



Help prevent trafficking in Afghanistan's cultural heritage

11 Oct. 2021-The Afghan crisis has given rise to serious concerns about the fate of the country's heritage under the Taliban. Some media reports claim the Taliban have pledged to protect cultural heritage sites and artefacts and to prevent looting. Others raise fears that what happened to cultural heritage previously under the Taliban may happen again.

Illicit digging for artefacts can destroy important archaeological sites, something the art market does not want to unwittingly facilitate. Allowing such artefacts to enter the market compromises the legitimate art and antiquities market and goes against our trade associations' professional and ethical standards, which are reflected in our written codes.

The art trade must be prepared to do what it can to ensure that any illicit cultural property coming out of Afghanistan does not make its way on to the market. To that end, as trade associations we will continue to alert our members and others to the heightened risks involved. We will continue to support law enforcement in publicising news of stolen and trafficked items to prevent them from entering the market.

The Antiquities Ministry in Afghanistan comes under the authority of the Ministry of the Interior Affairs. The current acting Minister of the Interior is Sirajuddin Haqqani, a terrorist wanted by the FBI and with a bounty of up to \$10 million on his head. Because of this, governments must also be careful about returning artefacts to Afghanistan under the Taliban.

Signed,

Art And Antique Dealers League of America (AADLA, USA)
Associazione Antiquari D'Italia (AAI, ITALY)
Antiquities Dealers' Association (ADA, UK)
British Antique Dealers' Association (BADA, UK)
Comité Professionnel des Galeries d'Art (CPGA, France)
Czech Association of Antique Dealers (AS, Czech Republic)
Federación Española de Anticuarios (FEA, Spain)
International Association of Dealers in Ancient Art (IADAA, Int'l)
Kunsthändlerverband Deutschland e.V. (KD, Germany)
LAPADA the Association of Art & Antiques Dealers (LAPADA, UK)
Syndicat National des Antiquaires (SNA, France)
Syndicat National des Maisons de Ventes Volontaires (SYMEV, France)

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