

Building peace requires culture, education – message of historic UN Security Council resolution

24 March 2017 – Univocally condemning unlawful destruction and pillaging of cultural heritage such as religious sites and artefacts, the United Nations Security Council today adopted an historic resolution that is expected to strengthen protections for such heritage during armed conflicts where they are most vulnerable.

“The deliberate destruction of heritage [...] has become a tactic of war to tear societies over the long term, in a strategy of cultural cleansing,” said Irina Bokova, the Director-General of the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) following the resolution’s adoption.

“This is why defending cultural heritage is more than a cultural issue, it is a security imperative, inseparable from that of defending human lives,” she added.

Today’s briefing by Ms. Bokova to the Security Council was the first time a head of UNESCO has been invited in that capacity.

In her briefing, she explained that since the adoption of Resolution 2199 (in 2015), which prohibits trade in cultural property from Iraq and Syria, efforts were well-underway to disrupt terrorist financing through the illicit trafficking of antiquities.

“Together, UNESCO, INTERPOL, the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), customs services, the private sector and museums are all bolstering cooperation, coordinating new action,” she noted.



Irina Bokova, Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), addresses the Security Council. UN Photo/Evan Schneider

Through the newly-adopted resolution, the Security Council also underlined that such destruction can hamper post-conflict reconciliation, undermine economic and cultural development and, that, in certain conditions, could constitute a war crime.

“Weapons are not enough to defeat violent extremism. Building peace requires culture also; it requires education, prevention, and the transmission of heritage,” added Ms. Bokova.

“This is the message of this historic resolution,” she stated.

Need for supply chain integrity and stopping illicit trade of cultural property

Also today, the top UN political official said that in addition to making every effort to implement the international legal and normative framework on protection of culture, as well as strengthen international cooperation, a response was needed from global criminal justice to prevent trafficking in cultural property by disrupting organized criminal and terrorist networks.



The Security Council unanimously adopts resolution 2347 (2017), condemning the unlawful destruction of cultural heritage in the context of armed conflicts, notably by terrorist groups. UN Photo/Manuel Elias

“We need to put a stronger focus on investigation, cross-border cooperation and exchange of information, and on bringing in private and public sector partners, including dealers and the tourism sector, to promote supply chain integrity and stop the illicit trade and sale of cultural property.”

Yury Fedotov, the Executive Director of UNODC also welcomed the resolution’s emphasis on international cooperation in crime prevention and criminal justice responses to counter trafficking in cultural property.

“The resolution [...] addresses the vital issue of trafficking in cultural property as a source of terrorism financing, and also sets out ways of protecting cultural heritage during armed conflict where it is most vulnerable,” he said, noting that it strengthened the international community’s ability to tackle the issue and help acts that fund terrorism, and enable yet more destruction and looting of cultural sites and archaeological treasures.

Also speaking at the Security Council, Commander Fabrizio Parulli of the Carabinieri Italiani (the national gendarmerie of Italy) and the UNESCO Unite4Heritage task force shared the latest data on illicit trafficking, and said that over the course of last year, 800,000 artefacts had been seized by Italian forces in the fight against the financing of criminal activities.

AUDIO: The destruction of cultural heritage by terrorists, described as “cultural cleansing” by Irina Bokova, the Director-General of the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), is a war crime.

**Press release: Privy Council
appointment: Tobias Ellwood MP and Ben**

Wallace MP

The Queen has been pleased to approve the appointment of Tobias Ellwood MP and Ben Wallace MP as members of the Privy Council.

The Queen has been pleased to approve the appointment of Tobias Ellwood MP and Ben Wallace MP as members of Her Majesty's Most Honourable Privy Council.

Carwyn Connect heads to Barry

The Carwyn Connect event will give local people the opportunity to meet the First Minister and ask him questions on any issues which affect them or their local community.

The session will take place between 6pm and 7.30pm at the Memo Arts Centre [Gladstone Road, Barry, CF62 8NA].

People are encouraged to register their interest in attending the free events online at the following link:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/cyfarfod-carwyn-carwyn-connect-tickets-29821069622>

Questions can be asked in a number of ways – they can be submitted when people arrive at the venue when doors open at 5.30pm; in advance via email on cabinetcommunications@wales.gsi.gov.uk or via Twitter using @fmwales with the hashtag #carwynconnect.

