

12. INVITES the Member States and the Commission within their respective competencies and responsibilities,
- to enhance synergies with Community areas and activities other than cultural ones from the earliest possible stage of preparation of any action or policy to its implementation, through an assessment of these actions at all appropriate levels,
 - to examine the methods through which the exchange of good practices in relation to the economic and social dimension of culture could be developed, including the contribution of cultural activities to social inclusion and to the promotion of cultural diversity;
13. AGREES that the Council, by the end of 2004, should take stock of the follow-up to this Resolution.

DECLARATION OF THE COUNCIL

of 26 May 2003

on the tragic destruction of cultural goods, archaeological sites, monuments and libraries in Iraq

(2003/C 136/02)

The Council of the European Union,

- expresses its deepest concern at the tragic destruction of cultural goods, archaeological sites, and monuments of irreplaceable historical value in Iraq and the vandalism and looting of the museums and libraries of vital importance not only to Iraq but to the whole world,
- confirms that a basic principle ruling the EU as a community of cultural values and sensitivities is the respect and protection of world cultural heritage,
- stresses the need to protect in an efficient way the cultural goods of Iraq and to return the objects illegally removed from museums or archaeological sites, without allowing them to become objects of trade ending up in foreign museums or private collections.

The Council declares the European Union's active support of UNESCO's related initiatives and actions as well as its support of governmental and non-governmental organisations aiming at protecting Iraq's cultural heritage as part of the world's cultural heritage.
