

TO: ALA Executive Board
RE: U.S. Committee of the Blue Shield

ACTION REQUESTED/INFORMATION/REPORT:

Request that ALA recognize and participate in the U.S. National Committee of the Blue Shield

ACTION REQUESTED BY:

Maurice J. Freedman, Chair, International Relations Committee

CONTACT PERSON: Michael Dowling, 312-280-3200, mdowling@ala.org

DRAFT OF MOTION:

That ALA recognize and participate in the U.S. National Committee of the Blue Shield

DATE: December 14, 2006

BACKGROUND:

The Blue Shield is the cultural equivalent of the Red Cross. It is the symbol specified for marking cultural property in the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict. The International Committee of the Blue Shield was set up in 1996 by The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), International Council of Archives (ICA), International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), International Council of Museums (ICOM).

The International Committee of the Blue Shield encourages each nation to create a National Committee of the Blue Shield. The ALA IRC was approached about this a few years ago but nothing came of it. There are currently eleven Blue Shield national committees, including Belgium, Benin, the Czech Republic, France, Italy, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Madagascar, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, and the United Kingdom and Ireland.

A United States Committee of the Blue Shield has finally been formed and they are looking for ALA as the most representative library association in the U.S. to recognize

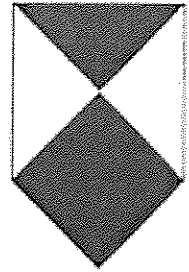
the Committee. The Committee already been recognized by the American Associations of Museums (AAM) and Society of American Archivists (SAA).

The U.S. Committee would also like to invite ALA to nominate a representative to serve on the Committee's Board. This would be a volunteer position in which ALA would not provide funds for participation. The nominee, if selected would report to the International Relations Committee. There are no anticipated costs for ALA's participation. If ALA is to recognize the Committee the International Relations Committee will seek a nominee to serve on the Committee's Board.

Attachments

Request to Recognize to IRC Chair Maurice Freedman
Requirements for National Committee of Blue Shield
USCBS Mission
USCBS Board
USCBS History and Development
AAM ICOM Support

United States Committee of the Blue Shield
Corine Wegener, President
cwegener@artsmia.org



December 4, 2006

Mr. Maurice J. Freedman, Chair
International Relations Committee
American Library Association

Via email: mitchjf@gmail.com

Re: United States Committee of the Blue Shield

Dear Mr. Freedman:

I'm writing to you in your capacity as president of the American Library Association's International Committee and on the advice of Sjoerd Koopman of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA). I would like to ask your help in our efforts to establish a United States national committee of the Blue Shield to promote the protection of cultural property during armed conflict.

The Blue Shield is the cultural equivalent of the Red Cross. It is the symbol specified in the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (see www.unesco.org/culture/laws/hague/html_eng/page1.shtml) for marking cultural sites to give them protection from attack in the event of armed conflict. It is also the name of an international committee set up in 1996 to work to protect the world's cultural heritage threatened by wars and natural disasters. While the United States signed the Hague Convention in 1954, it has never ratified this important treaty.

The International Committee of the Blue Shield (ICBS) covers museums, archives, libraries, and monuments and sites. It was created by and brings together the knowledge, experience and international networks of four organizations dealing with cultural heritage: ICOM (the International Council of Museums), ICOMOS (the International Council of Monuments and Sites), ICA (the International Council on Archives) and IFLA (the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions). Another organization, CCAAA (Coordinating Council of Audiovisual Archives Associations) was also recently added.

Blue Shield National Committees are key to the success of the ICBS mission. They bring together the different professions, local and national government, the emergency services and the armed forces. They provide a forum to improve emergency preparedness by sharing experiences and information. They provide a focus for raising national awareness of the threats to cultural heritage and promote the ratification and implementation by national governments of the 1954 Hague Convention. There are currently eleven Blue Shield national committees, including Belgium, Benin, the Czech

Republic, France, Italy, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Madagascar, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, and the United Kingdom and Ireland. Sixteen other countries have committees under construction, including the United States.

Mr. Maurice J. Freedman

December 4, 2006

Re: Formation of the United States Committee of the Blue Shield

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According to ICBS guidelines, initiatives for establishing a national committee of the Blue Shield must have the support of the national representatives of all five of the non-governmental organizations that originally make up the ICBS. In January 2006 I worked with a group of colleagues from the cultural property community to establish the basis of a U.S. national committee, which was incorporated as the United States Committee of the Blue Shield (USCBS). See our website at www.usebs.org (please note we are in the process of upgrading the site.)

