

Statement regarding the UK visa refusal of three ICOM members from Egypt

The International Council of Museums (ICOM) has learnt with great concern of the visa refusals of three of our members wishing to participate in a conference organised by our International Committee for Egyptology (CIPEG) in the United Kingdom.

We are deeply disturbed by the decision of the Home Office to prevent these three Egyptian museum professionals from attending the meeting in Swansea, Wales. The individuals in question had been backed by distinguished experts in Egyptology and had been awarded travel grants by ICOM, on the basis of their professional excellence.

We are equally concerned that other international events might be affected by an increasingly restrictive UK visa policy. This policy will not only deter international organisations from holding their conferences and meetings in the United Kingdom if members from Africa, Asia or Latin America cannot participate; it will also hinder the development of the scientific and professional community in the UK.

ICOM, as the global association of museums and museum professionals, has a long-standing commitment to the promotion of international cooperation and exchange as an effective means of developing professional standards and best practices, ultimately fostering a climate of mutual understanding and long-lasting peace. To accomplish this mission, participation in ICOM's meetings and conferences by museum professionals of all nations is vital.