conditions we face.

The debates at this seminar are a fine illustration of the complex and pluridimensional causes of these economic and social hardships. The Orthodox Church is well aware that it is impossible to solve these problems without taking into account the historical roots that underlie today's events. Since the financial crisis began, the Orthodox Church has tried to meet social needs that have risen in these times of poverty, discrimination, individualism and the weakening of social ties. Faithful to its mission, the Orthodox Church has increased its charitable and social solidarity work within its parish communities and via the social infrastructures that it has developed, focusing especially on the most vulnerable members of society.

### **An essentially spiritual crisis**

But this is an essentially spiritual crisis. Society's violence is in large measure caused by the chaotic nature of our relations with God, with ourselves, our neighbours, the world. In such conditions, a crisis of values is unsurprising. In place of the values of honesty, rigor, competence, stability, honour and responsibility, once a hallmark of European society, we now find basic instincts, gambling, risk, speculation, incompetence and irresponsibility. As we are more experienced in matters of humanity's inner spiritual challenges, we see strong ties between these challenges and external upheavals, such as the financial crisis, political instability and the breakdown of social cohesion that is so widespread in today's world.

The Orthodox Church is in a unique position in society to attempt to heal the deep-rooted causes of the ills that assail us. We advocate solidarity, humility, moderation, generosity and, above all, knowledge of God. We know that despite all our striving for perfection, it is scarcely possible to eliminate egotism, negligence and the lust for power from the world. Looking to the future, we are all too aware of the difficulties of taking action. How best can we reduce the avidity of profit-based economic systems?

### **Religion, a private matter?**

A few words about secularism. The world is dominated by lay thinking that is in the process of removing religion from the public arena, declaring it to be a private matter. This means you can do what you like at home, believe what you want at the bottom of your heart, but you can only collaborate with the state and society under certain established rules that apply to all. This apparently equitable approach becomes a real challenge for Christians when laws run counter to Christian ethics on issues such as abortion, euthanasia and same-sex marriage.

Modern secularism reminds us of pagan Rome: you can believe in whatever you want, but you have to make sacrifices to the gods. This is called tolerance and pluralism. Belief in God and the decision to follow the commandments are usually termed a private matter. It has become bad manners, dated and archaic to make a public declaration of faith. More and more frequently in EU countries we are seeing discrimination against citizens who actively express Christian positions. Certain employers consider wearing a Christian symbol, such as a baptismal crucifix, to be a violation of corporate culture. Voices are heard calling for the banning of public Christian celebrations such as Christmas, using the fallacious pretext that such celebrations insult other religious communities.

How are Christians to halt this trend? What is the true power of Christianity? This is determined by Christians' faith, their capacity to live by the Gospel, bringing the light of divine truth to the people. Having lost the capacity to be the salt of the earth, Christians have become incapable of standing up to oppose the various ideologies that claim their own truths for the governance of daily life.

### **Christian MANHART**

Thank you, Miguel Palacio, for reminding us that the prevailing economic society makes it far more difficult today to live a spiritual life, such as promoted by the Orthodox Church. I now have the pleasure to hand over to Alfredo Bastianelli, the Italian Ambassador to Cyprus.



**H.E. Alfredo BASTIANELLI**, *Ambassador of the Italian Republic to the Republic of Cyprus*

Cultural heritage protection is essential for Europe's collective memory. Our shared historical identity is a priority, not just for Italy but for all the 27 EU member states. In democratic societies, cultural heritage policies are a negotiation between stakeholders: politicians, administrators, economic actors involved in heritage, not-for-profit bodies and public opinion.

Public opinion is important, as cultural heritage is supported by governments whose actions may be based on education as a way to increase awareness among the public at large.

The Mediterranean region is a special case in terms of cultural heritage. Italy, as you know, has more UNESCO world heritage sites than any other country in the world. The region as a whole can be characterized by the imbalance between the extraordinary riches of southern Europe's heritage and the limited resources of its governments. After decades of relative prosperity and improved funding, archaeological, cultural and historical treasures now face new threats. From the Arctic to the Aegean, governments are cutting culture budgets as they strive to balance their public finances and rein in their debt. The EU has provided some dramatic figures in this area.

### **Innovate: new types of funding, new roles for heritage**

Every crisis is, however, an opportunity. The economic situation forces us to be creative and to find new ways to preserve our cultural heritage, particularly in times when government funding is reduced. The heritage sector has to prove its ability to adopt responsible and intelligent management methods to meet the new situation. The idea is would that private funding, donations, sponsors and not-for-profit organizations would play a larger role and become instruments for tackling the consequences of the crisis. For example, the world famous Milan-based Scala Opera House is now a semi-private foundation; the state continues to pay part of the operational costs, but these have been reduced. The opera changed its statutes in order to seek private sponsors without compromising its public funding. The process was successful, and the opera house was restored with funding provided by Italian tire manufacturer Pirelli.

Many companies are ready, with one eye to the future, to initiate similar associations with high-profile institutions with one eye to the future. This involves heritage adopting new uses and a profit culture in order to better preserve it. Heritage is today considered an important component in urban and environmental planning.

The economic crisis can help to remind us of the importance of cultural heritage. Informed choices must be made to permit other people and lobbies to play a far more active role. Private funds are welcome but they cannot answer all the questions that the financial and economic crisis raises. We have to find a new mix between the role of public and private sectors. We need long-term thinking if we are to ensure the durability of the protection efforts made. It is very important to improve education policies aimed at the general public. This involves associating not-for-profit organizations and associations with the decisions that will have to be taken if we are to preserve our heritage and promote better training. After all, preserving our cultural heritage is important not just for the present but also for generations as yet unborn, the Europeans of tomorrow.

### **Christian MANHART**

Thank you Mr. Ambassador for your appeal for greater creativity, to avoid reliance on public funding alone and to develop partnerships with the private sector and find new roles for museums. Museums cannot be simply spaces for the exhibition of historical objects, they have to play an active role in society. At the request of UNESCO Member States and the UNESCO General Conference, we are, jointly with ICOM, preparing a new instrument for museums that will take into account these new functions. This is the start of a process that may lead in time to a recommendations by the General Conference.

Last, but by no means least, I would like to invite Francesco SIRAVO to present his views.

### **Francesco SIRAVO**, *Aga Khan Trust for Culture, Historic Cities Programme*

The Aga Khan network shares your concerns about the future of our common heritage, a concern that lies at the heart of the work at the Aga Khan Trust for Culture. Our organization was founded in 1991 by His Highness the Aga Khan and is dedicated to revitalizing culture and improving the overall quality of life in societies where Muslims have a significant presence. One of the AKTC's best known programs is the Award for Architecture. There is also a program devoted to preserving traditional music from the Islamic world. Finally, the Historic Cities Programme, where I work, focuses on the Islamic built heritage and, since 1991, it has implemented conservation and urban revitalization projects in culturally significant sites of the Islamic world. In particular, it has undertaken the restoration and rehabilitation of historic buildings and public spaces in ways that spur social, economic and cultural development.