First Minister of Wales Carwyn Jones said:

“Over the past year, I have travelled across the country to hear the views of local communities and answer the burning questions of the people of Wales.

“I would like to see as many people as possible at the event in Barry on 3 April, so if you have a question for me, want to raise issues affecting your community or have a great idea to make your home town a better place to live, come along to the event.

“We always discuss a wide variety of topics at these events, with questions about very local issues, to discussions about broad Government policy.

“This is your chance to meet and speak with me in person. I’m really looking forward to meeting you all.”

News story: Baroness Anelay welcomes conclusions of UN Human Rights Council

This was the first Human Rights Council (HRC) session since the UK's successful re-election in November to serve a second term on the Council. The UK, represented at Ministerial level by my colleague Mr Sharma, Minister for Asia, played a leading role on a number of important issues, including Syria, Sri Lanka and South Sudan, as well as supporting on Burma, DPRK and Iran.

I welcome the adoption of a strong resolution on Syria, which includes renewing the mandate of the UN Commission of Inquiry (COI). The COI's vital work highlights the unspeakable atrocities being perpetrated in Syria. We will continue to call for those responsible for violations and abuses of international law to be held to account. We remain concerned at the lack of humanitarian access in Syria. We call on the regime to abandon its callous siege and starvation tactics and allow for the immediate, unhindered delivery of aid.

The report presented by the Human Rights Commission in South Sudan was deeply worrying. Following the peace agreement in August 2015, our hope that a transitional government of national unity might turn the tide of violence and begin the process of reconciliation looks to remain just that, a hope. So I welcome the adoption of a resolution, by consensus and with South Sudan's support, that will extend the Commission's work and strengthen its mandate.

The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) report on Sri Lanka highlighted notable improvements in its human rights situation. But much remains to be done in order to address the legacy of Sri Lanka's armed conflict. I welcomed Sri Lanka co-sponsoring a resolution at this session, sending a strong signal on the importance the Government attaches to reconciliation and human rights. I urge the Government of Sri Lanka to provide the leadership required to fully deliver on its commitments, to develop a comprehensive, time-bound implementation strategy, and to give due consideration to the conclusions of the report of the Consultation Task Force on reconciliation mechanisms.

I thank the Special Rapporteur on Burma for her report to the Council, acknowledging the progress made by the Government in its first year, while outlining the complex human rights challenges that remain, in particular conflict-related violations in Rakhine, Shan and Kachin States. I welcome the establishment of an independent international Fact Finding Mission to look into recent human rights violations, and urge the Burmese authorities to cooperate fully. The UK stands ready to assist the Government in this endeavour and tackling other long-standing human rights challenges. I welcome the resolution on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), which draws upon the recommendations made by the Group of Independent Experts on

accountability. I hope the UN Special Rapporteur will continue the important task of developing an effective accountability framework with OHCHR in Seoul. The UK will continue to work with partners to maintain international pressure on the DPRK. I call on the Government of the DPRK to take credible steps to address the shocking human rights record and prioritise the welfare of the North Korean people above the country's nuclear and ballistic missile programme.

The situation in Libya remains a grave concern, as highlighted in the latest joint report by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the United Nations Support Mission in Libya. I condemn the recent upsurge in violence between armed groups both in Tripoli and in the oil crescent, and am deeply concerned by reports of human rights abuses and violations by combatants in Benghazi and elsewhere. Those responsible must be held to account. I welcome the efforts of the Presidency Council and other mediators to de-escalate the situation and secure ceasefires. I urge calm on all sides to avoid further exacerbating the humanitarian crisis in the country. The UK welcomes the Council's support for the resolution and the emphasis on accountability.

I welcome the renewal of the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on Iran. The human rights situation within the country is deeply worrying, in particular the continued execution of juvenile offenders. The newly introduced Charter on Citizen's Rights has the potential to make a positive impact and I urge Iran to grant immediate access to the Special Rapporteur so she can work with them to implement it.

I also welcome the adoption of the resolution on the situation in South Ossetia and Abkhazia. The human rights situation there is deeply concerning. For too long, international organisations have been denied access by the de facto authorities to these increasingly isolated territories. I welcome the opportunity for detailed and objective reporting by the OHCHR. I trust that the de facto authorities in South Ossetia and Abkhazia will grant the mandated access to the High Commissioner and his Office.

