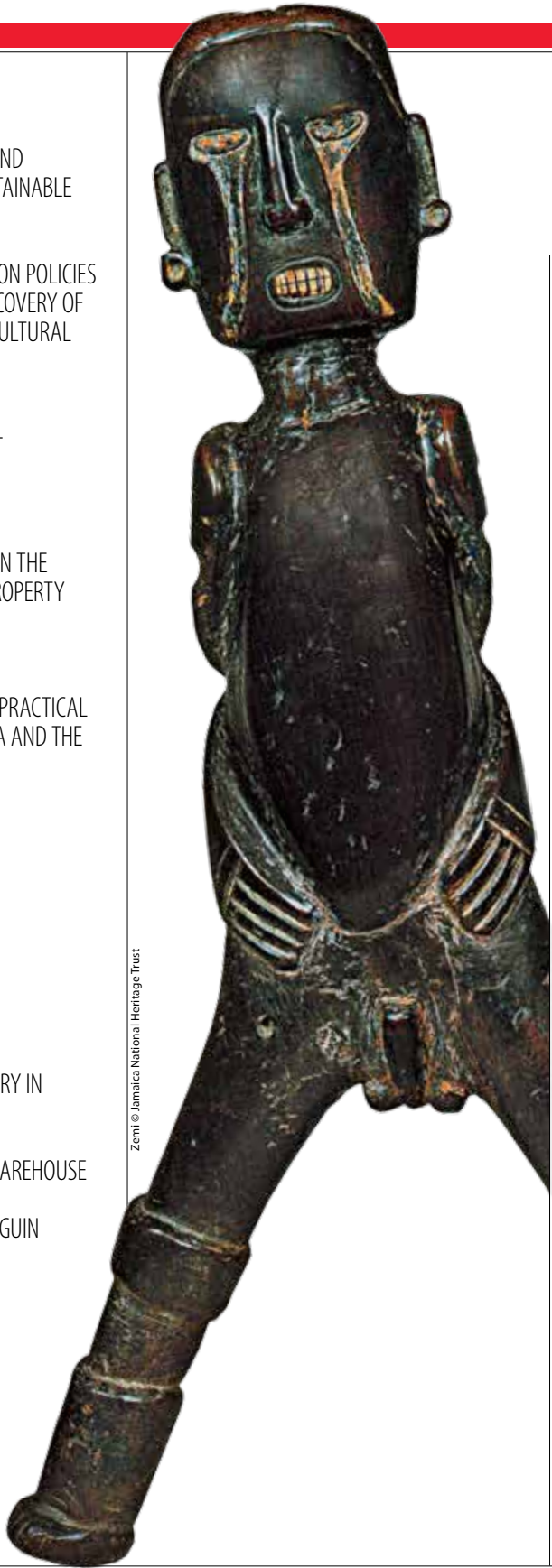


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EDITORIAL



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The media recently echoed the return to Peru of several archaeological pieces from the Chancay culture, which had been seized by the Egyptian authorities in their territory. This is certainly a good example of international cooperation in the fight against illicit trafficking in cultural property between two countries that have unfortunately suffered from this scourge for many years. The new issue of *Culture and Development* focuses on this issue in the region.

Not long ago, representatives of Latin American and Caribbean countries shared their concern with Irina Bokova, Director General of UNESCO, about their concern over the looting, theft and illicit trafficking in cultural property in the region. The answer to this demand was to immediately boost training in connection with the implementation of the 1970 Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property. Specialized workshops, which were attended by experts and professionals from different disciplines, institutions and countries, were organized by the UNESCO offices in Havana, Montevideo and Lima, and were financed by the Regular Programme Budget of the Organisation and the Emergency Fund, with financial support from the Netherlands and Spain.

The value of cultural property, the importance of its protection, the prevention of its illegal trade, the role of the UNESCO Conventions, including the 1970 instrument in the development of individuals and societies, and the outcomes of the above-mentioned regional workshops are part of the contents of this issue, which includes contributions from experts of the UNESCO Cultural Heritage Protection Treaties Section and UNIDROIT.

Multiple experiences in various countries of the region enrich this conceptual framework. Interpol's work in Argentina, the measures taken by the Andean Community to combat illicit trafficking in cultural property, and the latest Dominican Red List of Cultural Property at Risk are just some of the topics covered in this issue. Colombia and Guatemala present their policies to prevent these crimes; Cuba describes its customs detection and control system; and St. Martin advances an interesting cooperation modality between France and the Netherlands on this Caribbean island. Other examples illustrate the following pages, such as the state of affairs in Haiti, illicit traffic of underwater cultural heritage, and, as previously mentioned, the return of cuchimilcos found in Egypt to Peru.

The previous issue, which was dedicated to the inclusion of culture in the post-2015 development agenda, closed with the Hangzhou Declaration available at <http://en.unesco.org>. This issue ends with the Trinidad and Tobago Declaration, a document that states the value of culture as a driver for sustainable development and delves into the areas of intervention necessary to create a culture of peace in the region through improved legal frameworks, increased investment and strengthened film industries.

I thank the colleagues of the Organization, and the experts of the region for their support and contributions to this issue of *Culture and Development*, which gives visibility, from a different perspective, to the value of culture to achieve the development we all want.



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