## **The AKTC's experience: cultural heritage, a driving force for development**

We have been in existence for twenty-two years now, and have been present in many countries, including Afghanistan, Egypt, India, Mali, Pakistan, Syria and Tajikistan. Our work in Cairo, for example, has been carried out for over fifteen years. This continuity of efforts testifies to the fact that the preservation and conservation of cultural heritage can be an important driving force for development, a fact that can be measured only over the span of several years. Not all types of development, of course, but a development that respects the environment, the qualities of historic spaces and the identity of communities. This form of development is also a way to make the best of existing resources and opportunities in order to enhance the quality and vitality of urban spaces and societies across the Islamic world. This is an important consideration at a time when resources are limited and economic opportunities are vastly reduced. Our approach to historic cities is holistic and integrated, aimed at engaging in activities as varied as adaptive re-use, contextual urban planning and the improvement of housing, infrastructure and public open spaces, such as urban gardens and parks. In parallel, we try to address interrelated socio-economic development initiatives directed at upgrading local living conditions. Investments in single project locations or regions are coordinated with other programs of the Aga Khan Development Network so that they reinforce each other towards creating a critical mass for positive change. Paramount is the protection of important cultural and heritage assets, and I wholly agree with Bishop del Rio Carrasco that we must create and constantly update inventories within historic cities and cultural landscapes. Often we do not even know what we have, and efforts to list and protect our threatened heritage are essential.

An additional, important aspect touched by this conference is the conservation of the heritage in a divided society. Our work in Mostar which took place in the late 1990's and early 2000's, after the 1992-1995 conflict, has made us keenly aware of the problems that divided communities face and of the efforts that are needed to bring everybody together around a shared plan of action, transcending ideologies and divisions. The rehabilitation of cultural assets and the careful planning of existing resources can contribute substantially to this effort by creating a harmonious environment where people of different cultures, religions and ethnic affiliations can live and work side by side.

## **Working as closely as possible with communities and their daily realities**

I'd like to add a few words about responsibilities. Responsibility means working with local communities to ensure better living conditions and promote the economic development in ways that are compatible with the existing resources. As AKTC, we often act in support of local communities striving to create improved living conditions and the preservation of precious heritage assets. We do this in two ways:

- first, we examine national heritage policies to determine whether better alternatives may be identified. We all know that development can be uncontrolled and that there exist better possibilities for preserving these historic sites while, at the same time, enhancing a form of economic development which is respectful of history and traditions;
- second, we assist communities directly by using the organization's own funds, as well as funds made available by international, bilateral and private donors and investors.

This touches on the issue of funding availability during times of economic crisis. I believe in these difficult times we are all affected by reduced resources and have difficulties in obtaining funding for the preservation of monuments and other cultural initiatives. To the extent possible, the strategy we are trying to pursue ties together cultural projects with the improvement of community facilities, infrastructure and urban services, for which funding is still available. This reinforces the notion that culture and development can be complementary and create mutual synergies that contribute to the overall wellbeing of a society.

We must continue in this direction, including the rehabilitation of religious structures, another subject touched by this conference. Ancillary spaces within religious complexes can often provide space for community and educational purposes which are compatible with the nature of the sites and can give many more years of life to structures which are otherwise destined to decay and eventual destruction. In many cases, it is not too late to give new life to these structures and make them part of the daily life of a community.

Let me mention one last aspect which I believe to be of great relevance, working as I have in many important Islamic cities, I have realized the extent of destruction and transformation of traditional urban assets and historic heritage. Similar phenomena are occurring in other cities as well as a result of rapid and unprecedented urban expansion. It is not an exaggeration to say that approximately one third or more of these precious and irreplaceable urban assets have been destroyed in recent decades in historic cities as important as Cairo, Samarkand and Zanzibar. I believe that our concept of urban development in traditional contexts must be revisited with the aim of repairing past damage, introducing compatible new functions and returning continuity to the structure form and life of traditional urban places and communities. Thank you.

### **Christian MANHART**

One of the fascinating features of your organization, the Aga Khan Trust for Culture, is that it also works on subjects like housing, something that UNESCO

is unable to do. You relate to housing and infrastructure projects, and your aim of preserving monuments as living buildings is extremely important. I now welcome further contributions to our debate.

**Baroness Jacques JONET – DE BASSOMPIERRE**, *President of the private Foundation Futur 21, Vice President of Malta Belgium International*

I would like to add another – modest – dimension to the debate. In order to preserve heritage we have to start by understanding its value. If we are to be effective over the long term, education and awareness-raising need to happen at a very young age. A child as yet unborn can dance to a toccata by Bach that her mother listens to. Early memories stay with us for life. For me, this was the statue of a bodhisattva in a remote temple in Japan where my grandfather lived for many years and whose passion for that country he passed on to me; I was five years old at the time.

Forgive me, but I must stress that this is all basically very simple, and we can all play a part. I recently visited the magnificent Vatican museum, one of the world's finest. I was very surprised to find that none of the numerous boutiques sold anything specifically aimed at young children. This is something that we can all do, the leading international organizations like UNESCO with its wonders of the world, local authorities with the street-corner churches, as well as private owners and funders. This is something that everybody can do, even at a very small level, and that I feel is part of a shared responsibility.

**Christian MANHART**

Thank you. It is very important to start educational efforts as early as possible. And children can lead their parent to visit museums...

**Msgr. Marcelo SANCHEZ SORONDO**, *Chancellor of the Pontifical Academy of Sciences and of the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences*

We have heard much about external difficulties, but there also exists what I might term an internal enemy, by which I mean religions' differing sensitivities relative to sacred places. Christians generally distinguish between sacred and holy. The sacred is an anthropological category that concerns a shared responsibility. The sacred is, at times, interpreted in a somewhat fanatical and fundamentalist manner. As for the holy, Bishop del Rio Carrasco provided an astonishing example, with Catholic churches being handed over to create mosques. This is no small thing. Sensibilities about sacred places do vary, and this is something that abso-

lutely must be taken into account as part of this work. This is a difficulty that we face, but it is something that, in a spirit of share responsibility, we must overcome.

**Prof. Mounir BOUCHENAKI**, *Advisor to UNESCO and former General Director of ICCROM*

I would like to pick up on two points.

1. First, concerning the contributions from Jean-Claude Thébault and the Italian Ambassador to Cyprus. Italy has long experience of managing cultural heritage and it is no coincidence that the country has 47 sites on the World Heritage List. Italy is the country with the largest number of sites on the list, but that does not mean that it is home to 50% of the world cultural heritage, as often reported.

### **The Italian experience: the Carabinieri Art Squad**

Italy has specific experience in one of the areas highlighted by Maria Hadjicosti, Cyprus' Director of Cultural Heritage, and Bishop Christoforos: the fight against trafficking in art works. One possible area for cooperation would be to work with the Carabinieri Art Squad<sup>13</sup>. Italy is, as far as I am aware, the only country with a special section of the armed forces to look after cultural heritage. This military corps has accomplished wonderful things over the past forty years. When I was at ICCROM – and here I'm speaking on behalf of my colleague from ICCROM, Stefano de Caro – we signed an agreement with the carabinieri to ensure that their experience and professionalism could be used to help other countries. We did this in Cambodia, providing training to customs, police officers and personnel responsible for heritage; it is something that we repeated in Afghanistan and, more recently, Iraq.