In April 2006, the USCBS received the endorsement of the American Association of Museums International Council of Museums Committee, which represents ICOM in the U.S. Just this month the board of the Society of American Archivists (SAA), the U.S. representatives for ICA, voted to officially endorse USCBS. We also have a tentative agreement from the U.S. Committee of the International Committee on Monuments and Sites with official endorsement forthcoming. I am currently working to establish contacts with the Association of Moving Image Archivists' (AMIA) and the Association for Recorded Sound Collections (ARSC), representing CCAAA.

On behalf of the board of the USCBS, I would like to invite the American Library Association International Committee, as the logical U.S. representative of (IFLA), to recognize the USCBS as the official national committee of the Blue Shield in the United States. Furthermore, we invite you to submit a nominee to represent ALA as a voting member on the USCBS board of directors. Once all of the U.S. organizations have agreed, we may apply for official recognition as a national committee from the ICBS. We hope to accomplish this goal in early 2007.

I have attached a copy of our mission and goals statement, a list of our current board members, and a narrative on the events leading up to the creation of the USCBS. I have also attached a copy of the AAM/ICOM endorsement as an example of the format an endorsement might take. Please let me know if you have any other questions or concerns. I look forward to hearing from you and hope that the ALA will join together with other cultural property professional organizations in this historic initiative.

Best regards,

Corine Wegener
President
United States Committee of the Blue Shield

cc: Michael Dowling, ALA International Committee

Attachments: USCBS Mission and Goals
USCBS Board List
USCBS History
AAM/ICOM Endorsement

Requirements for National Committees of the Blue Shield

Strasbourg Charter (14 April 2000)

- *Conditions requises pour la création de comités nationaux du Bouclier bleu*

The following requirements to be met by national initiatives that wish to seek recognition as national Blue Shield committees.

1. Initiatives for establishing a national committee of the Blue Shield should fully recognise the ICBS Charter as adopted by ICBS in Strasbourg, 14 April 2000:

In order to protect endangered cultural heritage, the International Committee of the Blue Shield was created in 1996 by the four non-governmental organisations, which represent professionals active in the fields of archives, libraries, monuments and sites, and museums.

In the framework of the Hague Convention (1954) for the protection of cultural property in the event of armed conflict, ICA (International Council on Archives), ICOM (International Council of Museums), ICOMOS (International Council on Monuments and Sites), and IFLA (International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions) have taken up the emblem of the Convention as symbol of the International Committee of the Blue Shield. These four founding members were joined in 2005 by CCAAA (Co-ordinating Council of Audiovisual Archives Associations).

The five organisations work together to prepare for, and respond to, emergency situations in case of armed conflict or natural disaster that could affect cultural heritage.

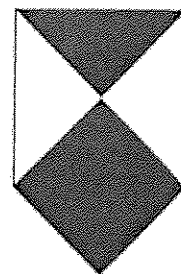
They respect the following principles:

(Approved by the International Committee of the Blue Shield at its meeting in Paris, 8th June 2001):

- joint actions
 - independence
 - neutrality
 - professionalism
 - respect of cultural identity
 - work on a not-for-profit basis.
2. Initiatives for establishing a national committee of the Blue Shield should have the support of the national representatives of all four non-governmental

organisations listed above, which together form the ICBS. In case of doubt, the bureaux of the four non-governmental organisations will decide on the respective representational claims.

3. An appropriate representative of initiatives to establish a national committee of the Blue Shield should inform the ICBS of the membership, contact addresses, meeting schedules and agendas and relevant national events of the proposed national committee.
4. An appropriate person or organisation on behalf of initiatives to establish a national committee of the Blue Shield may request the ICBS to grant official recognition. The ICBS has the sole right to decide whether to accord such recognition.



United States Committee of the Blue Shield

Promoting the protection of cultural property during armed conflict

The Blue Shield is the cultural equivalent of the Red Cross. It is the symbol specified for marking cultural property in the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict. It is also the name of the international committee set up in 1996 to work to protect the world's cultural heritage threatened by wars and natural disasters, the International Committee of the Blue Shield (ICBS).

