

SAMPLES OF NGOS' INITIATIVES IN THE PROTECTION OF THE CULTURAL HERITAGE BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER CONFLICTS IN RECENT YEARS

As it is known, in the 15th century Renaissance developed in Italy and Industrial Revolution started and developed in England in the 18th century. Within this period, in parallel with the development of the democracy, state concept started to be re-structured again to the limit of individual and society, superstructure institutions like art, politics and culture had developed rapidly and it had been seen that civil-social organizations independent from the government society appeared mostly. For instance the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB) was founded by William Morris and Philip Webb in England (1877) and it published "The SPAB Manifesto-The Principal of the Society for the Protection of the Ancient Buildings as Set Forth Upon its Foundation": This manifesto including the first preventive and innovative conservation philosophy and approaches to the ancient buildings is considered the start point of the many later conservation policies of the civil society.

After World War II, in parallel with the foundation of Inter-Governmental Organisations (IGOs) from 1944 to 1965, such as UN, UNESCO, NATO, ICCROM, Conseil of Europe, European Economic Community, the forerunner of EU many international non-governmental organisations (NGOs) were founded to work on the protection of the cultural heritage. They are ICOM, ICOMOS, ICA, Europa Nostra, International Council on Monuments and Sites etc.

The International Committee of the Blue Shield in 1996 was the first international NGO in the world working on the protection of the cultural heritage in armed conflicts. Besides, national NGOs were founded to work on this subject in the countries, such as Austrian Society for the Protection of Cultural Property (Austria,1980).

The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), held in Rio in 1992, was a milestone by of world environment movement and the adoption of participatory mechanisms independent from the government. In this summit it was accepted that NGOs are one of the definitive, supplementary and essential elements of society. In this way, at the same time NGOs started to be reference guide in

determination and protection of national and international benefits, they were taken under protection by laws and regulations.

Lately WATCH (World Association for the Protection of Tangible and Intangible Cultural Heritage During Times of Armed Conflict) founded in 2005 in Rome, Italy, was the international NGO to provide support in the implementation of the policies foreseen by the Hague Convention 1954 and its protocols and all the other related international agreements to protect cultural heritage before, during and after armed conflicts.

Friends of Cultural Heritage (FOCUH), founded in Istanbul, Turkey, in 2005, is the first and unique national NGO in Turkey that performs works about protection of cultural heritage both in peace and in armed conflicts according to its statutes.

It is known that international NGOs perform many activities for protection of cultural heritage before, during and after armed conflicts. In this part some examples for national or international NGOs' activities hidden among pages of history are given.

Many scientific, official and civil society initiatives performed for protection of cultural heritage of Iraq before possible war are also remembered with respect. For instance, initiatives in the presence of USA official organizations and Pentagon by Prof. Mc.Guire Gipson, Dr. Nabil Al Tikrity from Chicago University, warnings and advices of the Archaeological Institute of America (AIA) especially and many other universities and experts towards USA army. An international petition campaign of the "Civil Initiative for Protection of Iraq's Cultural Heritage" was organized by the author of this article and her friends in Turkey in February 2003.

During the armed conflicts between Israel and Lebanon in August 2006: an international petition campaign through internet by Prof. Dr. Fabio Maniscalco, from Naples, Italy, "Appeal for the Protection of Cultural Property in Israel and Lebanon" published by six international IGOs and NGOs such as ICCROM, ICA, ICOMOS, ICOM, OWHC, Europa Nostra, speech of President of FOCUH in panel discussion of high rating Skytürk broadcaster in Turkey, in connection with World Peace Day and her public awareness about protection of cultural heritage in both countries during the armed conflicts took part in the pages of the history of NGOs.

Within the period of the armed conflicts in Caucasus between in Georgia and Russian Federation in 2008, the letter of FOCUH titled "Appeal for the the Protection of the Cultural Heritage in Georgia As Well As in the Region of Caucasus During the Armed Conflicts" in which it advised fighting parties to respect cultural heritage in the

region sent to Ambassadors of Russia and Georgia in Ankara, Turkey, as well as representatives of UNESCO, ICOM, ICOMOS in Turkey was another example of the national NGO's activity.

Consequently historical and cultural heritage properties which are assurances for sustainable development of countries must be carefully under protection. Mass popularization of their conservation is only possible with NGOs. Therefore, in the national developing plans as well as in states' national defense strategies for the protection of the cultural properties in peace, before, during and after armed conflicts, pioneering and dominant role of National NGOs in the community should be taken into consideration during the time of peace.

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