Could not this be applied in Cyprus, with a training programme perhaps jointly designed by UNESCO, ICCROM and the Italian government, particularly the corps of Carabinieri? This is a concrete initiative that we could maybe discuss at a future forum?

13 - <http://www.carabinieri.it/Internet/Cittadino/Informazioni/Tutela/Patrimonio+Culturale/>

## **Being open to the knowledge of others: the Focolari experience**

2. The second point, alluded to by Professor Kriari, is dialogue. Religious communities often have little insight into other religions. I know of one experiment that I have taken part in myself, the Focolari. The Focolari are an association of Christians – I received founder Chiara Lubich at UNESCO when she was awarded a prize<sup>14</sup> – who seek to encounter other religions, Muslim communities in particular. In the town that Ambassador Grasset and I both come from, there is a monastery where I learnt Latin as a child, a place where the Focolari regularly meet – every fortnight or every month – with members of the Muslim community. They talk together, at first simply getting to know each other, then forming ties based on understanding, respect and tolerance, or rather, as tolerance is not a word I like, acceptance of one another. This is the type of concrete work in the field that needs to be encouraged.

### **Christian MANHART**

Thank you for your highly practical propositions. Let us continue.

### **H. Em. Metropolitan Athanasios of Achaia**, *Director of the Office of the Church of Greece to the European Union*

I would like to know whether our Cypriot friends have been in dialogue about protecting religious site with the community in the north.

To the organizer of this conference, I would like to ask if they have any ideas about how to get representatives from the other community around this table. The Republic of Cyprus is unable to invite them as it does not recognize them as a state. But bodies like the Order of Malta might, perhaps, find it easier to get the two communities to sit down at the same table.

### **Dr Maria HADJICOSTI**, *Director of the Department of Antiquities of the Republic of Cyprus*

I would like to pick up on Professor Bouchenaki's suggestion of organizing training with various different bodies. I said in my presentation that there is a very close working relationship between the Department of Antiquities, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Church of Cyprus and the customs and police services. The

14 - UNESCO 1996 Prize for Peace Education, Paris.

Cypriot police have established a heritage department in collaboration with the Italian police. We also work with Interpol. These are long-standing collaborations and I believe that the Cypriot government's way of working is considered to be a model of its type, with actions undertaken at various levels and results obtained in terms of the repatriation of antiquities and cultural items.

As far as the efforts made to promote collaboration between the two communities on the island of Cyprus, I have to say that much good work has been achieved via the ongoing talks to seek solutions to the Cypriot problem. As part of the process, we have set up a joint committee of Greek and Turkish Cypriot experts. A very long list of monuments has already been drawn up and both sides have listed their priorities. We are working to achieve the restoration and conservation of specific monuments. Other conservation measures are underway and we are renewing our priorities.

### **Christian MANHART**

Can you answer the second half of the question: was the Northern Cyprus invited to this forum?

### **H.E. Jean-Pierre MAZERY**, *Grand Chancellor of the Sovereign Order of Malta*

We plan to hold this forum every year, or every second year, and would be delighted to act as a mediator next time, if that is possible. Up until now we thought it would be better to remain among Greek Cypriots to outline our ideas and how we wanted to proceed. But we are, of course, open to new ideas.

### **H.E. Alberto LEONCINI BARTOLI**, *Ambassador of the Sovereign Order of Malta to the Holy See, Diplomatic Counselor to the Grand Chancellor*

I would like to speak about the earlier question, asking us all to suggest measures. I quote: how can international organizations and foundations help governments with this process and how can cooperation between states be improved? In my opinion, the meritorious work of international organizations and foundations could benefit from activities of awareness-raising from the media equal to an essential task in the history of the nation's civilization process.

Actually, in the light of an international reality increasingly characterized by the impact of the media on public opinion, even outside the Mediterranean region, we can only consider as a priority any initiative aiming at supporting the work



of governments and at improving cooperation between States. This forum, in which I have the honor to participate, and this follow-up, followed by a welcome contribution in terms of analysis and in-depth studies from specialized journals, should be able to effectively keep the interest level high and encourage research best suited for the complexity of the issues

It is clear that any attempt at media level could only take place within the context of the paths pursued by institutions, governments and parliaments through the relevant parliamentary committee for Cultural Affairs.

In this respect, cooperation between states related to the intensity of relations, particularly between the countries of the Mediterranean region, becomes fundamental especially during bilateral and multilateral meetings between Prime Ministers or Ministers of Culture. In this perspective, it remains undeniable that progress in the delicate matter of protection and conservation of cultural heritage in the Mediterranean could only be hampered by a situation in the Mediterranean region characterized by tensions and turmoil.

### **Christian MANHART**

You are right. We must all make sure that our shared responsibilities are better known.

Regarding the media, they are often sensationalist and can have a negative effect. This is something that worries us. UNESCO still has some work to do on its relationship with the media. Now, Ambassador Bastianelli has something to add.

### **H.E. Alfredo BASTIANELLI**

A word about the Carabinieri. This is a relatively unique force whose accomplishments are incredible. As Doctor Hadjicosti has reminded us, the Carabinieri Art Squad is already cooperating with the Cyprus police. There are regular meetings attended by officers from both sides and cooperation is both close and productive.

One small precision: Italy might not have half the heritage, but it does have the highest concentration per square kilometre. And if we were to remove all Italian pieces from museums, I wonder what would happen to the Louvre or the Metropolitan in New York.

**Prof. Ismini KRIARI**, *Vice-Rector of the Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences, Athens*

I'd like to turn again to the importance of the media. In Canada, some Muslim citizens produced a light-hearted TV series called *The Little Mosque on the Prairie*, which took a humorous look at some of the problems that prejudice causes Canada's Muslims. This series was a big hit in Canada, where it attracted 2 million viewers. The series was translated and broadcast in the countries of North Africa.<sup>15</sup> This is a good example of a cultural approach. Perhaps these are flowers able to bloom on certain continents, but we cannot know whether they will flourish in countries that bear the heavy burden of long-lasting conflicts such as our Mediterranean countries.

### **A day to commemorate the birthplace of our civilization?**

As a Greek and a European, I well understand the financial constraints. But would it really be too hard for UNESCO or the EU to name a day to commemorate the sacred sites of the Mediterranean? We already have days for cultural education and intercultural dialogue, and many others; would it really be so difficult to set aside a day to commemorate the birthplace of our civilization?

**Jean-Claude THÉBAULT**, *General Director of the BEPA of the European Commission*

Thank you for this suggestion, which I can only support. This reminds me that every year the EU names one or more cities as Capital of Culture. Androulla Vassiliou is in charge of this programme. Marseille will be next capital, Athens was the first, in 1985.

