New forms of cooperation and agreements for the return and restitution of cultural property to Central America

Subregional dialogue – Guatemala, 9 – 10 December 2024

Concept Note

Context and justification

The return and restitution of cultural property is a fundamental aspect RI 81(6&2¶V PDQGDWH Since its inception, UNESCO has played a crucial role in supporting and accompanying its Member States in their requests for return and restitution by providing expertise, facilitating dialogue, and offering continuous guidance.

The MONDIACULT 2022 Declaration, unanimously adopted in September 2022 by Member States, JDYH DU HQHZHG LPSHWXV WR 81(6&2¶V for HanRdeW and LQ WKLV inclusive international dialogue for the return and restitution of cultural property, including illegally exported cultural property, to countries of origin under the aegis of UNESCO « as an ethical imperative to foster the right of peoples and communities to enjoy their cultural heritage", while calling on UNESCO to promote the effective implementation of existing legal and policy frameworks for the return and restitution of cultural property to its countries of origin, as well as working with art market actors, museums and private collectors.

The inclusion of culture in the Pact for the Future adopted by Heads of State at the UN General Assembly last September firmly anchors culture at the heart of countries' response to the major challenges of our time. The text calls on States to integrate culture into their economic,