COMMS

Museums Connect Without Borders: Museums, Conflict and Social Responsibility.

Crisis and Global Governance: *From Policy to Protection*

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Webinar 5- 1st October 2026

Beyond Passion: The Need for Structure:

- Preparedness vs. Improvisation

Passion is the Spark — Structure is the Shield:
Good intentions require pre-established frameworks.

Long-term Consensus:
Protection is built on years of multilateral agreement, not on-the-fly reactions.

Sector-Wide Resilience:
Global networks turn shared principles into immediate frontline action.

Bridging Policy & Protection:

- Navigating the Crisis Response Chain

Governance Foundations → **Resolutions, ethics, and legal frameworks**

Diplomatic Voice → **Official statements: impact, purpose, and structural limits**

Operational Mechanisms → ***Global networks, emergency funds, and frontline tools***

Strategic Communication → **Public trust, factual integrity, and the "Do No Harm" principle**

Governance & Ethics in Practice:

General Assembly Resolutions:

- **Adopted** democratically by the global museum sector
- **Translating** international conventions into action
- **Serving** as an operational compass in times of instability

The Code of Ethics:

Provenance First:

- Zero tolerance for illicit trafficking & opportunistic acquisition

Ethical Red Lines:

- Protecting cultural property from exploitation

People-Centric:

- Safeguarding heritage workers and local communities alongside collections

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FROM POLICY TO PROTECTION

The Diplomatic Voice

Strategic statements: reaffirm international law • put people first • anchor verified facts

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FROM PRINCIPLE TO PRACTICE

ICOM's statements create a platform for action—not action itself

From legal warning to a public doctrine and crisis-specific advocacy.

2021 · Afghanistan (1)

ICOM cited treaty duties, looting risks, and its Afghanistan Red List.

2025 · Peace statement (2)

"Museums connect and protect, without borders" framed museums as bridges.

2026 · Conflict response (3)

ICOM invoked the Hague Convention and cited heritage damage.

The boundary (4)

Statements build legitimacy; they cannot deploy teams or stop attacks.

Strategic communication can enable response; operational capacity must still follow.

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ICOM Calls for Protection of Museums and Cultural Heritage Amid Conflict in Iran, the Gulf Region and the Eastern Mediterranean

ICOM expresses its serious concern over the recent conflict in Iran, the Gulf Region and the Eastern Mediterranean, its humanitarian impact, as well as the risks facing museums and cultural heritage sites. We are alarmed by reports of serious damage to cultural sites in the region, confirmed by intergovernmental organisations such as UNESCO.

Museums connect and protect, without borders.

We advocate for peace for a better future.

ICOM international council of museums

"Museums connect and protect, without borders. We advocate for peace for a better future."



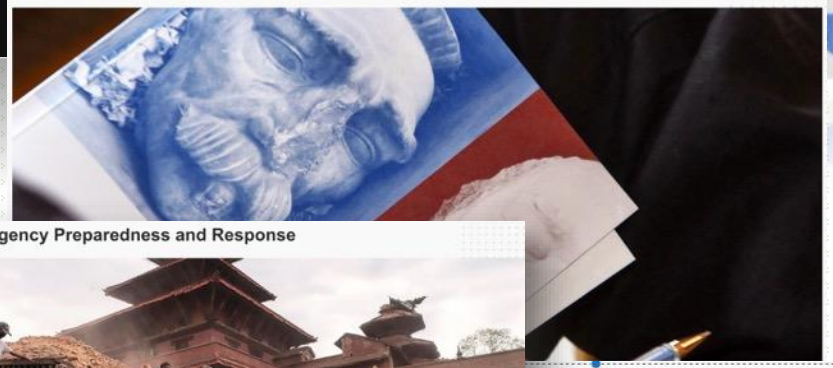
The ICOM Executive Board reaffirms ICOM's mission to preserve cultural heritage globally and unite the museum community. ICOM is deeply committed to empowering museums as a strong voice in fostering mutual understanding.

Museums connect and protect, without borders.

We advocate for peace for a better future.