### **A Mediterranean capital of culture, twinned with the capitals of Europe?**

These events have very positive spin-offs in terms of economic and cultural reinvigoration. The cities make many preparations and organize visits and exchanges. Listening to your views, I find myself asking why we should not try to nominate a Mediterranean capital of culture? Perhaps it could incorporate twinning between cities on both sides of the Mediterranean. It's an idea...

15 - And France, on France Ô.

## Christian MANHART

Speaking for UNESCO, I would say that it is not hard to create a special day, but that it requires your government to make the request, which will then be examined by the Executive Board and either adopted or rejected by the General Conference. It is up to Member States to make this kind of request.

## Sir Paul DUJARDIN, *General Director of the Centre for Fine Arts, Brussels*

Working with the European Parliament, we are holding an event next week on the subject of the financial crisis and possible alternatives.<sup>16</sup> We will be presenting a recent study of consolidated pan-European data since the crisis broke in 2008. This shows that cuts in public subsidies have not been offset by new resources. Although Europe's leading heritage and arts institutions such as the Scala in Milan manage to keep their heads above water, and although a major institution like the Prado can, in theory, keep going in the face of major cutbacks, smaller structures face a real battle to survive. A divide is beginning to appear.

Additionally, all national governments have, in the last two years, made decisions about tax and VAT while under considerable pressure, meaning that within the eurozone there is a very marked imbalance in the amounts of tax to pay on revenue (if any); museum entrance tickets are already inexpensive... This pan-European gathering will be held in Brussels this Tuesday and Wednesday; the documents are on the Palais des Beaux-Arts and European Concert Hall Organization websites.<sup>17</sup> The seminar is open to the public. There is also a possibility of training in ways to find other sources of funding.

The Aga Khan Foundation provides a fine example of a different approach. It is vital to be able to share expertise and pass on information to the major institutions, to prove that synergies can be found, even though this is not the only solution, as Europe is not yet in the same position as Great Britain. It is fair to say that at present, Europeans pay twice for heritage and cultural development: first via taxes, then individually.

### **The British National Trust model**

England offers a very interesting model in heritage management terms. The English National Trust heritage protection organization involves a large number of citizens and is a model that we can look to. This model exists throughout Europe, but nowhere as widespread as in England, where it enables public and religious actions to exist at a very local level. How can we make it available to people today?

16 - "Funding for the Arts in Challenging Times", 28 November 2012. With reducing public subsidies for the cultural sector and governments offering less fiscal incentives for giving, how will European Arts and Cultural institutions survive in the future?

17 - <http://concerthallorganisation.eu/>

These are models of Anglo-Saxon inspiration, more Protestant, more focused on individuals taking responsibility in place of the public authorities. Finding the right balance between the state in its role as guardian of our institutions and citizens, who must also assume responsibilities in this area, is an issue we must settle for the future.

**Father Fadi SAMIA**, *Representative of the Maronite Archbishop of Cyprus*

I am here as representative of the Maronite Archbishop of Cyprus. My thanks to Father Savvas for mentioning the Maronite church in the context of the occupied zones. Churches have not just been converted into mosques, one of them, Agia Marina, has become a military facility! I would also like to express my agreement with those who spoke of the healing of memory. I am Lebanese, and have left Lebanon to serve the Maronite Catholic Church; our roots are in Lebanon but we are represented all over the world.

When we talk of Arabs, we are in fact usually referring to the Islamic culture. But many Christian Arabs live in these countries, coexisting with Muslims. There is acceptance and communication in all moments of daily life. I would like to state my wish that representatives from the occupied zone be invited to join in these discussions. We can only heal the wounds of the past by communicating and learning to understand ourselves.

**Dr Hayet GUETTAT GUERMAZI**, *Director of Heritage Preservation at ALECSO*

I would like to add to the point made about education and communication, and especially the use of modern means of communication, the social media that our young, and not so young, people use more and more: Twitter, Facebook and so on. At ALECSO, we are running a major project known as virtual visits to Arab cities, starting with the medina in Tunis. These visits focus very much on tolerance and coexistence between religions. For the Tunis medina, we have attempted to show all places of worship and the wonderful layering that has accrued over time, the traces of different cultures and religions that have accumulated to create this Mediterranean culture of openness and acceptance of the other. The project targets not just professionals but also young people, children and tourists who first seek their information on the internet. This is a project that will make it easier to communicate about heritage and relationships with others.

## **Working with capitals of Arab culture?**

I also want to pick up on what Jean-Claude Thébault said about European capitals of culture: ALECSO celebrates the capitals of Arab culture as well. In 2013, it will be Baghdad; the ministers have decided that in 2014 it will be Tripoli in Libya. It would be great if we could work together on twinning initiatives to promote partnerships around the Mediterranean.

## **Christian MANHART**

Thank you all for your numerous and varied suggestions.

## **H.E. Jean-Pierre MAZERY**

This has been an extremely fruitful round table. I am sure that Ambassador Ugo Leone will take into account the recommendations and suggestions that have been made. Our morning is not, however, at an end. We look forward to Ambassador Pierre Morel's summary up, after which we will hear from Doctor Erato Kozakou-Marcoullis, the driving force behind the Cyprus Forum.





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# SYNTHESIS

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**H.E. Pierre MOREL**  
**Former French Ambassador**





**H.E. Pierre MOREL**, *Former French Ambassador*

Summing up is always a delicate task, but the first place to start is with acknowledgements. We thank the Order of Malta, the Republic of Cyprus, UNESCO and the European Union for, each in its own way, enabling such a productive meeting to take place. Thanks also to our Cypriot hosts, whose experience of the questions we discussed yesterday and today we now understand far better. Nothing focuses the mind more effectively on finding solutions than concrete examples from real life.

This is a tried and trusted process: the forum is part of a highly substantive and methodical sequence that has, in just a few years, deepened understanding and forged new alliances. Within our different spheres of activity that are nonetheless related and convergent, we are learning to know each other better, to work together more efficiently in a difficult context that is only going to become still more difficult. This is why we feel a sense of urgency.

We have made new contacts, and here I must thank the Grand Chancellor, who has regularly allowed our debates to overrun whenever there was a shared desire to delve deeper into an issue. These extended discussions have greatly aided our work, and the flexibility we have enjoyed certainly made things go more smoothly. But now it is time for conclusions.

I shall try to summarize as concisely as possible. Our debates ranged in various directions, and I shall endeavour to highlight eight points that I felt to be particularly striking. Each one of you is at liberty to take my critical examination further with your own initiatives and as part of the preparation for the phases to come.

**Solidarity in response to the increased fragility of material and spiritual heritage**

1. We at this forum have been able to appraise the risk of a decline in Mediterranean cultural heritage that is not simply, or indeed primarily, material.

