



## Resolutions 2004 International Congress on Archives

Adopted by the 15<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Assembly, Vienna, 28 August 2004

The 2000 participants from 116 countries, meeting at the 15 International Congress on Archives in Vienna (Austria) from 23 to 28 August,

**1.** *Concerned* at the grave consequences of man made and natural disasters for archival and documentary heritage, both public and private,

**recommend** to governments that have not already done so, to sign and to ratify the 1954 Hague Convention on the Protection of Cultural Heritage in the Event of Armed Conflict and its two Protocols of 1954 and 1999, the second of which came into force on 9 March 2004;

**recommend** to the United Nations and other international organisations and to national governments:

- to include the protection of moveable and immovable cultural heritage and of vital records in the mandate of their peace support and humanitarian operations,
- to act to prevent looting and destruction of records and archives, and
- to put in place measures to stop illicit trade in archival documents;

**recommend** to cultural heritage professionals to integrate risk preparedness, response and recovery into their programmes;

**recommend** that, where they do not already exist, ICA members should work with ICOM, ICOMOS and IFLA to create national committees of the Blue Shield, to protect cultural heritage in case of conflict or natural disaster, and to urge their governments to support them.

**2.** *Recalling* the right and responsibility of each country to protect its cultural heritage; *referring* to the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity unanimously adopted by UNESCO in 2001<sup>1</sup>,

**welcome** the proposal to develop an International Convention on Cultural Diversity as recommended by the 32nd General Conference of UNESCO; and

**call on** the intergovernmental meeting of experts preparing the draft convention to take account of the essential importance of archives for maintaining diversity.

**3.** *Recalling* that archives are at the heart of the information society, *concerned* at their vulnerability, particularly in the electronic environment, *wishing* to assure their preservation for future generations, and *concerned* to reduce the digital divide between rich and poor countries and within societies,

**call on** their governments to mandate their delegates to the World Summit on the Information Society to be held in Tunis in November 2005, to support measures for preservation and free accessibility of archives, as stated in the action plan adopted by the Summit at Geneva in December 2003;

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.unesco.org/culture/pluralism/diversity/>

**invite** public authorities in their respective countries and the leaders of their institutions or organisations to mandate their delegates to the World Summit on the Information Society to demand a reduction in access costs to the Internet for low income countries and to permit all national archive services to connect to the Internet, thus helping to reduce the digital divide between countries.

**4. *Conscious*** of the importance of archives as a fundamental constituent of collective and of individual memory,

**recommend** to governments and international organisations to develop strategies for the preservation of the memories of nations as well as to encourage the sharing of the common heritage of countries and communities, at the intellectual level.

**5. *Considering*** the fundamental importance of archives in all states, as a means of determining responsibility for human rights violations and helping reconciliation and the promotion of universal justice,

***Greatly concerned*** by the threat of destruction which, in certain countries, faces the archives of public bodies and international organisations that document violations of human rights,

**call on** the appropriate UN authorities to adopt the final report on the question of the impunity of perpetrators of human rights violations, drawn up by Louis Joinet in 1997 (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1997/20/Rev.1), so that it can be submitted to the General Assembly of the UN<sup>2</sup>;

**call on** the relevant authorities of the UN to facilitate the exercise of the rights mentioned in the report above, by studying means of preserving these archives and developing an action plan to this effect;

**call on** UNESCO to give its support to the projects of the International Council on Archives which aim to improve the preservation and accessibility of archives relating to defence of human rights.

**6. *Considering*** the growing importance of sport and the Olympic movement in contemporary societies and the necessity of preserving and promoting its archival and documentary heritage,

**call on** the International Olympic Committee, governments and civil society to support ICA projects intended to safeguard and promote the preservation and accessibility of archives of sport and of the Olympic movement .

**7. *Considering*** the need to promote the image of archival services in public opinion,

**call on** the appropriate authorities of the United Nations to organize an International Archives Day.

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<sup>2</sup> This report contains a set of 40 principles, five of which (principles 13 to 17) require the preservation of records of the following individual and collective rights: the right to know, the right to justice and the right to reparation.  
[http://www.unhcr.ch/huridocda/huridoca.nsf/\(Symbol\)/E.CN.4.sub.2.1997.20.Rev.1.En](http://www.unhcr.ch/huridocda/huridoca.nsf/(Symbol)/E.CN.4.sub.2.1997.20.Rev.1.En)

## Special Motions

The participants in the 15<sup>th</sup> International Congress on Archives in Vienna, Austria,

**express their profound gratitude** to the Federal President, to the Government of Austria, to the Mayor of Vienna, to the Director General of the State Archives of Austria and his colleagues, as well as to other Austrian archivists, for their warm hospitality and for their excellent organisation of the 15<sup>th</sup> International Congress on Archives.

**recognise with grateful thanks**, the role played by national and international organisations, both public and private, in helping to support the 15<sup>th</sup> International Congress on Archives.

**thank** all the participants, organisations, associations, branches, sections, committees and individual members of ICA who have contributed actively to the success of the 15<sup>th</sup> International Congress on Archives.