



SOCIETY FOR AMERICAN ARCHAEOLOGY

August 14, 2008

The Honorable Harry Reid
Senate Majority Leader
528 Hart Senate Office Bldg
Washington, DC 20510
Fax: 202-224-7327

Dear Senator Reid:

On July 29 the Senate Foreign Relations Committee approved, by unanimous vote, the Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (106-1) and recommended its ratification by the Senate. The Society for American Archaeology (SAA) respectfully requests that this important treaty be considered by the Senate when it returns in September.

SAA is an international organization that, since its founding in 1934, has been dedicated to the research about and interpretation and protection of the archaeological heritage of the Americas. With more than 7,500 members, SAA represents professional archaeologists in colleges and universities, museums, government agencies, and the private sector. SAA has members in all 50 states as well as many other nations around the world.

The 1954 Hague Convention, adopted in the aftermath of the Second World War, was based in large part on regulations issued by General Eisenhower during that conflict to ensure that all reasonable steps were taken to protect culturally significant objects and sites. Parties to the Convention are to avoid, if possible, acts of hostility directed against historic structures and monuments, museums, archaeological sites, and other places of scientific and historic note.

The U.S. was one of the first nations to sign the convention. In addition, the policies of the U.S. military are consistent with the Convention. Ratification will codify U.S. obligations and ensure a smooth legal and operational environment with our allies, most of whom have ratified the document.

We urge the Senate to take up and ratify the Hague Convention prior to the end of the current Congress. Thank you for your consideration.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Dean R. Snow', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Dean R. Snow
President