ICOM

Declarations and statements



Emergency Preparedness and Response



RECENT DECLARATIONS AND STATEMENTS (2020–PRESENT)

- Notice in solidarity with Venezuela following the recent earthquakes (2026)
- Statement on Protection of Cultural Heritage in Ukraine (2026)
- ICOM Reaffirms the Protection and Respect of Human Lives and Cultural Heritage During Conflict (2026)
- ICOM Calls for Protection of Museums and Cultural Heritage Amid Conflict in Iran, the Gulf Region and the East
- ICOM Statement for Peace (2025)
- ICOM Calls to Safeguard Cultural Heritage in Ukraine (2025)
- M fears consequences for museums in the Islamic Republic of Iran and the State of Is
- travel to conflict zones and/or disputed territories (2024)
- adesh's Endangered Cultural Heritage Amid Ongoing Crisis (2024)
- n of archives, libraries, museums and heritage places during armed conflicts and poli
- nce against people and their cultural heritage (2024)
- and Palestine (2023)
- imate Activism (2022)
- ussian invasion into Ukraine (2022)
- tuation facing cultural heritage in Afghanistan (2021)
- 1 – Statement on Nagorno Karabakh (2020)
- Lebanon and support to recover the damaged cultural heritage in Beirut
- atement on Hagia Sophia (Istanbul, Turkey) (2020)
- or relief funds for museums during the COVID-19 crisis (2020)
- nce of museums (2020)

The International Council of Museums (ICOM) expresses its solidarity with Venezuela following the recent earthquakes.

ICOM



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RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY ICOM'S 34th GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Kyoto, Japan
2019

In Gaza, UNESCO has verified damage to 164 heritage sites, among them two museums. Cultural sites in Lebanon, particularly in the south of the country, have also been directly impacted. Strikes in the ancient cities of Baalbek and Tyre have seriously threatened these UNESCO World Heritage-listed cities, with the archaeological museum in Tyre suffering direct damage. Cultural heritage in Ukraine continues to suffer from the ongoing conflict, with 525 cultural sites having been verified as damaged by UNESCO since 2022, among them 39 museums. The recent attack on Lviv's 17th-century St Andrew's Church and the Bernardine Monastery, part of the UNESCO World Heritage-listed Ensemble of the Historic Centre, is a stark reminder that cultural heritage remains acutely vulnerable in conflict-affected countries.

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A museum is a not-for- institution in the serv researches, collec interprets and exhib intangible heritage. O accessible and inclu foster diversity and sust operate and communicate professionally and with the participation of communities, offering varied experiences for education, enjoyment, reflection and knowledge sharing.

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Operational Mechanisms, Strategic Alliances & Solidarity

Operational Mechanisms & Solidarity

➢ Emergency Support & Risk Management

Multilateral Ecosystem & Emergency Support

UNESCO
Normative framework and treaty compliance.

Emergency Support
DRMC, emergency funds, solidarity pprojects.

Blue Shield Intl.
'Cultural Red Cross'; bridges heritage and responders.

Two Pillars

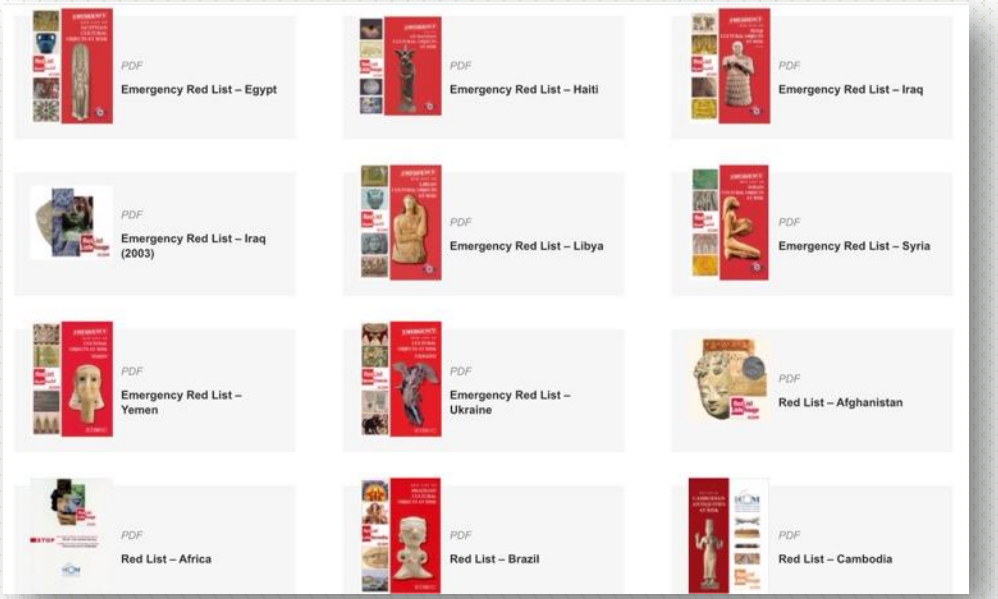
ALIPH & ICOM Funds
eemergency financing and solidarity projects.