We live in an age where the very notion of heritage is under threat, just like the major natural balances. Here I would like to build on Bishop Marcelo Sanchez Sorondo's theme of the nature-culture pairing. There is nothing new in the idea of parallel deterioration, but it does seem to be accelerating. If the entire planet has, via the IPCC and the Copenhagen Summit, taken on board the gravity of global warming, the same cannot be said for the cultural heritage world. One conclusion stands out: we have to act on all fronts. It is not enough to dramatize this or that particular case, even if it might serve to draw attention. All in all, we are seeing a potential shrinking of our heritage. The alarm must ring out. We should not be pessimistic, but the speakers we have heard clearly feel a sense of danger. We all, quite rightly, have our own views, but if we are to judge what is at stake, we need to look at the bigger picture.

We must take care of the abode. And this abode is both material and immaterial. The need to strengthen the feeling of solidarity and common interest is emerging. We have referred to ecumenical, meaning inter-religious, solidarity. For there are several degrees that separate the ecumenical (branches of the same religion) from the inter-religious. We could refer to a solidarity that is inter-cultural, or even spiritual, with the sense that these feelings of solidarity must be strengthened in the face of a threat.

Since 1986, the inter-religious Assisi meetings have been a marker of this growing solidarity. One of the innovations introduced by Pope Benedict XVI was to invite non-believers, whom he described as “pilgrims of truth.” This was not simply a gesture of goodwill, rather it expressed the idea that in an emergency, nobody who seeks should be ignored, and because they are seekers, they too understand the risk of decline.

I will sum up this first point by saying that there is increasing awareness of the solidarity of all participants in the face of the fragility of our heritage, which has a material dimension but is far from being limited to that dimension. Although we must make progress on the material front, it is vital to also understand the value of spiritual solidarity.

### **The power of symbols makes heritage a target as well as a lever for action**

2. This leads me to my second point: the power of symbols, which should never be underestimated. In the long, long, multi-millennial history of major heritage components, the traces and testimonies of faith retain their powerful force across the centuries: they can draw crowds, change people’s lives, encourage sharing, rhythm the life of large communities through regular pilgrimages, but also stimulate conflicts. Here again we can see the ties between the material and the immaterial. I am thinking here of the dramatic destruction of monuments that have been mentioned, at Bamiyan and Timbuktu. A shiver of alarm is felt every time this happens. These are monuments, and far more besides. We understand that something serious is afoot, that mobilization is needed, although such mobilization sometimes fails. Bamiyan was, in this sense, a turning point. Despite efforts that came close to reaching the very maximum mobilization possible at the time, the result was failure. But it was at least the beginning of a new awareness and a desire to convert the first shivers of unease into a more effective form of action and lessons for the future.

At the same time, we are seeing another illustration of the power of symbols which then drives powerful movements devoted to reconstruction. This is extremely impressive, everywhere. I could mention Optino Pustin, near Kaluga, in Russia, the monastery which serves as a reference at the beginning of Dostoyevsky’s Brothers

Karamazov, a monastery which was totally destroyed after 1917 and totally rebuilt. Or the Eastern Peak Temple, a Taoist temple close to Beijing, totally destroyed, totally rebuilt. Walls can spring up again like trees.

Thus, not all destruction is irreversible. The true power of symbols is that they are levers for action. The nature of these attacks serves to highlight the links between the material and the immaterial. Destruction seeks to erase what the monument stands for. Such destruction is at once a totalitarian act and the basis for overcoming these aggressions.

Our discussions have enabled us to set forth a typology.

There is destruction as a result of conflict, whose first sub-category is accidental destruction (when losses are assessed afterwards, but have happened accidentally). Then, there are targeted, deliberate acts of destruction, acts of elimination, of abolition, which are a symbolic indication, a negation of the past, the affirmation or construction of a new identity.

Alongside conflict, there is the issue of social and societal changes, what we call modernization, the interplay of markets that also create a process of abolition, brutal or selective devaluation of accrued memories that market forces or real estate development will sweep aside. This is therefore a deliberate obliteration, even though we find alibis, telling ourselves that such and such a monument will confirm that memory has been preserved. Within this unstoppable process, we can invoke a relatively good practice with the renovation of ancient quarters, a field in which we have 50 or 60 years' experience. The example that the AKDN<sup>18</sup> offers with Islamic architecture is one of the most vivid in an area where awareness of the issue is more recent. But it is easy to go quickly from control over the process to errors of judgment that will cause bitter regrets later on.

Among the changes affecting the modern world, above and beyond modernization, there is a mechanism that inexorably accompanies economic development, something that I call the emergence of lawless zones. Between incomplete or failed states, zones of conflict and zones of tension we see the immediate advent of theft, trafficking, unbridled exploitation, smuggling and parallel markets. This is where we later assess the true impact of the damage and the sum of all that has been lost.

We can see the extent to which the link between the material and the immaterial and the power of symbols can be directly targeted. But they can also play a part in the process of reconstruction, many examples of which offer us the possibility of recovery, examples that are of great value to our deliberations.

18 - Aga Khan Development Network.

## **The moral dimension of reconstruction: the concept of hospitality**

3. I would like to stress the moral dimension of reconstruction in the face of loss and destruction. We have heard mention of the Frauenkirche in Dresden; we could equally speak of Coventry and the memory of the Shoah – this is not a reconstruction, but a way of reconstructing an understanding of events that cannot be erased or forgotten. This is work on commemoration, forgetting, forgiving and reconciliation. I remember Paul Ricœur and the admirable phrase that appears at the end of his magnificent book, *Memory, History, Forgetting*: “you are more worthy than your actions.” This is addressed not only at the other but also at the self. The action is, of course, reprehensible, perhaps abominable, but we have to distinguish between the fault, the crime and the individual. The heritage bequeathed to us from the very depths of our civilizations, which we must call upon when examining these questions of destruction and threat, enables us to regain a perspective, to avoid shutting ourselves off in dismay, despair and, thus, the rejection of the other. “Healing of memories” is a formula we have heard, and this is of the utmost importance, because reconstruction occurs via the relationship between the other and the self.

There is within heritage a resilience that is material, through reconstruction, but that is primarily psychological, spiritual and cultural. We can see how a responsibility can be shared, a duty to protect, which is the extension to heritage of the responsibility to protect people and communities. To underline the moral dimension of reconstruction following conflict and disaster, we should bear in mind what was said several times at this forum about respect and tolerance.<sup>19</sup> The phrase “acceptance of the other” has also been used. I would prefer to go further, suggesting a term that I feel to be a perfect match for the civilization of the Mediterranean: hospitality. Ultimately, this is not simply accepting the other, but offering a welcome. We should strive to ensure the prevalence of the idea of hospitality all around the Mediterranean.

