



INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF MUSEUMS  
CONSEIL INTERNATIONAL DES MUSEES

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**  
**BETWEEN**  
**THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL POLICE ORGANIZATION - INTERPOL**  
**AND**  
**THE INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF MUSEUMS**  
**ON**  
**COUNTERING THE THEFT OF AND TRAFFICKING IN CULTURAL PROPERTY**



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## PREAMBLE

The International Criminal Police Organization - Interpol (hereinafter referred to as Interpol) and the International Council of Museums (hereinafter referred to as ICOM):

Recognizing that the protection of the cultural heritage must be the subject of international co-operation,

Noting that the looting of cultural property is a worldwide phenomenon and that it gives rise to a large amount of illicit trafficking,

Considering that the illicit trafficking in cultural property constitutes a crime against the world's cultural heritage,

Considering that Interpol's aims are to ensure and promote the widest possible mutual assistance between all criminal police authorities within the limits of the laws existing in the different countries and in the spirit of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and to establish and develop all institutions likely to contribute effectively to the prevention and suppression of ordinary law crimes,

Aware that the ICPO-Interpol plays a fundamental role in combating the theft of and illicit traffic in cultural property,

Aware that ICOM also plays a vital role in protecting cultural property,

Considering that strengthening co-operation at international level between bodies responsible for protecting and conserving the cultural heritage, on the one hand, and police authorities on the other will increase the effectiveness of the fight against the illicit trafficking in this heritage,

Have agreed on the following:

### Article 1

#### Mutual consultation

- (1) Interpol and ICOM shall consult regularly on matters of common interest for the purpose of realizing their objectives.
- (2) When appropriate, consultation shall be arranged at the required level between representatives of ICOM and of Interpol to agree upon the most effective way in which to organize particular activities and to optimize the use of their available resources in compliance with their respective mandates.



**Article 2**

**Exchange of information**

- (1) Subject to such arrangements as may be necessary for the safeguarding of confidential information, Interpol and ICOM shall ensure full and prompt exchange of information and documents concerning matters of common interest.
- (2) The two Parties shall communicate to each other any information they may have concerning *modus operandi* used in the illicit traffic of cultural property and statistics they may have on this form of crime.
- (3) Subject to its internal regulations, Interpol shall consider authorizing ICOM to consult its information on stolen works of art.
- (4) ICOM shall communicate to Interpol information it has on cases of theft of and illicit traffic in cultural property. The appropriate supporting documents shall be attached to such information.
- (5) In conformity with its internal regulations, Interpol shall make the necessary arrangements for the use of information communicated in application of paragraph 4. In this respect, ICOM shall authorize Interpol to reproduce and circulate, for crime prevention purposes, the information it receives from ICOM.

**Article 3**

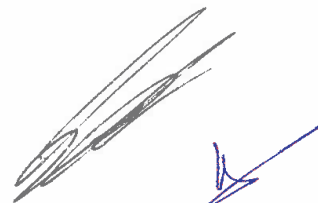
**Reciprocal representation**

- (1) Where appropriate, arrangements shall be made for reciprocal representation at Interpol and ICOM meetings convened under their respective auspices and dealing with matters in which the other party has an interest or technical competence.
- (2) The Secretary General of ICOM and the Secretary General of Interpol shall each designate a person to act as a focal point with a view to ensuring the implementation of the provisions of the present Memorandum of Understanding.

**Article 4**

**Technical co-operation**

- (1) Each Party shall, at the request of the other Party, review projects to be implemented at national, regional and international level, in order to provide comments and suggestions which are appropriate to their area of concern.
- (2) By mutual agreement and within the limits of their resources, the Parties shall work together to set up and implement programmes, projects and activities, in particular those linked to combating the theft of, and traffic in, cultural property.



- (3) Within the limits of their resources, each Party shall take part in cultural property training activities for staff involved in combating illicit traffic in cultural property organized by the other Party and shall work closely with the other Party so that museum professionals and police services combating this form of trafficking may share experience and expertise.

**Article 5**

**Entry into force, modification and duration**

- (1) The present Memorandum of Understanding shall enter into force on the date on which it is signed by the Secretary General of Interpol and the Secretary General of ICOM, subject to the approval of the Interpol General Assembly and the Executive Council of ICOM.
- (2) The present Memorandum of Understanding may be modified by mutual consent expressed in writing. It may also be revoked by either party by giving six months' notice to the other party.

In witness whereof, the Secretary General of the International Criminal Police Organization - Interpol and the Secretary General of the International Council of Museums have signed the present Memorandum of Understanding in duplicate, in French and English, both texts being authentic, on the dates appearing under their respective signatures.

For the ICPO-Interpol:



R.E. Kendall, Q.P.M., M.A.  
Secretary General

For the International  
Council of Museums:



Manus Brinkman  
Secretary General

Date:

11 April 2000

Date:

11 / 04 / 2000