



Recommendation 2139 (2018)¹

Deliberate destruction and illegal trafficking of cultural heritage

Parliamentary Assembly

1. The Parliamentary Assembly, referring to its [Resolution 2234 \(2018\)](#) on the deliberate destruction and illegal trafficking of cultural heritage, recalls that cultural heritage in all its forms constitutes a unique and important testimony to the history and identity of different peoples and is a common asset that should be preserved in all circumstances.
2. The Assembly is deeply concerned that cultural heritage is targeted with alarming frequency in both peacetime and wartime. It welcomes the new Council of Europe Convention on Offences relating to Cultural Property (CETS No. 221) and urges its wide ratification and implementation.
3. Accordingly, the Assembly recommends that the Committee of Ministers instruct the relevant bodies of the Council of Europe to:
 - 3.1. raise public awareness and produce a general publication to accompany the convention, encouraging ratification and implementation by alerting audiences to key problems and highlighting the ethical and legal issues which are vital to the acceptance of the convention and its implementation;
 - 3.2. organise regional and national conferences on harmonising criminal law with a view to facilitating a discussion among member States on the implications of ratifying and implementing the convention in both legislative and policy terms;
 - 3.3. if required, provide necessary technical assistance and guidance to member States seeking to ratify the convention, for instance by making available a “standard model law” to help States adapt their legislation;
 - 3.4. work closely with member States in order to address the transnational aspects of illicit trafficking in cultural property in a more efficient manner by strengthening international co-operation in criminal matters and, where necessary, establishing joint investigative teams composed of experts from law-enforcement agencies, judiciary and customs authorities, as well as experts in cultural heritage;
 - 3.5. in co-operation with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the European Union and Interpol:
 - 3.5.1. undertake a feasibility study to explore the possibilities of creating and funding a European observatory, as a permanent platform to systematically monitor and co-ordinate efforts to fight cultural property crimes; this could be envisaged in the format of an enlarged partial agreement;
 - 3.5.2. promote the ratification of the convention by non-member States.

1. *Assembly debate* on 29 June 2018 (27th Sitting) (see [Doc. 14566](#), report of Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media, rapporteur: Mr Stefan Schennach). *Text adopted by the Assembly* on 29 June 2018 (27th Sitting).

