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## Cultural heritage in crisis and post-crisis situations

**Reply to Recommendation<sup>1</sup>:** Recommendation 2071 (2015)  
Committee of Ministers

1. The Committee of Ministers has carefully examined Parliamentary Assembly Recommendation 2071 (2015) on “Cultural heritage in crisis and post-crisis situations”. It has brought it to the attention of the governments of member States and forwarded it to the Steering Committee for Culture, Heritage and Landscape (CDCPP), for information and possible comments.

2. The Committee of Ministers notes that the Council of Europe has already conducted several projects and activities under the Technical Co-operation and Consultancy Programme related to the integrated conservation of cultural and natural heritage, which have demonstrated the role of heritage in post-conflict reconciliation processes and in post-natural-disaster situations.<sup>2</sup> The Council of Europe’s approach places an emphasis on the preservation of cultural heritage in order to facilitate the reconciliation of communities, enriched by their diversity, strengthen social cohesion and pave the way for sustainable development.

3. Recent international events have reminded us of the dramatic impact at a cultural, social, environmental and economic level of the deliberate destruction of the cultural heritage. In this connection, the Ministers responsible for cultural heritage, meeting in Namur on 23 and 24 April 2015 for their 6th Council of Europe Conference, adopted the Namur Call which reiterates their condemnation of such destruction and the illicit trade in cultural property and works of art, and sets out their intention to address this issue by means of discussions initiated in the Council of Europe.

4. At this conference, the Ministers also adopted the Namur Declaration which calls for a European cultural heritage strategy for the 21st century to be drawn up. The Committee of Ministers has entrusted the CDCPP with the task of drafting this strategy. The CDCPP will bear in mind, in the course of its work, the Assembly’s proposal that the CDCPP “draft guidelines for the protection and reconstruction of damaged or destroyed cultural heritage as part of a broader strategy for preserving cultural identity and diversity in crisis and post-crisis situations” (paragraph 3.1 of the Assembly recommendation).

5. The Assembly further recommends that the CDCPP provide “support for member States to exchange good practices based on the guidelines as well as on standards and principles of the Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (CETS No. 199), and provide assistance to member States in implementing these provisions.” In this connection, the Committee of Ministers informs the Assembly that work along the lines which it advocates is under way in the framework of the CDCPP and will be continued, in particular under the HEREIN system and as part of the implementation of the Action Plan

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1. Adopted at the 1244th meeting of the Ministers’ Deputies (13 January 2016).

2. - Post-war damage assessment in Bosnia and Herzegovina (1996), Croatia (1996), Kosovo\* (1999) and Georgia (2008), and in Kosovo\* following the violence in 2004;

- Rehabilitation strategies in Croatia (1997-1998) and South-East Europe through the joint Council of Europe/European Union programme “The Ljubljana Process” (2003-2014), and in Georgia (2009-2010);

- Needs assessment and reconstruction/development strategies in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Cyprus;

- Post-earthquake assessment and rehabilitation strategies in Georgia (2002) and Spain (2011-2014).

\* All references to Kosovo, whether the territory, institutions or population, in this text shall be understood in full compliance with United Nations’ Security Council Resolution 1244 and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo.



on the Faro Convention. In this respect, the CDCPP co-operates also with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNCHR), the European Union, the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) and other relevant and national aid agencies. The Committee of Ministers invites the CDCPP to contribute to the European Committee on Crime Problems' (CDPC) work of updating the European Convention on Offences relating to Cultural Property (Convention of Delphi; ETS No. 119) and offer its expertise in this context.