

RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY ICOM'S 12TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Moscow, USSR
1977

ICOM'S 12TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Moscow, USSR, 28 May 1977

Resolution No. 1: Museums and Cultural Exchange

The 12th General Assembly of the International Council of Museums (ICOM), held in Moscow on 28 May 1977:

Taking into account the growing role of museums in the cultural and social life of society, the humanistic foundation of their activity and also their great potential for influencing the development of public consciousness, world culture and each national culture,

Believing that cultural exchanges between peoples and governments promote social progress, the study and propagation of cultural values and the raising of the level of national cultures and cultural advancement of all peoples,

Considering that cultural exchanges among nations in all areas improve their mutual understanding and cooperation and contribute to international detente and to the strengthening of peace,

Desiring to contribute to the enrichment of cultures of different nations with every respect for their originality, identity and national expression while also recognizing the elements and traditions that they may have in common,

Maintaining that the above provisions conform also to the ideas set forth in the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe,

Recalling Article 27 (1) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, stating that «Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits»,

Emphasizing the importance of the recommendation of the Intergovernmental Conference on Cultural Policies in Europe (Helsinki 1972), where necessary, to take «appropriate measures to protect their national culture from forms of production which disseminate ideas of hatred and enmity between nations, war, violence and racism, having

particular regard to their corrupting influence on youth»,

Regarding the sustained and far-reaching work aiming to ensure the protection of the environment as one of the most important tasks in the work of museums,

Declares its determination to apply in its daily practice the following principles as having paramount importance in cultural exchanges between peoples:

To contribute in every way to the realization by museums of the lofty aims inherent in progressive development of the culture of all peoples, consolidating existing mutual understanding and cooperation, preserving as well as increasing sustained devotion to cultural values which embody the finest achievements of mankind;

To ensure effectively, through an active programme of public education, the right to unimpeded access to treasures of national and world culture for all members of the world community without restrictions and discrimination;

To contribute to the creation in museums of exhibitions fostering in the minds of people the ideas of humanism, peace, friendship and accord among peoples;

To expand and improve exchanges between museums, contacts and cooperation between them at various levels, with full respect for national laws, traditions and interests of the countries concerned, within the framework of agreements that have been or will be concluded regarding such contacts;

To promote the collection and study of monuments of the natural environment, scientific-technical progress and culture in one's own and other countries with the aim of ensuring the fullest possible acquaintance with cultural values of each country;

To encourage wherever possible short-term and long-term mutual exchanges between museums, of exhibitions and displays furthering the above stated cultural aims;

To promote the development of direct contacts, scientific and scholarly ties and cooperation between museums in different countries as well as exchanges of appropriate information, the implementation of joint initiatives of a scientific, scholarly or museological nature, through regular meetings of experts charged with the elaboration of concrete proposals;

To study and apply modern scientific and technological achievements in order to reduce the inherent risks of damage or loss to which original monuments of material and spiritual culture and of nature are exposed during their movement or their public exposure;

To study the possibilities for reducing the costs relating to international

exchanges of materials (objects) belonging to museums, and to find new methods of insuring natural, historical and cultural objects loaned in exhibition exchanges, by establishing government indemnities and government support to take the place of commercial insurance premiums;

To contribute to the sharing of experience in the training of museum personnel and to the activity of international training centres and to promote the organization of international courses for training museum professionals;

To encourage exchanges of trainees and specialists among museums and to contribute to the creation of favourable conditions for their reception in the respective institutions.

Resolution No. 2: Museums and International Tourism

Recognizing the contribution of museums and their collections of the natural, historic, artistic, and scientific heritage of the world to the development of mutual understanding among peoples,

Calls upon National Committees of ICOM and all Member States of UNESCO, together with the various organizations connected with museums and tourism internationally, to:

Contribute to the exchange of experience of cooperation between tourism and museums to maximize their use while ensuring as far as possible that tourism does not injure the environment and heritage of the respective countries;

Develop new and existing museum facilities to establish closer contacts with tourist offices and to improve reception services for tourists;

Encourage the publication of multi-lingual reference and popular literature, reproductions and other information about museums and their collections.

Resolution No. 3: The Protection of Cultural and Natural Heritage at the International Level

Taking into account that the cultural and natural heritage of each country reflects its origin, history and development and the material and spiritual traditions of every generation,

Mindful that the specimens and objects witnessing to nature»s and man»s history and the culture of individual countries constitute an inseparable part of the world's cultural and natural heritage, serve the aims of the development of science, education and culture, and testify to the contribution of all peoples to the development of our civilization,

Noting the ever-growing interest of the world public and the attitude of governments and international organizations to the exchange of cultural values, promoting an atmosphere of detente and trust between countries

in the spirit of the principles set down in the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe,

Drawing attention to the pressing need for mutual information on protecting the cultural, historical and natural heritage and for exchanges of cultural values and the perfection of the museum profession,

Calls upon the National Committees of ICOM, its members, UNESCO and also governmental bodies exercising control over the protection of cultural and natural heritage:

To expand scientific research on the preservation of the cultural-historical and natural heritage so that international experience may be disseminated, and for the promotion of multi-lateral cooperation in the organization of international periodical publications devoted to questions of scientific research on the protection, restoration and use of natural historical and cultural heritage;

To promote closer working contacts between the International Council of Museums and other international organizations participating in the protection of cultural-historical heritage and the improvement of the environment,

Appeals to the governments of all countries to expand their activity in protecting material, natural, historical and cultural values, using all the latest achievements of modern science and technology, perfecting the existing legislation and working out new laws to keep abreast of the present level of development in this field.

