

Amman Communiqué
September 8, 2016

Recognizing the continuing threat to our cultural heritage, economic prosperity and national security from antiquities looting, trafficking illegal excavation and destruction by organized crime networks and violent extremist organizations, the Governments of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, United Arab Emirates, Kingdom of Bahrain, Republic of Tunisia, People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Republic of Sudan, Republic of Iraq, Sultanate of Oman, State of Palestine, State of Qatar, State of Kuwait, Lebanese Republic, State of Libya, Arab Republic of Egypt, Kingdom of Morocco, Islamic Republic of Mauritania, Republic of Yemen, and League of Arab States met at the second annual ministerial #CultureUnderThreat Conference to strengthen regional cooperation in the fight against cultural racketeering.

The #CultureUnderThreat Conference's first meeting was hosted by the Arab Republic of Egypt between 13-14 May, 2015, resulting in the *Cairo Declaration*, a regional action plan against cultural racketeering and related terrorist financing. The Conference will be hosted annually by several countries within the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) as part of regional, international and Arab League efforts to enhance regional collaboration, and build on relevant Arab initiatives.

During the Conference, participating countries agree that crimes against culture are crimes against civilization itself, and pledged to work together to put an end to this illicit trade. Towards that end, the attendees agree to the following in Amman, Jordan, on 8 September 2016.

- **Information Sharing Mechanisms:** Establish mechanisms to strengthen information sharing, particularly in the areas of best practices, antiquities auctions, financial aid, and the possible establishment of a provenance verification System for antiquities sold overseas.
- **Cultural Memoranda of Understandings:** Launch bilateral negotiations with “demand” countries, and invite the Arab League to look into strengthening regional collaboration in the fight against antiquities racketeering.
- **Capacity Building:** Provide border patrol and customs agents with comprehensive training on combating the illicit antiquities trade, ensure that local law enforcement agencies play a primary role in the prevention of the illicit trafficking of cultural properties, and explore methods of collaboration and support among regional, sub-regional and UN organizations.

- **Heritage Jobs Initiative:** Establish a pilot project with interested countries to test job creation opportunities around heritage sites.
- **Awareness Campaign:** Create and launch an awareness campaign against the purchase of "blood and looted antiquities" that was agreed upon during the May 2015 #CultureUnderThreat Conference.

The *Middle East and North African Task Force Against Cultural Racketeering* met in Amman for the first time and agreed to meet on a biannual basis to coordinate regional action in the fight against antiquities trafficking and terrorist financing.