The Antiquities Coalition unites a diverse group of experts in the global fight against cultural racketeering: the illicit trade in antiquities by organized criminals and terrorist organizations. This plunder for profit funds crime, armed conflict, and violent extremist organizations around the world—erasing our past and threatening our future. Through innovative and practical solutions, we tackle this challenge head on, empowering communities and countries in crisis.
2015 TIMELINE OF EVENTS
(Bold italics are AC events)

January 27
Reports emerge that Daesh attacked and destroyed parts of ancient Nineveh in Iraq

February 2015
The artifacts of the Mosul Museum and books of the Mosul Library are damaged and destroyed by Daesh

February 12
U.N. Security Council unanimously adopts Resolution 2199 on cultural racketeering and terrorist financing

March 5
Reports emerge of Daesh attacking and razing ancient city of Nimrud in Iraq

March 6
AC calls on the International Criminal Court to open an investigation into Daesh’s war crimes against the people of northern Iraq and their heritage

March 19
Daesh destroys ancient Assyrian capital of Khorsabad in Iraq

March 19
U.S. House of Representatives introduces the Protect and Preserve International Cultural Property Act (H.R. 1493) to curb illicit antiquities and Daesh funding

March 24
AC receives 501(c)(3) tax exempt status

April 22
AC launches new website

May 12
AC secures start-up grant

May 13-14
AC organizes groundbreaking Cairo Conference, bringing together 10 key MENA Governments, resulting in the Cairo Declaration

May 16
U.S. Special Forces raid Syrian compound of terrorist Abu Sayyaf, confirming Daesh has made millions trafficking antiquities

May 12
AC releases #CultureUnderThreat Video Series

June 2015
At New York Forum, AC brings together 9 nations with leaders from the art world, issuing a Call to Action to Protect the World’s Cultural Heritage

July 1
House of Representatives passes H.R. 1493

July 2015
Cambodia knights Antiquities Coalition Executive Director Tess Davis for her work recovering the country’s stolen masterpieces

July 29
Senate introduces H.R. 1493 as S. 1887

August 30
Daesh destroys Temple of Bel at the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Palmyra in Syria

September 21
AC joins 11 heritage organizations in issuing a letter of support for the urgent passage of H.R. 1493

September 24
Antiquities Coalition announces establishment of the Museum Digitization and Documentation Center in Egypt, which will safeguard the country’s ancient legacy through 21st century technology

October 6
Antiquities Coalition calls on U.S. Secretary of Treasury Jack Lew to take immediate action through executive order to halt the import of blood antiquities

November 17
House Foreign Relations Committee holds hearing on sources of Daesh funding, including trade in illicit antiquities

November 24
Antiquities Coalition launches #CultureUnderThreat Before and After interactive resource illustrating the deliberate destruction of heritage sites since the 2011 Arab Spring

November 30
Antiquities Coalition joins 11 heritage organizations in issuing a letter of support for the urgent passage of H.R. 1493

December 22
Antiquities Coalition joins 11 heritage organizations in issuing a letter of support for the urgent passage of H.R. 1493
The Antiquities Coalition unites a wide range of experts in the fight against cultural racketeering. We are business leaders, former government officials, archaeologists, lawyers, and other professionals. We bring with us the experience and skills of these widely diverse backgrounds as we work together to safeguard our shared cultural heritage.

Our Team

Deborah Lehr  
Chair

Claire Buchan  
Vice Chair

Erin Durkin  
Treasurer and Secretary

Peter Herdrich  
Co-Founder

Tess Davis  
Executive Director

Katie A. Paul  
Chief of Staff

Advisory Council

Yasser Elnaggar  
Ambassador and Principle Deputy Minister of Investment, Cairo, Egypt

Erin Walsh  
Executive Director, Head of the Office of Corporate Engagement, Asia, Goldman Sachs

C. Brian Rose  
James B. Pritchard Professor of Archaeology, University of Pennsylvania

Carlos A. Cordeiro  
The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc.

