

PREVIOUS EFFORTS: 2003 – 2008

Leading up to the Iraq Cultural Heritage Program (ICHP) that was launched in October 2008, since 2003 the Department's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs has provided diverse support for Iraqi cultural heritage. Many of these efforts are continued today through ICHP and pending additional programs. The Iraq National Museum, the Iraq National Library, and the State Board of Antiquities and Heritage (SBAH) have been primary beneficiaries. In addition, significant efforts have been taken in the protection of archaeological sites in Iraq and in the fight against illicit international trafficking of Iraqi antiquities.

Iraq National Museum

In 2003, **Emergency Administrative Infrastructure Support** was provided toward the purchase of computer and photography equipment and other technical needs. In addition, four experts in museum security, environmental control, conservation, and information technology were sent to Baghdad to conduct a **Museum Needs Assessment**. The assessment led to **Physical Infrastructure and Communications Improvements**, carried out in 2004. These included electrical, plumbing, climate control, and structural repairs, as well as the installation of a computer network and communications equipment. Also in 2004, a plan for a CPA-Iraqi **Museum Security Plan** was developed, and protective gear was provided to improve the personal safety of museum guards. Through an on-going collaboration with museum staff, a **Museum Website** in Arabic and English is being developed.

Iraq National Library and Archives

In the autumn of 2003, a team from the Library of Congress conducted a [Library Needs Assessment](#). Following the assessment, in early 2004, staff members were provided with **Museum Supplies**, including cameras, laptop computers, reference books, and conservation materials, such as a special vacuum and sponges. **Climate Control Stabilization** was achieved through a project in 2007.

Training and Consultative Visits for Iraqi Cultural Heritage Professionals

In the spring of 2004, a 5-week Cultural Heritage Institute provided **Museum Staff Training** in the United States for 22 professionals in the fields of museum management, curatorial practice, and conservation. In early 2005, three senior Iraqi cultural officials from the SBAH participated in a **Consultative Visit to the US**, through the Department of State International Visitors Leadership Program. They had the opportunity to confer with colleagues at U.S. museums and academic institutions regarding the development of new opportunities for collaboration in museum practices and site management. In Spring 2006 and Summer 2007, 6 Iraqi museum professionals participated in an exchange program to engage with American counterparts through a **Museum-to-Museum Partnership Program**. Two Iraqis participated in each of the following three programs: cuneiform tablet and ivory conservation at the Walters Art Museum (Baltimore); fundraising and development at the California Science Center with the Japanese American National Museum (Los Angeles); and education and collections management

at the Chicago History Museum, with the Field Museum of Natural History and the Oriental Institute (Chicago).

In 2005, the Library of Congress organized a **Library Conservation Training Program** that brought a small group of Iraqis to the U.S. Then in 2006, The Director General of the Iraq National Library and Archives participated in a **Consultative Visit to the US** to discuss possibilities for collaborative projects in collections conservation.

Protection of Iraqi Archaeological Sites

In Spring 2004, a new **Iraq Archaeological Site Protection Plan** was implemented, and communications equipment and vehicles were provided to site guards in the regions of Nasiriyah and Diwaniyah. From 2005 to 2007, in collaboration with Stony Brook University, a **Satellite Imagery Acquisition** project provided large amounts of high-resolution satellite imagery of the archaeologically rich area of southern Iraq to enable the SBAH to assess looting and damage and to develop site protection and management strategies. In 2008, also in collaboration with Stony Brook University, the **Archaeological Map of Iraq Project** was launched. Using current satellite technology and digital techniques, a new map recording archaeological site locations will replace an antiquated atlas published in 1976. This digital map will support the efforts of the SBAH as they work to safeguard sites against looting.

Fight Against Illicit Trafficking in Iraqi Antiquities

The **United Nations Security Council Resolution 1483** is being implemented in the U.S. through the Department of Treasury Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC), in consultation with the Department of State. Since August 1990, by Presidential Executive Order, sanctions have prohibited the importation into the U.S. of any cultural objects from Iraq. The **Emergency Protection for Iraqi Cultural Antiquities Act of 2004** authorizes the President to impose [U.S. import restrictions on Iraq's cultural property](#). This presidential action was implemented by the Departments of State and Homeland Security in 2008.

In Spring 2005, a **Workshop on International Law Enforcement Cooperation for Cultural Heritage Protection** was held to promote cooperation between U.S. and foreign law enforcement entities in the recovery of artifacts illicitly taken out of Iraq. A follow-up workshop is anticipated.

An [Emergency Red List of Iraqi Antiquities at Risk](#) was published in Spring 2003, and reprinted in 2005 and 2008. Produced by the International Council of Museum (ICOM), this brochure is a tool to help customs officials, police officers, and art dealers identify objects that may have been unlawfully removed from Iraq. Printed brochures have been distributed world-wide in English, French, and Arabic. An on-line version is also available.

Recoveries and Repatriations have entailed the recovery in 2006 by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement of the famous statue of the early Mesopotamian ruler

Entemena, which was stolen from the Iraq National Museum in April 2003. The U.S. Department of Homeland Security returned the sculpture to the Iraqi people in a [July 2006 repatriation ceremony](#) attended by Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki. An additional 1,102 Iraqi antiquities recovered in 2001 were returned to the Iraqi people [September 2008 repatriation ceremony](#). Since 2008, at the request of the government of Iraq, a project for the **Conservation of Seized Iraqi Artifacts** has focused on documenting, stabilizing, and conserving the Iraqi archaeological objects repatriated in 2008 so that the fragile collection can be transported safely to Iraq.