

MEDIA RELEASE

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ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN WORKING GROUP ON ARCHAEOLOGY

The World Archaeological Congress endorses the agreement on archaeological heritage reached by the Israeli-Palestinian Working Group on Archaeology.

“This agreement is a model for other areas of conflict, as it recognizes the responsibility of each state to protect archaeological heritage regardless of its period and ethnic, religious or cultural affiliation,” said Professor Claire Smith, President of the World Archaeological Congress.

“The importance of the region’s archaeological heritage extends far beyond the borders of the two separate areas,” said Professor Smith.

The agreement is based on the assumption of the establishment of a Palestinian state alongside Israel. It calls for the repatriation of archaeological objects excavated after June 4 1967 to the state in which their archaeological context is located, along with all the records pertaining to those sites and objects.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

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BACKGROUND:

The World Archaeological Congress (WAC) is a non-governmental, not-for-profit organization and is the only elected international body of practising archaeologists. WAC holds an international congress every four years to promote the exchange of the results of archaeological research; professional training and public education for disadvantaged nations, groups and communities; the empowerment and betterment of Indigenous groups and First Nations peoples; and the conservation of archaeological sites.

The Sixth World Archaeological Congress (WAC-6) was held from 29th June—4th July at the University College Dublin. This was the first World Archaeological Congress to be held in Ireland. It was attended by over 1,800 archaeologists, native peoples and international scholars from 74 nations. Motions from the Plenary session of the Congress were considered by subsequent meetings of the World Archaeological Congress Council and Executive.

The Congress Patron for WAC-6 was President Mary McAleese. Previous Congress Patrons include Harriet Mayor Fulbright, Prince Charles and Nelson Mandela.