Partners

Collaboration is a crucial tool in safeguarding our shared cultural heritage. The Antiquities Coalition has thus joined forces with a wide range of partners across borders and disciplines. These partnerships leverage the power and ingenuity of the not-for-profit, private, and public sectors, as we work together to fight cultural racketeering.
ADVOCACY AND OUTREACH

We championed better law and policy to key decision makers in government and the market, successfully advocating for practical and proven solutions.

ADVOCATED for heritage protection including the pending US-Egyptian bilateral agreement, which once signed, will restrict the import of Egyptian antiquities into America.

RAISED AWARENESS of cultural racketeering and its impact on global economics and security, while improving our visibility and broadening the understanding of what we do.

- Spoke and published widely to academic and general audiences
- Launched a new and improved website
- Developed a growing social media presence with 2100+ Twitter followers and 1500+ Followers on Facebook

Introduced our #CULTUREUNDERTHREAT video series on YouTube, giving the public access to policy makers and experts from around the world.

Served as a TRUSTED SOURCE FOR INTERNATIONAL MEDIA, appearing in top outlets, including:

- The New York Times
- BBC
- VANITY FAIR
- The Washington Post
- USA TODAY

INFLUENCED THOUGHT LEADERS AND PUBLIC OPINION through op-eds in outlets including:

THE HUFFINGTON POST

Expanded our PRINT AND ONLINE PUBLICATIONS with resources such as a dedicated blog, an interactive and print “Before and After” series illustrating the destruction of monuments and sites since the 2011 Arab Spring, and worked with counter-terrorism experts to explore terror financing through antiquities trafficking.

What Daesh can buy with $1 Million

- $1,000,000 for a jet climbing the rank of the international antiquities market
- 11,000 AK47s
- 25,000 RPGs
- 4,000 pistols
- 1,200 rocket launchers
- 5,000 Molotov cocktails

Cultural in Conflict: Where can Daesh get $1 Million?

Terror groups such as Daesh and the US are using the threat of destruction to fund their military operations and avoid counter-terrorism sanctions.
10 Governments at the Cairo Conference

In May, with Egypt, the Middle East Institute, and UNESCO, we organized a groundbreaking ministerial conference bringing together ten key Middle Eastern and North African governments, resulting in the Cairo Declaration. This bold action plan commits the participating countries to cooperative and ongoing steps, including the creation of a regional task force.

The Cairo Conference serves as “a strong symbol of our joint commitment to respond, and UNESCO is determined to live up to its responsibilities, because we believe the protection of heritage is far more than a cultural issue — it has become a security imperative.”

- UNESCO Director General Irina Bokova

9 Countries Represented at the New York Summit

In September, alongside the Asia Society, Middle East Institute, and UNESCO, organized a subsequent forum bringing together 9 nations with leaders from the art world, issuing a Call to Action to Protect the World’s Cultural Heritage.

We have to deal with this crisis by uniting. We have to go beyond alarm, shock, and condemnation. The time has come for us to unite towards a more proactive approach and translate words into deeds before it is too late.”

- Jordan’s Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Nasser Judeh

We fostered diplomatic cooperation and international dialogue through educational seminars, emergency meetings, regional summits, and global conferences, helping individuals, organizations, and nations collaborate, strategize, and reach consensus in a crisis.
Collaboration is a key tool in the fight against cultural racketeering. Using internationally recognized best practices and cutting edge technology, we equipped communities and countries with the knowledge and tools needed to safeguard their cultural heritage.

As a result of our 2014 public-private partnership with the Arab Republic of Egypt, we announced the establishment of the Museum Digitization and Documentation Center in Egypt, which will safeguard the country’s ancient legacy through 21st century technology, while building capacity among a new generation of heritage professionals.

There are many other ways you can join the global fight to combat looting. Help the Antiquities Coalition raise awareness about cultural racketeering and other crimes against culture. With your help — together — we will make a difference.