

Emergency in Egypt

8 February 2011

U.S. Committee of the Blue Shield and Other Organizations Warn of Emergency in Egypt

The undersigned cultural heritage and archaeological organizations express their concern over the loss of life and injury to humans during the protests in Egypt this week. We support the desire of the Egyptian people to exercise their basic civil rights. We also share their concern about the losses to cultural heritage that Egypt has already sustained and the threat of further such losses over the coming days.

Brave actions taken by the citizens of Cairo and the military largely protected the Egyptian Museum, Cairo. However, the numerous sites, museums and storage areas located outside of Cairo are even more vulnerable. As the prisons are opened and common criminals are allowed to escape, the potential for greater loss is created. A recent report from Egyptologist Professor Sarah Parcak of the University of Alabama in Birmingham states that damage has been done to storage areas and tombs in Abusir and Saqqara and that looting is occurring there and in other locations.

We call on the Egyptian authorities to exercise their responsibilities to protect their country's irreplaceable cultural heritage. At the same time, we call on United States and European law enforcement agencies to be on the alert over the next several months for the possible appearance of looted Egyptian antiquities at their borders.

American Anthropological Association

<http://www.aaanet.org/>

American Institute for Conservation

<http://www.conservation-us.org/>

American Schools of Oriental Research

<http://www.asor.org/>

Archaeological Institute of America

<http://www.asor.org/>

Association of Art Museum Directors

<http://www.aamd.org/>

Cultural Heritage Center, The University of Pennsylvania

<http://www.penn.museum/cultural-heritage/230-cultural-heritage-center.html>

Cultural Heritage and Preservation Studies, Rutgers University

<http://chaps.rutgers.edu/>

Friends of Cultural Heritage (Turkey)
<http://www.kumid.eu/en/index.php>

International Foundation for Art Research
<http://www.ifar.org/>

Lawyers' Committee for Cultural Heritage Preservation
<http://www.culturalheritagelaw.org/>

SAFE: Saving Antiquities For Everyone
<http://savingantiquities.org/>

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U.S. Committee of the Blue Shield
<http://uscbs.org/>