Mission:

To promote the protection of cultural property during armed conflict and provide an emergency response when needed.

Goals:

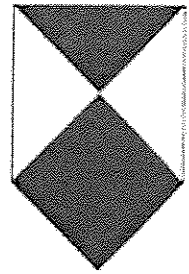
- Coordinate with the U.S. military, U.S. government, and other cultural property organizations to protect cultural property worldwide during armed conflict.
- Advise and assist U.S. cultural organizations in emergency planning for situations involving armed conflict.
- Prepare and maintain a database of volunteers to advise and assist in the protection of cultural property worldwide damaged or threatened by armed conflict.
- Raise public awareness about the importance of cultural property as the shared heritage of all humankind.
- Promote U.S. legal protections for and commitments to cultural property consistent with the 1954 Hague Convention and its Protocols.
- Receive official recognition as a national committee from the International Committee of the Blue Shield.

For more information see www.uscbs.org

United States Committee of the Blue Shield

Promoting the protection of the world's cultural property during armed conflict

Board of Directors



Corine Wegener, President

Corine Wegener is assistant curator in the department of Architecture, Design, Decorative Arts, Craft, and Sculpture at The Minneapolis Institute of Arts. Wegener is also a retired major with 21 years of service in the U.S. Army Reserve, the last 13 years of which were as a Civil Affairs officer. Wegener's last assignment was in Baghdad, Iraq as the Arts, Monuments, and Archives Officer for the 352nd Civil Affairs Command from May 2003 to March 2004. Her primary responsibility was to assist the Iraq National Museum in the aftermath of the devastating looting that took place after the U.S. invasion. Wegener is a coauthor of the U.S. Army publication *GTA 41-01-002, Civil Affairs Arts, Monuments, and Archives*, a guide for soldiers on the protection of cultural property in a wartime environment and has lectured extensively about her experiences in Iraq. Wegener is a graduate of the University of Nebraska-Omaha and received M.A.s in Political Science and Art History from the University of Kansas.

John Malcolm Russell, Vice President

John Malcolm Russell is a Professor in Critical Studies and Art History at the Massachusetts College of Art. Author of four books, including *Final Sack of Nineveh: The Discovery, Documentation, and Destruction of King Sennacherib's Throne Room at Nineveh, Iraq* and numerous articles, Russell is also a winner of the James R. Wiseman Book Award and the Arthur Kingsley Porter Prize. He was a member of the UNESCO cultural mission to Iraq in May 2003 and until June 2004, Deputy Senior Advisor to the Ministry of Culture for the Coalition Provisional Authority in Iraq. He received the Archaeological Institute of America's Outstanding Public Service Award in 2005. Russell is a graduate of Washington University, St. Louis and received his M.A. and Ph.D from the University of Pennsylvania.

Nancy C. Wilkie, Secretary

Dr. Wilkie is the William H. Laird Professor of Classics, Anthropology and the Liberal Arts, and Co-Director of the Archaeology Concentration at Carleton College in Northfield, Minnesota. She began her archaeological career in 1968, working on a number of archaeological projects in Greece, Egypt, and Nepal. Dr. Wilkie currently serves on the Cultural Property Advisory Committee, a group of experts and members of the general public who advise the President of the United States on requests from foreign governments for import restrictions on their archaeological and ethnological artifacts in accordance with the Convention on Cultural Property Implementation Act. She served as President of the Archaeological Institute of America from 1998 to 2002. Dr. Wilkie is the author of more than 30 articles and co-editor of three books on the archaeology of Greece. A graduate of Stanford University, she received her M.A. and Ph.D. from the University of Minnesota.

Perry McGowan, Treasurer

Perry McGowan is employed as a Certified Public Accountant in the Minneapolis office of Larson, Allen, Weishair & Co., LLP. He is a member of the Construction and Real Estate Group and functions as a National Tax Office leader for the firm. McGowan received a Bachelor's degree in accounting from the University of Minnesota, a J.D. from Hamline University School of Law and an LL.M from William Mitchell College of Law. He has also earned other graduate degrees in taxation and international business from the University of Minnesota and the University of St. Thomas. McGowan is a member of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants and the American Bar Association, and serves on the boards of several cultural and environmental organizations.

