

PASSED

Committee: UNESCO

Question of: Re-evaluating the Reparations and Repatriations of Cultural Artifacts and Heritage Property

Submitted by: Nigeria

Co-submitted by: Germany, India

Signatories: Senegal, Australia, Mexico, Brazil, Egypt, Italy, Greece, Ethiopia, South Africa, China

Preambulatory clauses:

Deeply concerned, that the historical injustices of cultural plundering have left a lasting impact on the identity and heritage of colonized nations, particularly those in Africa and the Indian subcontinent,

Alarmed, at the number of cultural artifacts forcibly taken during the colonial era, leading to a significant loss of cultural continuity and economic resources for affected countries,

Recognizing, that both parties claim the right to preserve and protect their cultural heritage, understanding the intricate connection between these artifacts and the identity of nations,

Understands, that the repatriation of stolen cultural artifacts is a critical step towards rectifying historical wrongs, fostering justice, and preserving global cultural heritage,

Condemns the cultural plundering that occurred during the colonial era as a violation of the rights and sovereignty of nations, leading to a profound impact on their societies and causing a lack of cultural identity,

Acknowledges the fact that both parties involved in this issue, the colonized nations and those who acquired the artifacts must engage in dialogue to find a fair and just resolution,

Understanding the importance of fostering international cooperation to address the complexities of cultural restitution and heritage preservation,

Taking into account the idea that this issue requires a comprehensive approach that considers the economic ramifications and the role of cultural artifacts in the development of nations,

Acknowledges that the issue at hand is complex and requires deep consideration to balance the preservation of global cultural heritage with the recognition of individual nations' rights and aspirations,

Encourages that the humanitarian issue at hand requires immediate action to rectify the historical injustices, restore cultural continuity, and promote economic development for affected nations,

Confident that through collaborative efforts and international consensus, a path forward can be forged that respects the rights and aspirations of colonized nations regarding their cultural treasures,

Acknowledge that many countries aren't financially stable but aim to pay reparations to support the creation and purchase of museums and professionals to take care of the artifacts,

Deeply conscious of the damaged artifacts in foreign museums that belong to other countries and make sure of the reparations of damaged items.

Operative Clauses:

1. Solemnly affirms that the international community shall prioritize the repatriation of stolen cultural artifacts to their countries of origin, emphasizing the significance of restoring cultural continuity and identity.
 - a. Establishes an International Repatriation Task Force, composed of experts and representatives from every nation, to facilitate the return of cultural artifacts through diplomatic channels. This is because some nations don't possess the expertise to properly facilitate the arrival of their artifacts.
 - b. Calls for the creation of an international fund to support the logistical and financial aspects of the repatriation process, with a particular emphasis on Third world countries.
 - c. Member states shall enact or strengthen national legislation addressing cultural plundering, making it illegal to possess, trade, or deal in stolen cultural property.
 - I. Mandates nations to establish comprehensive inventories and documentation systems for cultural artifacts to aid in the identification and tracking of stolen items.
 - II. Encourages the inclusion of educational programs in national curricula to raise awareness about the historical accuracy of cultural plundering and the importance of preserving cultural heritage.
2. Declares the establishment of a United Nations Cultural Restitution Commission:
 1. a. Mandates the Commission to serve as a platform for dialogue and collaboration between nations affected by cultural plundering and those possessing the artifacts.
 - I. Calls for the Commission to develop guidelines and best practices for the repatriation process, considering the legal, ethical, and cultural aspects of restitution.
 - II. Emphasizes the Commission's role in mediating disputes and fostering mutual understanding between nations to ensure a fair and just resolution.
3. Calls upon the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to:
 - a. Strengthen its efforts to document and publicize cases of cultural plundering, emphasizing the significance of raising global awareness about this issue.
 - b. Encourages UNESCO to provide technical assistance and expertise to nations seeking the repatriation of stolen artifacts, particularly those in Africa and the Indian subcontinent with weaker economic systems.
 - I. Calls for the expansion of UNESCO's Intergovernmental Committee for Promoting the
 - c. Recommends that the international fund gives priority to financially vulnerable nations, ensuring they receive support for logistical and financial aspects of the repatriation process

Return of Cultural Property to include broader representation from affected nations.

4. Requires states to:

a. Collaborate with international organizations, such as the International Council of Museums (ICOM), to develop ethical standards and guidelines for the acquisition and restitution of cultural objects.

I. Calls for the creation of a global database of stolen cultural artifacts, accessible to all member states, to facilitate the identification and tracking of looted items.

II. Encourages the sharing of expertise and best practices among member states to enhance their capacity for the proper preservation and management of repatriated cultural treasures.

5. Establishes an International Reparations Fund:

a. Mandates the fund to provide financial reparations to nations affected by cultural plundering, considering the economic ramifications of resource loss during the colonial era.

I. Calls for contributions from economically developed nations to support the International Reparations Fund, recognizing their historical involvement in cultural plundering.

II. Emphasizes the importance of utilizing the funds to invest in the development of cultural infrastructure and educational programs in affected nations.

6. Mandates the integration of cultural restitution into sustainable development goals:

a. Recognizes the intrinsic link between cultural heritage and sustainable development, emphasizing the role of repatriated artifacts in promoting cultural tourism and economic growth.

I. Urges member states to incorporate cultural restitution initiatives into their national sustainable development plans, fostering a holistic approach to economic and cultural empowerment.

7. Enforce nations to:

a. Collaborate on joint research projects to uncover hidden histories and stories related to repatriated cultural artifacts, promoting a deeper understanding of shared heritage.

I. Encourages the organization of international conferences and forums to facilitate the exchange of knowledge and experiences among nations affected by cultural plundering.

II. Emphasizes the importance of digital platforms and virtual exhibitions to make cultural artifacts accessible to a global audience while ensuring their physical repatriation.

8. Promotes the return and restitution of cultural and historical artifacts and monuments to their origin nations.

a. Requires countries to return items from their museums that belong to the original countries:

I. Countries in possession of those items return the items immediately to the origin country to ensure they can be viewed in the original country as an artifact of value.