



## **Culture Under Threat: The Scale of Heritage Destruction and Its Impact on Global Security**

You've seen the horrific images of Daesh's terror and destruction, from brutal executions to explosive demolitions of ancient churches, temples and cities. **Beyond the theatre of propaganda, what links these atrocities?**

Daesh doesn't dynamite everything. It reserves smaller items of historical and cultural value to sell on the black market, and with the profits buys the blades that behead civilians.

**In addition to oil, these "blood antiquities" are a major source of funding for Daesh alongside kidnapping and extortion.** In addition to the *psychological* value of cultural cleansing to subjugate captive people, sales of illicit antiquities provide *financial* incentive to plunder historic sites and consolidate the caliphate's brutal hold. Other militants groups, and organized criminal syndicates, also reap rich rewards from antiquities trafficking.

**Destruction and looting of ancient sites is accelerating on an industrial scale** and threatens to irreversibly damage humanity's shared cultural heritage. Unabated, it also fuels and sustains Daesh and others who threaten peace and stability.

- How much damage has been done?
- How can we weaken the incentives to plunder?
- Does disrupting antiquities trafficking strengthen global security?

The Antiquities Coalition has created the [Culture Under Threat Map](#) that shows not only the extent of cultural crimes but also the intensity. **For the first time, this unique interactive tool allows you to visualize the widespread destruction of heritage** in relation to known hot spots of terrorist occupation.

**Please join us for a presentation and discussion by the Antiquities Coalition** on how cultural heritage is used by Daesh and other violent extremist organizations as a means of growing their campaigns of terror and expanding their networks. Learn how Daesh finances its terror through looted relics, generates propaganda through performative destruction and expands its influence through the manipulation of media and market interest in cultural heritage. And explore the bipartisan steps Congress is taking to curb funding by cracking down on the trafficking of artifacts looted from sites in Syria.

### **Remarks by:**

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