## **Reinforce the emergency heritage management**

4. We are witnessing the practice of heritage management in times of emergency. This brings to mind the very rewarding and detailed seminar organized at UNESCO by the Order of Malta in France in collaboration with the French navy. We learned that emergency management is henceforth part of the international system and that, aside from the emergence of a reflex to show solidarity, it has become structured. We need to work to improve this emergency management. During the seminar last year, the focus was on humanitarian emergencies and basic needs. But there is a logical transition from a situation based on people and communities to the world

<sup>19</sup> - Tolerance, certainly, but with a measure of caution: I would remind you that tolerance is a pluralism of separation, it is not a pluralism of encounters. It is mere peaceful coexistence, but with everyone putting oneself first, acting on one's own behalf.

of heritage and its immaterial dimension. Humanitarian work is currently better structured than heritage emergency management, even though many organizations exist in this field. What we should take from our discussions is the need to structure further.

The legal side has also been stressed. I would like to draw a parallel with what happens under national legislations: emergency archeological programs. At any work site, when the unexpected occurs (whatever the exact case, accident, catastrophe, conflict or local crisis), regional infrastructure managers and fine arts services now have this reflex. The idea of an immediate response and protection work can no doubt be incorporated earlier on.

We need to remind ourselves of the four traditional stages of emergency management: alert, certainly we should be looking to expand warning mechanisms for heritage; prevention, there is much here for us to learn from the crises in Bamiyan and Timbuktu, and the possibilities of mediation that form an integral part of prevention; crisis management itself, and reconstruction, which is not simply technical, but spiritual and moral too.

Heritage emergency action shares something with humanitarian action: they are values in action. What matters is not simply issuing an alert, but intervening to as great an extent as possible. In the immediate term, this means responding to violence, since violence comes from distress and feeling of powerlessness. If the beginnings of a response to violence, even a partial one, can be found, then attitudes will change, behaviour will evolve and ties of solidarity will be strengthened. A mission shared among all possible actors, public, private, religious and lay, becomes possible. For this to happen, a new type of function must be developed, risks must be prepared for and the idea of an emergency fund, a body of experts, taken on board. This is not to suggest that we have to begin from scratch, absolutely not. The idea is to take what already exists, using existing observatories, to create a network of networks where everything or much is shared, in order to determine who is best placed to intervene when an emergency is identified. We need to work on the heritage aspects of crisis management, trying to take this logic as far as possible.

### **An inevitable historic turning point in the Near and Middle East that concerns us**

5. The fifth point concerns the turmoil in the Near and Middle East. The fact that we stand on the edge of a historic turning point cannot be stressed enough. Something is changing; it is hard to define yet, but it is not dissimilar to the fall of the Berlin wall, albeit under different conditions. There are so many elements involved, so many questions that arise on all sides of the Mediterranean as well as the Atlantic and in Asia – for this is truly an issue of global importance – that we must not downplay its ramifications.

We have spoken of the Arab Spring, but the phrase is not enough, it is evident that far more is involved. We have spoken of revolt, revolution, dreams, awakening, or resurgence, renaissance, with all the weight of memory this implies. It is hard to know what it is we are truly witnessing. This is a time of flux, of transition. What is certain is that all of this contains within it an upsurge of an affirmation of identity, a return to the self, at the same time as an acute questioning process. This is worthy of great attention, a ceaseless dialogue, and calls for a great many debates, colloquiums and seminars, the founding of university chairs as well as the development of concrete operations and political actions. Preparation and training for all this is fundamental, because perceptions are changing, among individuals as well as within communities, countries and political movements. We are witnessing the reform of the Arab world, while maintaining the existing formal historic frame. We cannot be mere spectators for we are directly concerned. We should embrace this process of reform, which concerns us as much as it does the Arab world.

We can clearly see all that this process may entail in terms of unpredictability and difficult management. Memory becomes selective, just as occurred during the Soviet era. The past itself becomes unpredictable depending on what it is that one seeks, what it is that one chooses to impose, to the detriment of other aspects of the past; this is where, motivated by respect and a sense of hospitality, each in our own way and wherever we may be, within the Arab world or on the shores of the Mediterranean, we have a duty to question and to accept questions from others. This reciprocity, this urgent need to intensify dialogue, is fundamental if we are not to become locked within our obsessions. I will turn later to the consequences for heritage.

During times of such historic shifts, a good way to prevent and identify threats is to embrace this state of dialogue, which is far from an easy option, but is a binding commitment.

Paul Dujardin mentioned the role of the middle classes, and they do indeed play a determining role. They are partially globalized and full actors in the transformation process. We have seen this before in other countries, other continents: the middle classes transform their country, make their particular contribution. They are also, in the midst of the changes to their world that they themselves have provoked, in need of reference points. There is upheaval in the family structure, people want to know where they are heading. The founding components of the personality and collective memory will therefore be called upon, including the religious and cultural dimensions, and thus the identity markers. This need for an identity felt by the middle classes in their role as the agents of change is probably the real engine driving the reconstitution of the Arab world. And hence the critical importance of education.

## **Media suspicion of religion's re-entry into the public sphere**

6. Religion's "return" to the public sphere is an old debate, but it has taken on new impetus. It is currently viewed with embarrassment and mistrust by governments and media. The historical process of secularisation entailed the exit of religion, something thought to be inexorable. But this is not what is happening, hence the hesitancy and hardening attitudes.

It is interesting to note that when the media report a religious event, they will often seek to identify something to "offset" it. This is what is called "neutrality". But it leads to confusion and misinformation. Here is a subject of great importance and sensitivity, and we need to find a way to shake off this reflex of unease that is apparent in the media. We need to speak out, inform, correct where there is misinformation; we need to provide more clarity and more facts in areas where over-simplification reigns. This over-simplification is the sign of dismay for many people: this was not the scenario that had been imagined, we are not sure how to proceed, we move from stereotype to stereotype, over-simplification to over-simplification. Much work is needed in this field, working calmly and methodically, based on facts, based on the law, based on the reality of the modern world, rather than simply sticking with stereotypes.

## **The involvement of places of worship in crisis situations**

7. The involvement of places of worship in local or international crisis is an aspect of the problem of the deconsecration and brutal neutralization of the traditional public sphere. These crises, incidents and emergency situations must be treated with sensitivity and intelligence. We witnessed a dramatic example in the case of the Basilica of the Nativity in Bethlehem. This terrible crisis, which did not last for long in the media, was less serious than an act of destruction, but did occasion tremendous moral harm. It took years to resolve, with magnificent work by many people. In many other varied affairs, the public sphere is instrumentalized for the purpose of an eye-catching action. This is a real risk. Even if physical heritage is undamaged, the symbol suffers. In the same way that all EU diplomats receive one week's training for hostage situations, so all managers of religious buildings should, at the very minimum, have a plan for emergencies. What to do if one arises? It is better to have thought about it beforehand, rather than to find oneself unprepared and facing thirty cameras at the entry to a religious site. This is an ever-present menace in an increasingly troubled world.



**Take action: alert politicians, educate, mobilize, confer responsibilities, reconcile**

8. I shall end with action. Many suggestions have been made. I shall not list them all, but I would like to highlight the key points. There already exists a significant national and international legal armoury, but although additions and revisions are required, we should not expect miracles. Additions should be made here and there and new protocols proposed.

