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WRITTEN DECLARATION

submitted under Rule 136 of the Rules of Procedure

on the return of stolen cultural goods and combating trafficking

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Lapse date: 27.7.2016

Written declaration, under Rule 136 of Parliament's Rules of Procedure, on the return of stolen cultural goods and combating trafficking¹

1. Trafficking in cultural goods is a particularly serious type of crime against property, since it affects not only property but also the cultural heritage of Member States. It represents a threat to the safeguarding of priceless national treasures.
2. Member States retain the right to define their national treasures and to take the necessary measures to protect them.
3. The European Union plays an important role in encouraging cooperation between Member States and with accession countries in order to protect cultural heritage of European significance.
4. With reference to Council Directive 93/7/EEC on the return of cultural objects unlawfully removed from the territory of a Member State, to the 1954 Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict and to the 1970 Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, the Commission is hence called upon to work together with the Member States and Accession States on the better implementation of signed conventions.
5. This declaration, together with the names of the signatories, is forwarded to the Council and the Commission.

¹ Under Rule 136(4) and (5) of Parliament's Rules of Procedure, where a declaration is signed by a majority of Parliament's component Members, it is published in the minutes with the names of its signatories and forwarded to the addressees, without however binding Parliament.