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## **Statement regarding the devastating fire in the National Museum of Brazil, in Rio de Janeiro**

The International Council of Museums (ICOM) wishes to express its deep sorrow regarding the devastating fire that has destroyed the National Museum of Brazil, in Rio de Janeiro, the biggest natural history museum in Latin America and Brazil's oldest museological institution. Housed in the former Imperial palace of São Cristóvão since 1902, the museum was celebrating its 200-year anniversary this year.

While we are relieved that this disaster has not caused any mortalities, we mourn the loss of the museum's invaluable collection, which included important natural history, mineralogical, paleontological, archaeological, ethnographic, and documentary collections, which hold up to 20 million items.

ICOM, on behalf of the international museum community, wishes to extend its firm support to the workers of the National Museum of Brazil and its solidarity with the wider museum community in Brazil and with the Brazilian people.

On this dark day for not only Brazilian heritage but also for the world's heritage, we wish to reiterate our unshakable belief in the resilience and professionalism of Brazil's museum professionals, and our faith in their ability to recover from this painful event.

ICOM is working to mobilise its Standing Committee on Disaster Risk Management (DRMC), its International Committees for University Museums (UMAC), Documentation (CIDOC), and Natural History (NATHIST), and other pertinent actors in our network to channel all kinds of expertise necessary to overcome this disaster.