

RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY ICOM'S 10TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Grenoble, France
1971

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Grenoble, France, 10th September 1971

Resolution No. 1: The Museum in the Service of Man

Considering the theme of the 9th General Conference «The Museum in the Service of Man, Today and Tomorrow», with its particular emphasis on education and cultural action,

Considering the reports which have been submitted and the discussions which followed,

Affirming that by virtue of having accepted the primary functions of collection, safeguarding, and thereafter presenting the results of this action to all sections of society, the museum's aim is education and the transmission of information and knowledge by all the means at its disposal in so far as the museum is first and foremost in the service of all mankind,

Taking note of the many controversial issues which reflect the differences of opinion within the museum profession on the adaptation of the museum to the contemporary world, notably:

1. That the museum must accept that society is constantly changing;
2. That the traditional concept of the museum which perpetuates values concerned with the preservation of man's cultural and natural heritage, not as a manifestation of all that is significant in man's development, but merely as the possession of objects, is questionable;
3. That each individual museum must accept that it has a duty to evolve means of action specifically designed to serve best the particular social environment within which it operates;
4. That the museum-visiting public is not necessarily the total public which the museum should be serving;
5. That the museum needs specially-trained personnel in order to carry out its aim;
6. That museums have not benefited from the financial resources

which have been made available to traditionally accepted educational institutions;

7. That museums have not taken advantage of the wide range of expertise and knowledge which exists in other sections of the community,

Requests urgently that all museums:

a. Undertake a continuous and complete reassessment of the needs of the public which they serve;

b. Through the medium of ICOM, undertake a programme of systematic study and research based on the results obtained and evolve methods of action which will in future more firmly establish their educational and cultural role in the service of mankind.

Resolution No. 2: Ethics of Acquisitions

Considering the wholesale destruction and commercial exploitation that have occurred concerning elements of the world's cultural heritage,

Hoping to respond to appeals from scholars and from source countries for help in maintaining and contributing to the reconstitution of their cultural heritage,

Reaffirming the need for a code of professional ethics concerning the acquisition of museum objects,

Recommends to all museum professionals:

1. That they bind themselves to a moral obligation for collective action in establishing and adhering to a professional ethic as regards acquisition of objects the licit quality of which is not sufficiently established;

2. That they adopt within their professional activities a policy which conforms to the ICOM resolutions of 1970 on this subject and strive to encourage the incorporation of this ethical code into the policy of all museums;

3. That they urgently request the governmental authorities in their respective countries to comply with Unesco's international recommendations on archaeological excavations (1965), and on the illicit transfer of cultural property (1964), and to ratify the International Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, and to conclude bilateral and multilateral agreements aimed at the suppression of illicit traffic in cultural property.

Resolution No. 3: Documentation of Collections and Field Missions

Desirous of seeing its members and the entire museum profession give positive sequel to the recommendations and resolutions concerning

the preservation of the cultural heritage of mankind, as well as to the scientific, moral and ethical rules which must govern the action of museums,

Considering all the recommendations and conventions adopted by Unesco, as well as the various dispositions of the text of recommendations adopted by ICOM in 1970,

Recommends:

1. That all persons responsible for museums, and particularly ICOM members, sign as soon as possible the text of the moral engagement proposed to them by the 1970 ICOM recommendation;
2. That all large museums holding important collections of foreign origin in their reserves, help, by all the means in their power (gifts, loans, deposits, exchanges, research scholarships, training of personnel, etc.), the countries of origin of these collections, so as to allow them to establish and develop modern museums which are truly representative of their specific cultures;
3. That these same museums deposit in the museums of the countries of origin of their collections, the most comprehensive documentation possible on the objects in their collections;
4. That scientific institutions and researchers deposit in museums the products of their research, i.e. the objects and the documents and publications related to these objects, after such reasonable delay (determined by law or contract) as is necessary for study and the scientific use of the resultant research by its authors; it being understood that the museums of the countries where the research was undertaken have the right to receive all or part of the objects collected, together with duplicates or reproductions of the principal documents issuing from such research.

Resolution No. 4: Training of Personnel

Considering the resolutions and recommendations concerning the status and the training of museum personnel adopted by the 7th and 8th ICOM General Conferences,

Recognizing the appreciable progress made in the last few years, particularly the increased number of museology courses in numerous countries,

Requests governing authorities responsible for teaching and research to recognize museology as a scientific discipline of university level,

Recommends most strongly that national and international organizations, museums and universities encourage and permit research on museology and the publication of this research, in that this is the most efficient method for the promotion and development of museology as a scientific discipline.

Resolution No. 5: Museums and Environment

Aware that the pollution of air, earth and water and the defacing of man's visual and physical environment is proceeding at an accelerated rate and is threatening to destroy not only man's cultural and natural resources but also life in general,

Believing that all museums in the world are concerned with the gathering of documentation on the basic conditions of human existence and the preservation of the natural and cultural environment,

Stressing the importance of the museum as one of the most effective vehicles for the transmission of information and cultural environment,

Recommends:

1. That all national and international organizations and in particular the United Nations, Unesco and all governments should recognize and fully employ the resources of museums and of ICOM in the furtherance of research and education in all measures designed to protect man's well-being and continued existence,
2. That all museums should create special displays on the theme «Man and His Environment» and prepare comprehensive documentation on this subject as an information base for government agencies and industry.

Resolution No. 6: Safety of Exhibitions During Transport

Recognizing that loan exhibitions bringing together works of art and museum objects have a vitally important educational influence throughout the world but that it is equally important to preserve and protect those works and objects at all times from damage or deterioration,

Noting the efforts of the museum profession, within the limits of its knowledge and resources, to ensure that objects do not suffer when included in such exhibitions,

Expressing concern at the increasing frequency of exhibitions and the consequent increase in damage caused to objects by poor packing, clumsy handling, shock and vibration in transit, violent variations in climate and lack of accompanying professional personnel,

Resolves that in order to aid and assist those responsible for the execution of the necessary procedures, ICOM undertake, through its relevant Committees, the detailed study of all the desirable administrative and technical control factors significant for the improvement of the care and preservation of works of art and museum objects entrusted to international loan exhibitions.

Resolution No. 7: Exchanges of Personnel

Considering that the vocation of any international organization is to

facilitate and stimulate exchanges of ideas and experiences,

Considering that within the museum profession the techniques and experience acquired in any one country should be put at the disposal of the others, particularly to the profit of those museums which have not yet attained a sufficient level of development,

Recommends that exchanges of museum professionals between different countries be systematically encouraged and organized, particularly through the intermediary of ICOM.

Resolution No. 8: Review of ICOM Structures

Considering that the organization of this Council must improve its ability to respond to the needs of the general membership,

Noting that the 10th General Assembly and the Executive Council have discussed the need for a thoroughgoing review of the structure, statutes, rules, programmes and services of ICOM,

Resolves the urgent necessity of such a review which must take into account the opinions and suggestions of the National Committees,

Resolves that a committee to conduct such a review be appointed by the President and be constituted of an equal number of active and associate members,

Resolves that the recommendations of such a committee be forwarded thereafter to the Secretariat for submission to the Executive Council and be distributed to all members in the following six months,

Expresses its full support of the work of the Secretariat.