

Committee: United Nations Educational,
Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

Delegation: Commonwealth of Australia

Topic: Preservation of Art and Culture in Conflict Zones

Delegate: Moises Francisco Trelles Ledesma



Good morning honorable chair and fellow delegates. On behalf of Her Royal Highness, Queen Elizabeth II, the Prime Minister Malcom Turnbull and the great people of this country, this delegation welcomes you to this debate which concerns the entire international community.

The Commonwealth of Australia deeply believes that to accomplish meaningful protection of the cultural heritage there should be political will and foresight from the international community in order to insist and become a priority the protection of it, and prevent situations as the ones who has taken place in countries like Afghanistan and Mali. As a result, in Australia, the national and international cultural property is protected through the Protection of Movable Cultural Heritage Act of 1986, guided by the criteria set out in the National Cultural Heritage Control List.

Being aware of the current situation where the best humankind has created is being destroyed and despite of the efforts the international community has done, such actions are still taking place due to the lack of legal procedures against criminals and lack of commitment of certain countries who has not signed the already existing protocols to protect cultural property. Therefore, this delegation purposes the following actions:

- Limit the legal definition of cultural property enough so it does not encompass too much or is too unreasonable.
- Prosecute by the International Criminal Court as war crimes, to the responsible for such destructions.
- Develop the idea of trusteeship in international public law.
- Become party of the already existing treaties for those countries who are not and greater participation from the ones that already are part of it, such as the submission of more monuments and sites for enhanced protection under the International Registry for Cultural Property under Special Protection.

As delegates, it is our responsibility to seek for a viable solution to this issue. It must be remarked that the future of cultural heritage is on our hands, and the resolutions achieved in this committee will determine the path the entire world will follow.

Thank you.