

Naples, 07.03.2005

To the President of the Palestinian Authority, H.E. Mahmoud ABBAS
To the Palestinian Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, H.E. Zeiad AL-BANDAK
To the Palestinian Ministry of the Foreign Affairs, H.E. Naser AL-QUDWA
To the President of Israel, H.E. Moshe KATZAV
To the Prime Minister of Israel, H.E. Ariel SHARON
To the Director General of UNESCO, Mr. Koïchiro MATSUURA
To the Heads of Government Parties to The Hague Convention of 1954
Copy to: U.N. General Secretary, Mr. Kofi ANNAN

APPEAL

The undersigned dr. prof. Fabio Maniscalco, as Director of the Observatory for the Protection of Cultural Heritages in Areas of Crisis, and on behalf of all those who wish to sign this appeal,

CONSIDERING THAT

- The Hague Convention of 1954 is until now the main multilateral juridical tool, dedicated to the protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict;
- The principles of The Hague Convention of 1954 continue to be ignored;
- Since the end of the Second World War there have been more than 100 international, mixed and internal conflicts, which have produced the destruction of a great deal of cultural heritage. A dissolution that, in part, results from the lack of a legislative Body, in the international juridical system, able to codify rules that are valid and have characteristics of generality and universality and from the absence, in the Conventions in force, of clear prescriptions concerning individual penal responsibilities and sanctions for the defaulting States;
- In order that international law has a concrete effect in the safeguard of cultural heritage in the event of armed conflict, it would be necessary to ratify existing treaties by as many states as possible (especially those involved in armed conflicts);
- During the long-lasting and endless crisis in the Middle East, a huge amount of cultural and religious heritage has been destroyed, damaged or stolen by conflicting factions;
- Palestine is not recognized as a State, therefore it cannot ratify treaties;
- Although Israel has signed The Hague Convention in 1957, it is not bound to respect its provisions because the Palestinian Authority has not ratified it.

CALLS UPON THE PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY

- To raise the awareness of the local public opinion about the respect of its and others historical and cultural identity and to adopt any useful measure to protect the entire cultural heritage, movable and immovable, material and immaterial, of Palestine;
- To promulgate national laws, concerning safeguard, preservation and valorization of cultural heritage, more adequate to the renewed requirements of Palestine;
- To present a petition to UNESCO to obtain the "authorization" to ratify or to adhere The Hague Convention of 1954 and its additional Protocols of 1954 and 1999.

CALLS UPON THE GOVERNMENT OF ISRAEL

- To raise the awareness of the local public opinion and the Israeli Army for the respect of its and others historical and cultural identity and to adopt any useful measure to observe the provision of The Hague Convention of 1954 both within its territory as well as within the Palestinian territories;
- To support the possible request of the Palestinian Authority to UNESCO, to ratify or to to adhere The Hague Convention of 1954.

CALLS UPON UNESCO AND ALL STATE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION FOR THE PROTECTION OF CULTURAL PROPERTY IN THE EVENT OF ARMED CONFLICT (THE HAGUE, 14 MAY 1954)

- In case that the Palestinian Authority will present a petition to UNESCO in order to ratify or to to adhere The Hague Convention of 1954, to agree to it and to favor its implementation in the Palestinian Territories.