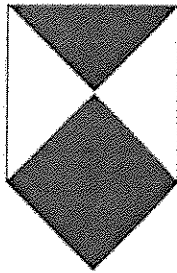
Patty Gerstenblith, At Large

Patty Gerstenblith has been Professor of Law at DePaul University College of Law since 1984. She is Director of DePaul's program in art and cultural heritage law and Co-Chair of the American Bar Association's International Cultural Property Committee. She served as Editor-in-Chief of the International Journal of Cultural Property from 1995 to 2002 and as a public representative on the President's Cultural Property Advisory Committee from 2000 to 2003. Her book, *Art, Cultural Heritage and the Law*, was published in 2004. She received her J.D. from Northwestern University and a Ph.D. from Harvard University in Fine Art and Anthropology. She served as a clerk to the Honorable Richard D. Cudahy of the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals in 1983-84.

Paul Wegener, At Large

Paul Wegener is a logistic planner for Supervalu Inc. in Chanhassen, Minnesota. He has over 18 years experience in supply, transportation, and distribution operations. Wegener retired in 2004 as a major with 22 years of service in the U.S. Army Reserve. For 13 years Wegener served as a Civil Affairs officer. His numerous overseas assignments include Operation Desert Storm: Saudi Arabia 1990 -1992, Operation Sea Signal: Cuban refugee crisis 1996, Operation Joint Endeavor/Joint Guard: Bosnia 1997-1998, and Operation Enduring Freedom: Afghanistan 2003. He has extensive experience in civil-military operations and civil/military relations. Wegener graduated from the University of Nebraska-Omaha, majoring in Geography with minors in History and Military History.

**United States Committee
of the Blue Shield
History and Development**



**by
Corine Wegener
President**

The Iraq War and the Looting of the Iraq National Museum

April 2006 marks the third anniversary of the looting of the Iraq National Museum. As an assistant curator at the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, seeing cultural property wantonly stolen and destroyed both outraged and saddened me. As a major in the U.S. Army Reserve and a twenty-year veteran, I knew that the operations order for the invasion included a detailed “no strike” list of important cultural, religious, and historic sites. Unfortunately, while units were ordered to avoid destroying sites on the list unless there was a military necessity, they were not ordered to actively protect cultural property from looting or other damage.

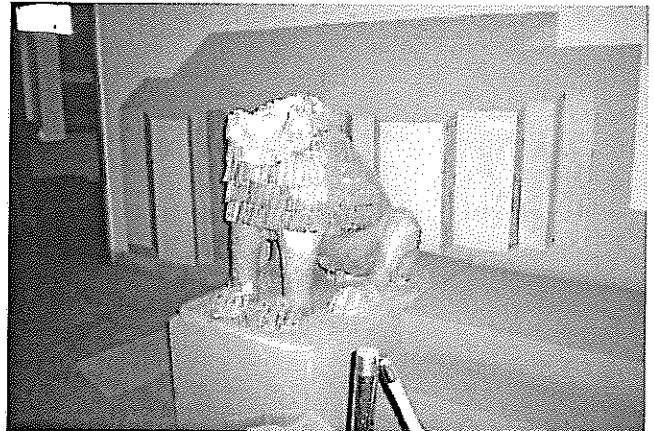
As the only art museum curator in Civil Affairs, I was mobilized as an individual after the looting of the Iraq Museum and sent to Baghdad as the Arts, Monuments, and Archives Officer for the 352nd Civil Affairs Command. Civil Affairs units are unique as the field commander’s link to civilian authorities and other international and non-governmental organizations. They recruit primarily reservists who are subject matter experts in a variety of areas, including cultural property. Though few cultural property professionals are members of the military today, Civil Affairs has a proud history of protecting cultural property going back to the Monuments, Fine Arts and Archives teams of World War II. These teams, comprised of museum curators and directors, art historians, and conservators developed cultural property assessments throughout Europe and repatriated thousands of works of art looted by the Nazis. I could not help but feel that we had failed to live up to that proud heritage.

After the catastrophic damage to cultural property in World War II, the nations of the world met to draft the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict. Since then 114 countries have ratified the Hague Convention, not including the United States and Great Britain. In 1995, the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff

unanimously recommended that the U.S. Senate ratify the 1954 Hague Convention. President Clinton submitted the Hague Convention to the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations for approval in 1999, where it has languished without discussion. In 2004 Great Britain announced its intention to ratify the Hague Convention and its Second Protocol. This will leave the U.S. as the only country with a significant military force that has not ratified this important treaty.

