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ICOM statement concerning the protection of cultural property and the amendment of the law in Germany

In light of the current international discussions concerning the amendment of the German law on the protection of cultural property, the International Council of Museums (ICOM), represented by its President Prof. Dr. Hans-Martin Hinz and by the Chair of its German National Committee, Dr. Michael Henker, wishes to express its support in favor of the initiative of Staatsministerin Prof. Monika Grütters.



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[This legislative initiative](#) aims at improving not only the protection of cultural property in Germany but will also ensure the efficient implementation of new EU law as well as the 1970 UNESCO *Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property*. It is indeed meant to reinforce the application of the existing regional and international legal framework, and by doing so will improve the protecting of cultural objects at risk of illegal trade.

All EU Member States have to implement the new Directive 2014/60/EU of May 2014 before the end of this year. Germany uses this obligation as an opportunity to revise and update its national law that in parts dates back to 1955.

It should be recognised as the responsibility and duty of every State around the world to protect cultural heritage, and every endeavour in this regard is welcomed and encouraged. The increasing number of

on-going conflicts that are putting cultural heritage at high risk around the world requires that we all take responsibility in safeguarding our common past and history against destruction, looting and illicit trafficking in cultural property.