UK Government

BritishRedCross ICRC

TIME
31st October
12.15-13.15

LOCATION
Room Nyon (80 person capacity)
Geneva Convention Centre

Protection of Cultural Heritage: Research and best practice for cultural heritage restoration in conflict and disaster affected areas

BACKGROUND

'Attacks on cultural property are so much more than destruction of bricks, wood or mortar. They are attacks on the identity, memory, dignity and future of entire populations.'

ICRC website.

The protection of cultural property in armed conflict are laid out in international treaty and customary law, including the '1954 Hague Convention on the Protection of cultural property in the event of armed conflict' and its two Protocols, as well as the 1977 Additional Protocols to the 1949 Geneva Conventions.

In regions affected by conflict and disaster, the restoration of cultural heritage can help communities regain a semblance of normalcy and improve social cohesion, both of which are essential for a successful reconciliation process. However, history has shown that rebuilding cultural heritage after destruction is a complex and challenging task, with recovery invariably requiring the involvement of the most affected stakeholders, as well as support from the local, national and international level.

OBJECTIVES

At the 34th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, the British Red Cross and the International Cultural Heritage Protection programme (UK Gov) will bring together experts from different fields to explore the relationship between cultural heritage and human rights, and to exchange current research and best practice on cultural heritage restoration strategies. It will also showcase some of the work supported by the Cultural Protection Fund, in Sudan.

By focusing on the importance of

1.) Involving local communities in the decision making and reconstruction process
2.) Cultural heritage as an instrument for reconciliation and tolerance

And by exploring strategies for effective community engagement, this event will also align with pillar 3 (enabling sustainable, locally led action) of the Framework for Culture in City Reconstruction and Recovery (CURE Framework), specific to post-conflict or post-disaster situations.

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CHAIR

- Charlotte Hanson - Head of International Cultural Heritage Protection UK Government

PRESENTATIONS

1.) UK Gov/British Council funded Cultural Protection Fund - Mallinson Architects/Sudan National Museum - Safeguarding Sudan's National Heritage

PANELLISTS

- Professor Alexandra Xanthaki. UN Special Rapporteur in the Field of Cultural Rights.
- Stephanie Grant, Director of the Cultural Protection Fund, British Council
- Dr Sofya Shahab, UKRI Future Leaders Fellow at the Institute of Development Studies
- Zainab Omgaafar - Curator from Sudan National Museum
- Michael Delacruz, Director of Operations, Blue Shield International

QUESTIONS

Under what circumstances should cultural heritage reconstruction take place?
What types of buildings / sites should be prioritised?
What considerations should be made?
Who should be involved in the consultation process?
What are the major pitfalls of cultural heritage reconstruction programmes today?
Discuss an example where a reconstruction programme worked well, and why.
Discuss an example where a reconstruction programme did not work well, and why.