In 1996, four non-governmental organizations, the International Council on Archives (ICA), the International Council of Museums (ICOM), the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), and the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), joined together to form the International Committee of the Blue Shield (ICBS). Recently a fifth body was added, the CCAAA (Co-ordinating Council of Audiovisual Archives Associations). The symbol of the Blue Shield is the cultural equivalent of the Red Cross. The Blue Shield's stated mission is "to work for the protection of the world's cultural heritage by coordinating preparations to meet and respond to emergency situations." I hoped to meet members of a Blue Shield emergency team when I arrived in Baghdad. Though a delegation from UNESCO was on the scene to assess the damage when I arrived on May 16, 2003, there were no conservators or other museum professionals who stayed to assist the Iraq Museum, nor were there any members of the Blue Shield.

In addition to damaging the museum's offices, equipment, and infrastructure, looters shattered sculpture, clay vessels, archaeological materials, and display cases, both in the galleries and in storage. Many objects had been in need of conservation even before the looting. The Iraqi conservation staff, a small team of about five, had little or no real training in conservation. This lack of training was endemic – nearly all the staff had degrees in archaeology, but little or no training in collections management, conservation, or museum administration.



I began to receive emails from conservators and other museum professionals who wanted to travel to Iraq to assist the museum, but any plans along these lines were frustrated by the bureaucratic realities of the war zone. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) such as the International Committee of the Red Cross or Medecins sans Frontieres are routinely allowed access to a theater of operations because they provide humanitarian assistance for which the military has scant resources. In fact, military units often invite NGOs to training exercises to provide realism and coordination for future real world missions. Unfortunately, no NGO dedicated to preserving cultural property requested entry into Iraq, and individual civilian volunteers were not welcome because they might become logistical and security burdens on the military. Similarly, national governments rarely issue visas to individuals seeking entrance to countries experiencing armed conflict. Such was certainly the case with Iraq. As a result, few conservators, archaeologists or other culture professionals were able to enter the country. Those that made it usually arrived under a press pass or as volunteers with humanitarian NGOs, only to abandon them once they were in Baghdad.

Why didn't the International Committee of the Blue Shield send an emergency team to the Iraq Museum? As an established NGO they would probably have been admitted, especially after the looting of the museum. My international colleagues suggested that ICBS did not have

the staff or resources for such a mission. It occurred to me that one reason the ICBS was not effective in this situation was that the U.S., the most powerful and active military power in the world, did not have a Blue Shield national committee to act as a liaison between cultural property professionals and the U.S. military. If the U.S. had a national committee of the Blue Shield, I could have referred individual volunteers to them, and then coordinated through my chain of command to get them into Iraq. During my nine-month tour I became increasingly convinced of the need for a U.S. national committee of the Blue Shield.

Conservators from the Italian Ministry of Culture finally arrived to provide on the job training to Iraqi conservators and repair some of the most important objects. This occurred nearly a year after the looting of the Iraq Museum. Unfortunately, they were only able to stay for a short time due to the deteriorating security situation. In April and May of 2003 the security situation in Baghdad would have allowed an emergency response team to work on conservation for the collections; however, that narrow window of opportunity was now closed.

At the end of my tour in Iraq I wrote a final report to the U.S. Army Civil Affairs Command detailing successful Civil Affairs reconstruction efforts at the Iraq National Museum and Iraqi Ministry of Culture, as well as a number of failures and opportunities for improvement. One of my strongest recommendations was for a new Civil Affairs basic soldier guide on the protection of cultural property. The project was quickly approved and I was asked, along with several volunteer conservators and military personnel from the John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center, to co-author the guide. In March 2005 the Department of the Army published *U.S. Army Graphic Training Aid 41-01-002, Civil Affairs Arts, Monuments, and Archives Guide*. In spite of the tragic losses of cultural property in Iraq, this successful project demonstrates the military's willingness continue its historic and important role in trying to protect cultural property during

armed conflict and to coordinate with civilian experts in the field. However, I remained convinced that the U.S. still needed a national Committee of the Blue.