Resolution No. 4: Assistance for the Developing Countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America in Training Museum Personnel and Restorers

Considering the acute requirement experienced by museums in many Asian, African, and Latin-American countries in qualified museum personnel, and especially in conservation specialists,

Noting that training of such specialists by many of these countries themselves, due to lack of experience and material facilities, is extremely difficult,

Believing that the countries of Europe and North America, possessing rich museum traditions and a ramified network of museums, could make a worthy contribution to the training of museum personnel,

Recommends that every effort be made to promote the creation and circulation of specialized teaching aids and materials designed for different levels of conservation training,

Requests UNESCO to multiply efforts to facilitate the organization of training courses both in the regions concerned and also in those large museums of the world providing courses intended for professionals selected by Asian, African, and Latin-American countries, and to place

in these regions experts able to give fast and effective training to a wide range of museum specialists, particularly in conservation.

Resolution No. 5: International Museum Day

Noting the ever-growing role of museums of many countries among institutions of science, culture and technology, in line with deep-seated processes in the development of the aspirations and progressive actions of people throughout the world seeking ways to intensify communion and mutual understanding among peoples,

Considers it expedient, with the aim of further unifying the creative aspirations and efforts of museums and drawing the attention of the world public to their activity, to take a decision on the annual holding of an International Museum Day. This day to be held using the slogan: «Museums are an important means of cultural exchange, enrichment of cultures and development of mutual understanding, cooperation and peace among peoples»,

Recommends that the International Museum Day should be held annually on 18 May, starting in 1978, and accompanied by the opening of new museums and exhibitions, meetings with visitors, acquaintance of the public with the aims and tasks and practical activity of the International Council of Museums and its national organizations, publication of materials on this subject in the press and also by the organization of exchange exhibitions and international forums to discuss major problems of the theory and practice of the museum profession,

Expresses confidence that the annual International Museum Day will help to increase the role played by the museum which uses the universal language of the original object in order to develop international understanding.

Resolution No. 6: Contribution of Museums to International Children's Year

Aware of the United Nations Organization's decision to celebrate «Children's Year» in 1979,

Recommends that museums all over the world actively participate in initiatives embracing this theme by undertaking the following programmes:

- a. The promotion of children's creativity through observation;
- b. The initiation of children to their national culture and to problems of the environment;
- c. Exchanges of didactic materials;
- d. Exchanges of exhibitions of children's works, and works of special interest to children,

Also recommends that the results of these programmes be evaluated through surveys carried out on groups of children of different ages,

Requests ICOM National Committees' cooperation to organize working group meetings, at regional and international levels, in connection with the Committee for Education and Cultural Action, to permit the exchange of views and experience between museum specialists on children's education.

Resolution No. 7: Museological Terminology

Considering it necessary to define museological terms as an important contribution to the better mutual understanding between museum professionals in different countries,

Believing that the present stage in museological research will permit the compilation of a dictionary of museum terms,

Appeals to the National and International Committees of ICOM to submit their proposals for a uniform museological terminology taking into account the practical and theoretical experience accumulated by museology of all countries.

Resolution No. 8: Dissemination of Museum Publications

Noting the important role played by museum publications, both on permanent collections and temporary exhibitions, in communication with the public at large and between specialists,

Deplores, in view of ICOM's commitment to international exchange, the existing limits governing world-wide distribution of museum publications,

Recognizes that the problems relating to this issue are complex and numerous and that therefore an extensive study to cover exchange and distribution of museum publications among institutional and individual ICOM members will need to precede concrete proposals,

Proposes the formation of an ad hoc committee to carry out this study.

Resolution No. 9: Museum Documentation

Stressing the fact that museum activities in all fields (acquisition, conservation, presentation, etc.) are conditioned by the quality and systematic nature of the documentation available,

Noting that museums and international organizations have developed or are studying ways of setting up documentary systems and that this effort has not yet been matched by an awareness to make such systems compatible in order to make possible the establishment of international networks of museum data,

Also noting that non-governmental, intergovernmental and governmental

organizations such as ICOM, ICOMOS, the International Centre for Conservation (Rome) and UNESCO have common documentary requirements, in spite of the different nature of their respective memberships,

Urges all international authorities concerned with regular action to achieve compatibility between documentation programmes existing in museums at the national and at the local level,

Insists on the need for coordinating the operation of the UNESCO-ICOM, UNESCO-ICOMOS and the International Centre for Conservation (Rome) documentary centres and services, in full agreement with UNESCO and in view of its Member States needs,

Notes, however, that because of the complexity of services demanded by the international, governmental and non-governmental community, no final decision should be made by the partners involved, namely UNESCO, ICOM and ICOMOS, before a thorough study of the situation and the different options has been made, and that for this reason, the previous calendar for merger of the UNESCO-ICOM and UNESCO-ICOMOS Documentation Centres should be revised.