But I think we should be addressing political leaders, and not necessarily via official channels. We need to say to them: “Open your eyes. Understand that this is more than a one-off crisis or accident.” The transformations our societies are undergoing give a new dimension to convictions rooted in the symbolic, in heritage and religion, but also convictions because there is also the right not to believe, which is at times also severely tested. Policies concerning these phenomena should thus be less characterized by an approach usually based on evacuation or simplification. We have a message we can convey, including to the media. Improving relations with the media on these subjects is a major task.

Training, education, certainly. I would like to mention the French experience, where the Institute for the Study of Religious Sciences ensures that all the country’s teachers, as well as hospital workers and prison guards, receive training to enable them to grasp the basics of religions and religious memories, notions often unknown by new generations..

I have mentioned mechanisms and procedures for mobilization, but one must also mention gestures of reconciliation. The responsibility to protect is another field that should also be developed as far as heritage itself is concerned, it being understood that diverse communities must be heard, meaning that the circle concerned is fairly wide and not limited simply to the legal or technical sphere.

I would like to end with the mention of one of the final ideas put forward, the twinning of capitals of European and Arabic cultures, suggested by Doctor Guettat Guer-mazi. This seem to me a wonderfully “Braudelian” way to link the north and the south of the Mediterranean. But there are many others I should have mentioned.

**The countries of the Mediterranean have an appointment with themselves**

This gathering is a call for imagination and creativity. We have to look afresh at the problems facing our heritage. This is not that same as starting afresh, far from it. The basics are solid and well-established. But in a more complex, more unpredictable, more unstable world, it is vital to be able to adapt, to create a better approach to a subject that everyone respects, even if they do not pay it sufficient heed. We have to give ourselves the means to move into action, accepting and

managing this new complexity.

Starting from my experience in recent years, I would say the EU will not miss this appointment with itself. I dare to hope that the same can be said of the entire Mediterranean region. All the countries of the Mediterranean, in the widest possible sense, have an appointment with themselves. Thank you.



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# CONCLUSIONS

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- **H.E. Dr Erato KOZAKOU-MARCOULLIS**  
**Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Cyprus**
- **H.E. Jean-Pierre MAZERY**  
**Grand Chancellor of the Sovereign Order of Malta**



**H.E. Dr Erato KOZAKOU-MARCOULLIS**, *Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Cyprus*

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to Cyprus, my country. I would like to thank the Order of Malta, UNESCO, the European Commission and all of you for the chance you have given the Republic of Cyprus to host this extremely interesting Forum.

When my dear friend Jean-Pierre Mazery suggested staging this Forum in Cyprus, there were three main reasons that led me to gladly agree:

- first, the subject of your Forum, the protection and conservation of the cultural and religious heritage of the Mediterranean, is a question of vital importance to the Republic of Cyprus, which sees continual pillage of its cultural and religious heritage occurring in the part of the country occupied by Turkey. Hundreds of historical, cultural and religious monuments in the occupied part of the island have been damaged beyond repair, while traffickers in antiquities steal and illegally sell religious and cultural treasures;

- second, because of the historical ties between Cyprus and the Order of Malta, stretching back to 1291 when the Order found refuge on Cyprus where King Henry of Lusignan permitted it to base itself in Limassol;

- finally, because the principle espoused by the Republic of Cyprus is that every people's cultural heritage belongs to humanity as a whole, and it must be safeguarded for the benefit of generations not yet born, and this applies especially to the cultural heritage of the Mediterranean region.

### **Protection of the Mediterranean cultural heritage is a shared responsibility**

Under the difficult conditions experienced in these regions, this has to be a collective responsibility, shared by us all. We must unite not just our diplomatic forces, but our personal and individual strengths too in the fight to protect this heritage bequeathed to us by the generations that have gone before. The great historian Fernand Braudel described the Mediterranean as “a thousand things at once”. “Not a single sea, but a succession of seas. Not one civilisation, but several civilisations superimposed. [...] The Mediterranean is an ancient crossroads. For millennia, everything has flowed towards this sea, overturning and enriching its history.”<sup>20</sup>

Protection of Mediterranean cultural heritage is a shared responsibility. This conference has diligently addressed all the questions that arise today: the impact of natural disasters, the challenge of the Arab Spring, the specific issues of religious

<sup>20</sup> - Fernand Braudel, *La Méditerranée - espace et histoire* [The Mediterranean – Space and History].

heritage, the effects of the economic crisis and the responsibility of national, regional and international bodies for the conservation of our cultural heritage. All these questions have been debated by scientific and academic experts with the utmost rigour on all sides. I would like to warmly congratulate every one of you for your contributions.

Its geographic position means that Cyprus has inherited an immense historical heritage. Every power that conquered this island over its long history has left its own historical imprint on the Cypriot body. However, this process, uninterrupted for centuries, was overthrown by the 1974 Turkish invasion and the illegal occupation that continues to this day. Hundreds of our churches have been ruined, transformed into mosques or demolished. Places as important as Salamine and Enkomi are abandoned to the elements and require urgent restoration. Other archaeological sites, such as the Neolithic site at Cape Andreas Kastros in the Karpas peninsula have been destroyed by the occupier. These are irreversible catastrophes. As a result of the 1974 invasion and illegal occupation, the cultural and religious heritage in the region not under the control of the Republic of Cyprus has suffered enormous harm, despite the efforts of the state, the church and private bodies to put an end to this unacceptable situation.

I would now like to address the international community, as well as every participant at this Forum, asking you to support the people and government of the Republic of Cyprus in their efforts to save a heritage that belongs to all humanity, to protect monuments that are in a tragic situation, to contribute to the repatriation of stolen treasures. Cooperation on the part of the international community is vital if we are to overcome Turkish intransigence. The international community is highly sensitive to questions touching on the respect and protection of cultural and religious heritage that belongs to all humanity, and this is important. Yet it is clear that adopting treaties, conventions, protocols, recommendations and judgments by regional and international bodies has failed to provide an effective solution to our problems. The global economic slump, the continual fighting and instability that are the hallmark of the region, serve only to make the situation worse. This is why, collectively and individually, we have to ask you that immediate measures be taken, that the existing conventions be applied, that the judgments be enforced.

At the same time, it is vital to invest in educating the new generation if we are to preserve our cultural and religious heritage, the aim being to instil in the young the idea that safeguarding humanity's history can be a foundation for a better tomorrow. During periods of crisis such as the one we are living through, we have to redouble our efforts and create ring-fences to protect the ancient civilisation of our Mediterranean. We owe an inestimable collective debt to this heritage. If we fail in our efforts to protect it, then we lose key evidence of humanity's unbroken presence. Thank you for your attention.

**H.E. Jean-Pierre MAZERY**, *Grand Chancellor of the Sovereign Order of Malta*

Dear Madame le Ministre, we have listened closely to what you have said, and we are well aware of the issues that you raise. I do not think it is by chance that we came to Cyprus. If our invitation was accepted by so many participants, experts, diplomats and politicians it is precisely because it was held here, in Cyprus. We are all very aware of the problems that reach far beyond the two parts of Cyprus and that concern the whole of humanity. We are all pragmatists in the Order of Malta. We advance little by little, step by step. Our Forum must play a part in raising awareness of the responsibility to protect; this is what we are all here for.