ICCROM — FAR
First-aid and resilience methods for heritage.

Statements open the door : alliances, funds and committees walk through it.

➢ Prevention & Resilience

Preventive Firewalls & Capacity Building



Preventive Firewall: Red Lists

Red Lists as a frontline tool against illicit trafficking in security vacuums — helping customs and border authorities protect heritage before it is erased.

Long-Term Capacity Building

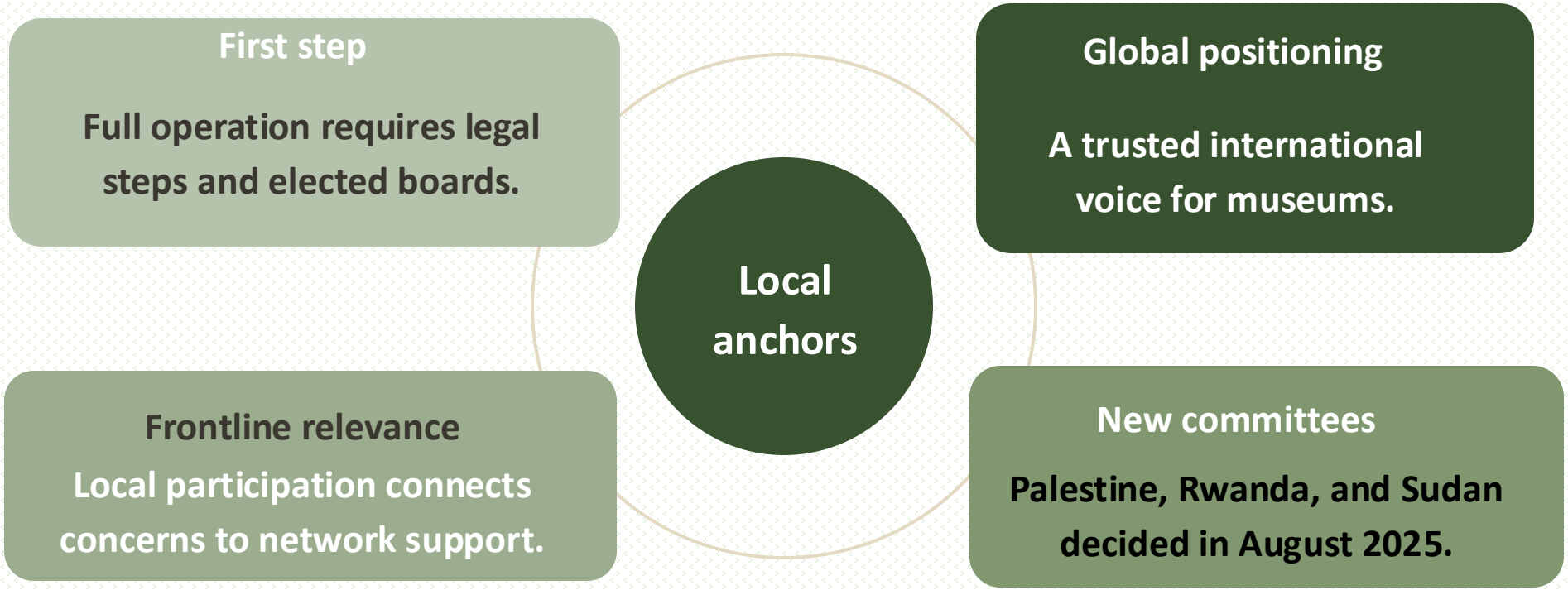


The ICOM Award as a capacity-building instrument — empowering local professionals and sharing sustainable practices before crises strike.

STRATEGIC VISION

Global inclusion makes local leadership part of the protection system

Anchoring resilience in the ICOM Strategic Plan



Remote response cannot succeed in a vacuum; solidarity must reach local leadership.

Crisis communication must protect, verify, and mobilize

Three principles for translating policy into ground action

Do no harm

People and site safety come before public curiosity. Protect sensitive staff and collection data.

Accuracy over speed

Verify field information before sharing; resist rumor cycles and preserve credibility.

Mobilize solidarity

Go beyond reporting loss: build momentum for funding, diplomacy, and partnerships.

Crisis and global governance: policy must meet protection

Heritage is living dignity: memory, human dignity, and the possibility of reconciliation.

From policy, to protection.

Thank you for your attention!

Tayeebeh Golnaz Golsabahi

Vice President
International Council of Museums