



# U.S. COMMITTEE OF THE BLUE SHIELD

Committed to the Protection of Cultural Property Worldwide During Armed Conflict

**March 21, 2011**

## **Protection of Important Libyan (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) Cultural Heritage Sites**

The U.S. Committee of the Blue Shield and its membership express great concern about the safeguarding of Libya's invaluable cultural heritage in light of adoption of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1973 imposing a no-fly zone and other necessary measures to protect civilians. Libya has a wealth of cultural heritage sites and repositories, with five UNESCO World Heritage sites, including prehistoric rock art sites, the Classical sites of Cyrene and Leptis Magna, and the Phoenician site of Sabratha, and has a rich underwater cultural heritage along its Mediterranean coast.

While recognizing the humanitarian nature of the military actions undertaken to protect civilian life in Libya, the U.S. Committee of the Blue Shield calls on the multinational coalition to be mindful of their obligations under the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, the 1972 UNESCO Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, and customary international law to avoid targeting cultural heritage sites and repositories and to minimize collateral damage to cultural heritage to the extent possible.

The U.S. Committee of the Blue Shield (USCBS) is a charitable nonprofit organization and is part of the Blue Shield international network supporting the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict.

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