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Protection of the Cultural Heritage in Ukraine

Statement of the Federal Commission for the Protection of Cultural Property (FCPCP)

The Federal Commission for the Protection of Cultural Property (FCPCP) condemns Russia's military aggression against Ukraine in the strongest possible terms.

The FCPCP emphasises that cultural heritage belongs to all humanity and expresses its deep concern about its preservation during the current military aggression.

The FCPCP recalls that, in accordance with international law, cultural heritage in all its forms should not be subject to attack or to the risk of destruction or damage.

The FCPCP welcomes UNESCO's statement of 3 March 2022, following the adoption by the United Nations General Assembly of the Resolution on Aggression against Ukraine, in which UNESCO calls for the "protection of Ukrainian cultural heritage, which bears witness to the country's rich history".

The FCPCP calls upon the Parties to respect their obligations as States Parties to the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, in particular the obligations under Article 4 of the 1954 Hague Convention, which urges the Parties to prohibit, prevent and, if necessary, put a stop to any form of theft, pillage or misappropriation of cultural property, as well as any acts of vandalism directed against such property.

The FCPCP recalls UN Security Council Resolution 2347 (2017), which reaffirms that attacks against religious, educational, artistic, scientific, historical or charity sites and monuments may, in some circumstances and according to international law, constitute war crimes, and that their authors must be brought to justice.

The FCPCP calls on the Ukrainian authorities and civil society to make use of the financial assistance made available by the Swiss Confederation for the preservation of Ukrainian cultural heritage.

The FCPCP also recalls the possibility of concluding a bilateral agreement for the temporary safekeeping of cultural property from Ukraine in the Swiss safe haven dedicated to this purpose.

The FCPCP is ready to support Ukraine, at its request and within the framework of the commission's expertise, in the protection and safeguarding of cultural heritage.