At the 2005 AAM annual meeting I proposed to the AAM/ICOM Board that they lead the effort to establish a U.S. national committee of the Blue Shield. The board asked me to contact the other organizations needed to approve national committees of the Blue Shield to gauge their interest and be sure they were not already planning a similar move. I contacted the international committee of the American Library Association, the executive director of the Society of American Archivists, Nancy Perkin Beaumont, and executive director of USICOMOS, Gustavo Araoz. None knew of any plans to establish a Blue Shield committee, but each expressed interest in such an organization. After receiving these findings, however, AAM/ICOM determined they did not have the staff or resources to act as the lead organization to establish a U.S. national committee of the Blue Shield. I decided to investigate the possibility of starting a national committee of the Blue Shield on my own, thinking it might prove easier to obtain support once the organization was initially formed.

The United States Committee of the Blue Shield

After consulting with colleagues at government organizations such as the U.S. Department of State, the Department of Defense, and Army Civil Affairs, as well as cultural property colleagues from the museum, archaeology, and conservation fields, I was encouraged to go forward with the basic nuts and bolts of establishing a national committee of the Blue Shield. I contacted Cristina Menegazzi, Program Specialist at ICOM and their liaison for the ICBS, for advice on how to proceed. She put me in touch with Joan van Albada, President of the ICBS, and I notified him of our intent to establish a national committee of the Blue Shield. He was

very supportive and enthusiastic and reminded me that in order to receive official recognition as a national committee of the Blue Shield, our organization should receive the support of the U.S. organizations that represent those that make up the ICBS. These include the American Association of Museums International Council of Museums Committee (AAM/ICOM), the U.S. Committee of the International Council on Monuments and Sites (US/ICOMOS), Society of American Archivists (SAA), American Library Association International Federation of Libraries and Archives Committee (ALA/IFLA), and the Association for Recorded Sound Collections (ARSC), and the Association of Moving Image Archivists (AMIA).

I then contacted attorney Elliot Kaplan, a partner with Robins, Kaplan, Miller and Ciresi and a longtime friend of the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, for legal advice. He generously agreed to provide pro bono legal assistance to file the articles of incorporation and 501(c)3 non-profit status paperwork.

The United States Committee of the Blue Shield (USCBS) was incorporated with the Minnesota Secretary of State on January 9, 2006 and received its IRS status as a 501(c)3 non-profit organization on November 9th, 2006. The board is by no means complete and we invite supporting organizations to recommend representatives if they so choose.

Members of our board have also begun to approach other key organizations necessary for recognition by ICBS. AAM/ICOM granted their official endorsement in April 2006, followed by US/ICOMOS in September and SAA in November. When USCBS has the support of the remaining representative organizations (ALA, ARSC and AMIA) we can apply for official recognition as a national committee of the Blue Shield and participate in the important work of working to preserve cultural property during armed conflict alongside our colleagues in the world's other national committees.

Since September 11th, 2001 the U.S. military has been continuously deployed on a scale not seen since World War II. Through the United States Committee of the Blue Shield, cultural property professionals from a cross section of disciplines could reopen a dialog with military planners about best practices in protecting cultural property, increase coordination between civilian experts and the military, provide training and expertise on “first aid” for cultural property, and potentially even field conservation teams to assist cultural property organizations in conflict zones controlled by the U.S. military. In order to achieve this relationship and gain the military’s full attention, USCBS needs full support and recognition, not only from the five organizations necessary for ICBS recognition, but also from other important cultural property organizations. Only in this way can we hope to foster positive change in attitudes about cultural property during armed conflict and prevent another tragedy like the looting of the Iraq National Museum.

Irene Y. Hirano
Chair (ex officio), AAM/ICOM

Nina Archabal
Vice Chair, AAM/ICOM

**U.S. National Committee of ICOM (AAM/ICOM)
Statement of Official Recognition and Support**

The U.S. National Committee of ICOM (AAM/ICOM), in recognition of the importance of the protection of cultural property in armed conflict and natural disaster and in view of the mission and goals of the U.S. Committee of the Blue Shield, supports the recognition of the U.S. Committee of the Blue Shield as the United States' National Committee of the International Committee of the Blue Shield.

By vote of the board of directors of the AAM/ICOM passed this 29th day of April, 2006 in the city of Boston, state of Massachusetts.

By Nina Archabal, its Vice Chair
Name Title