



RESOLUTION:

THE PARTHENON SCULPTURES SHOULD RETURN TO GREECE

Adopted at the YEPP Council of Presidents
In Athens, Greece, on the 6th of the December 2014

Recognising:

- Art.7(b)(ii) of the 1970 UNESCO Convention which states that: the Parties at this Convention accept "at the request of the State Party of origin, to take appropriate steps to recover and return any such cultural property";
- That the most recent international legal instrument in the area of cultural property, the 1995 UNIDROIT Convention on stolen or illegally exported cultural objects, states in art.3(1) that "the possessor of a cultural object which has been stolen shall return it";
- Resolution 4/09 adopted by the General Conference of UNESCO at its twenty-first session, on the return of cultural property to its country of origin;
- The recommendations adopted by the Intergovernmental Committee for Promoting the Return of Cultural Property to its Country of Origin or its Restitution in Case of Illicit Appropriation at its second session (Paris, 14-18 September 1981);
- That the removal of the Parthenon Sculptures from their place has disfigured a unique monument which is a symbol of great significance for the Greek people and humanity;
- That thesculptures should be returned to Greece, the country in which they were created, for their reincorporation into the architectural structure of which they forma part;

Acknowledging:

- Safekeeping of the Sculptures would be ensured at the New Acropolis Museum, situated to the south of the Acropolis hill, one of the most modern museums in the world (3rd in the Top Ten museums to visit by National Geographic). It was built to hold the Parthenon Sculptures in natural sunlight that characterises the Athenian climate, arranged the same way as they would have been on the Parthenon. The museum's facilities have been equipped with state-of-the-art technology for the protection and preservation of the exhibits;
- Precedents have been set with the return of monument fragments by Sweden, the University of Heidelberg, Germany; the Getty Museum, Los Angeles; and the Vatican;
- Many antiquities have found their way back to their country of origin based on discussion between the host country and the country of origin. In 1948, the Wright Brothers' Kittyhawk aircraft was returned to the United States from London's Science Museum. In 1962 the University Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology in Cambridge returned cultural objects to the Kabaka of Uganda. The Ethiopian Manuscripts were also returned in 1872 and early 1930s as Ceylon took back the shrine, scepter and orb of the last King of Kandy.

YEPP calls on:

- EU Member States to view the return of the Parthenon Sculptures as an automatic application of the principle stating that elements abstracted from national monuments should be returned to those monuments;
- The European Commission, the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union, based on this principle, to demand the return of the Parthenon Sculptures to their rightful place in the new Acropolis Museum;
- The European Institute of Cultural Routes and the European Union National Institutes of Culture (EUNIC) to create awareness of the background of the Parthenon Sculptures, currently being at the British Museum, and the rightful claim of Greece to them.