The UK once again played a strong role in supporting consensus on the adoption of both the EU's 'Freedom of Religion or Belief' resolution and the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation's text on the combating religious intolerance resolution. Tackling restrictions on freedom of religion or belief, and addressing intolerance and violent extremism should be a priority for all UN Member States.

This Council has once again reaffirmed the vital role that Human Rights Defenders play in promoting and protecting human rights. The ability of our citizens to hold governments to account, to freely express opinions, to hold and avow their beliefs, is an essential element of protecting our dignity as individuals and societies. In too many parts of the world that ability is being challenged or restricted. During this session, we have also seen attempts by some delegations to restrict the participation of NGOs at the Human Rights Council. Civil society must be able to engage actively in the United Nations – it is in the interests of the international community that they do so. Civil society furthers the UN's ideals, is a source of evidence

and expertise, and supports the implementation of the UN's work. We restrict civil society space at our peril.

The UK remains committed to ensuring that the Council's Universal Periodic Review process delivers real improvements on human rights. I am pleased that the UK took the lead alongside Paraguay, Morocco and Brazil on a joint statement this session, outlining commitments to improve implementation of UPR recommendations. We were pleased to lead a joint statement on the Rule of Law, stressing that implementation is as important as the rules themselves.

Finally, in addition to our duty to address egregious human rights issues, I believe we must acknowledge positive developments. We should encourage a "race to the top" as States engage positively with the UN human rights system and support each other in translating political will into action. Alongside Colombia, the UK launched the "Race to the Top" initiative during the September HRC session. This session we delivered a joint statement on the initiative, which we were pleased enjoyed broad support.

At the start of our second term serving on the HRC, the UK was pleased to play a leading role on a number of critical dossiers. We look forward to working with member states on consolidating progress made in this session.

Labour sets out its vision for Glasgow

25 March 2017

Labour today launches its vision for Glasgow with a pledge to build on the successes of the last five years.

Ahead of the council election in May, the party's Deputy Leader Tom Watson MP and Glasgow City Council leader Frank McAveety promised to continue to invest in the city, despite £1.5 billion of SNP cuts to local services across Scotland since 2010/11.

Nationalist ministers have slashed £377 million from Glasgow's budget over the last decade.

But despite austerity cuts by the SNP, Scottish Labour councillors in Glasgow have:

- Invested more than £250 million in schools, revolutionising our school estate
- Built nearly twice as many homes as originally forecast
- Created 8000 jobs as part of the Glasgow Guarantee
- Delivered the Commonwealth Games for Glasgow

Scottish Labour councillors have pledged to build on this record with a relentless focus on creating jobs in the city, investing in education and banishing fuel poverty.

Labour Deputy Leader Tom Watson MP said:

"The SNP is a party that willingly continues to impose cuts on the people of Glasgow.

"Nicola Sturgeon has passed on Tory cuts to her own city and all of Scotland.

"The SNP joined with the Tories four times to vote against asking the richest to pay their fair share to invest in local services

"Despite SNP austerity, it is Labour councillors who are fighting day in, day out for Glasgow.

"It is Labour councillors who have invested in the city's schools and services, created jobs and built houses.

"Voters in Glasgow and across the country can send the SNP a message in May – stop dividing our country and get on with the job of investing in local services."

Frank McAveety, Leader of Glasgow City Council, said:

"Five years ago we said we would unashamedly stand up for Glasgow above all else.

"We said we would invest in schools, build new homes and create more jobs. And we said we would deliver the best ever Commonwealth Games.

"Glasgow Labour has not just delivered on our promises, we have exceeded them.

"Glasgow Labour's manifesto is a plan for the next 5 years. It is a plan to move Glasgow forward, not backwards with another divisive referendum.

"It is a plan that will guarantee a job for every 18-24 year old, it is a plan to deliver 30 hours free childcare for every 3 and 4 year old and it is a plan that will see us build 25,000 new houses.

"When voters go to the polls they have a choice. They can choose to invest in childcare, in schools and in jobs.

"It's a choice to provide 21st century housing in a 21st century city, to support families and tackle inequality.

"It's a choice to move Glasgow forward and put Glasgow first."

[You can download and read our manifesto here.](#)