



## Association of Art Museum Directors

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New York, April 28, 2003 - Pillaging of archaeological sites - or great cultural repositories, as we have seen in Iraq - causes the destruction of cultural heritage and the unlawful, uncontrolled dispersal of rare and important artifacts.

American museums, and museums around the world, have the responsibility to preserve works of art. We condemn any actions that damage monuments, sites, or cultural institutions. In the face of the current Iraqi crisis, the AAMD therefore calls on its members to take the following steps:

1. AAMD urges all members with appropriate expertise to provide professional support to the Iraq National Museum in Baghdad and Iraq's archaeological community in general to identify and reclaim missing objects, and to facilitate efforts to inventory existing collections.
2. In order to prevent objects from being removed from Iraq, the AAMD calls for the creation of an amnesty program to encourage the immediate return of looted objects, free of criminal penalties, and with financial incentives.
3. AAMD calls on members with expertise in Mesopotamian art to facilitate the detection of stolen Iraqi works, by making existing artifact databases and other appropriate resources available on the Association's website, [www.aamd.org](http://www.aamd.org).
4. AAMD urges all museums - in America and around the world - to alert and work with the appropriate international authorities if they believe they have information regarding objects recently stolen from Iraq.

Since its founding in 1916, AAMD has been helping to establish professional guidelines for the acquisition, preservation and display of artifacts and objects by its members. AAMD members strive to serve the citizens of all nations by fostering knowledge and appreciation of works of art.

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