The quality and diversity of the views and opinions expressed over the course of the past two days, and the documents presented during this event, underline that it is particularly important and urgent to continue to work together to arrive at a shared final objective, which is the preservation and safeguard of the universal cultural heritage of the Mediterranean region.

Our discussions have clearly shown that religious freedom is best protected through the preservation and promotion of cultural and religious heritage. Protecting the Mediterranean region's heritage of outstanding and universal value for future generations to enjoy as in the past, requires new forms of action, including the determination to continue to face cultural and educational challenges, supported by the work that UNESCO accomplishes with great courage and humanity.

I would like to stress the key role played by the moderators who have guided the debates. I must also thank Ambassador Pierre Morel for his remarkable conclusions, and Ambassador Ugo Leone for drafting the Final Declaration, which is not yet finished, as we will be amending it.

Our thanks go again to His Excellency the President of the Republic of Cyprus, Dimitri Christofias, for allowing us the privilege of holding this Forum in Limassol. Special thanks are due to Doctor Kozakou-Marcoullis and her assistants for coordinating this first Forum in Cyprus, and to other government authorities and administrators who have participated in this event; thank you for your welcome and your wonderful sense of hospitality. Our thanks also go to the ambassadors to the Republic of Cyprus who accepted our invitation and to the representatives from UNESCO and the European Commission, without whom nothing would have been achieved in recent years. Thanks also to the members of the council and the directors of the *Fondation Française de l'Ordre de Malte*, the Baldi Foundation of the Order of Malta and the president of Fondation Futur 21 for their financial support, their assistance and their presence.

I would like to thank my chief of staff, Isabella Salburg-Falkenstein, and Stefania



Silvestri, our Desk Officer of the Foreign Affairs Department, for their work and commitment in preparing this Forum. And we of course extend our thanks to the interpreters.

Dear friends, we hope to continue cooperating with you in this project that is of great importance for Cyprus, for the Mediterranean region and for world heritage. We still have much to do! Thank you all.



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# HOSPITALLERS OF SAINT JOHN OF JERUSALEM<sup>21</sup> PRESENCE IN CYPRUS FROM 1291-1421

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<sup>21</sup> - which over the centuries was to become the Sovereign Military Hospitaller Order of Saint John of Jerusalem of Rhodes and of Malta

After the fall of Acre in 1291, the Order of the Temple and the Order of the Hospitallers of Saint John of Jerusalem retreated to Cyprus, where the Grand Master of the Hospitallers, Jean de Villiers - who had been seriously wounded in battle - was welcomed by King Henry of Lusignan. The latter gave the Hospitallers the city of Limassol, where they set up their headquarters. The Hospitallers began constructing hospitals to care for survivors of the Siege of Jerusalem and to minister to pilgrims and travellers to the Holy Land.

Grand Master Jean de Villiers convened a general chapter in Cyprus, and Hospitallers of all nations answered his summons. A gathering of such magnitude had never been seen since the founding of the Order.

The Limassol Commandery, endowed with plentiful water supplies for irrigation, was known for its wealth - due in large part to the production of cotton, sugar, oil and fine wines. The Hospitallers made significant contributions to the development of trade and commerce.

Cyprus possessed important ports on the Mediterranean trade routes towards Syria and Egypt, as well as a financial centre. The Order's ships provided a regular annual service from Marseilles to Famagusta and were used by Provençal merchants to carry out their own trade. It was at this time that the Order underwent restructuring and became a maritime power.

As a result of the papal schism and the growing instability of the Lusignan administration, the Hospitallers were no longer safe in Cyprus, as they had to protect themselves from two equally formidable enemies: the Saracens, who constantly threatened the Knights' naval and military organisation; and the King of Cyprus, who had initially welcomed them but with whom tensions rapidly escalated, limiting their expansion throughout the island.

As a consequence, on the initiative of Grand Masters Guillaume de Villaret and, subsequently, Foulques de Villaret, the Hospitallers sought a more suitable base. In 1306, the Order of Hospitallers of Saint John of Jerusalem invaded Rhodes, and in 1310 they transferred their Magistral Convent there, along with the majority of the Knights based in Cyprus.

In 1313, however, following the suppression of the Order of Knights Templar by Philip the Fair (French : Philippe Le Bel), the vast estates that the Templars had owned in Cyprus became the property of the Hospitallers and were added to the existing Commanderies. By 1374, the Order of the Hospitallers of Saint John of Jerusalem was thought to possess more than 60 "casali" in Cyprus.

During more than a century, the Grand Masters of the Order of Saint John of Jerusalem ruled over the wealthy Cypriot Commanderies with the assistance of the Magistral Lieutenants residing in Cyprus, where they thus retained their estates until 1421.

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## The Sovereign Order of Malta

Founded in 1048, more than 960 years ago, the Sovereign Military Hospitaller Order of Saint John of Jerusalem of Rhodes and of Malta, more commonly called Sovereign Order of Malta or Order of Malta, is one of the oldest institutions of Western and Christian civilization. By virtue of its hospitaller vocation of providing care to the poor, the ill and refugees, the Order of Malta is active today in over one hundred countries thanks to its 13,500 members, 25,000 medical and health-care staff and 80,000 permanent volunteers; it is also present wherever natural catastrophes and armed conflicts occur. As a sovereign subject of international law, the Order of Malta maintains diplomatic relations with 105 countries and with the European Union. It maintains permanent observer missions to the United Nations (in New York, Geneva, Vienna, Rome, Nairobi and Paris) and at the principal international organisations. Internationally, its special status enables the Order to carry on its health-care and humanitarian work around the world and to make humanitarian diplomacy a force to aid those most vulnerable, without distinction as to origin, religion or culture.

In France, the health, social and humanitarian missions of the Sovereign Order of Malta are essentially carried out within the framework of the Association Ordre de Malte France, which is also very active in Africa, the Middle East and Asia, as well as through its foundation Fondation Française de l'Ordre de Malte.

[www.orderofmalta.int](http://www.orderofmalta.int)

## The Fondation Française de l'Ordre de Malte

In the context of its missions, the Fondation Française de l'Ordre de Malte, officially recognised by the French government, is currently studying the protection and promotion of sacred places in the Mediterranean region, the “cradle of Western civilisation.” The goal of this project is to establish common principles and guidelines for access to and protection and promotion of sacred sites having a universal dimension. In this context, the European Commission and the Order of Malta organised a seminar in March 2012 on “Protecting the sacred places of the Mediterranean: a contribution to intercultural dialogue,” held in the Berlaymont building in Brussels, and a forum was held in Limassol in November 2012 devoted to “Protection and Conservation of Cultural Heritage in the Mediterranean: a Common Responsibility,” organised by the Republic of Cyprus and the Order of Malta, with the European Commission and UNESCO.

[www.fondationordredemalte.org](http://www.fondationordredemalte.org)



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