

PROTECTING SUDAN CULTURAL HERITAGE:

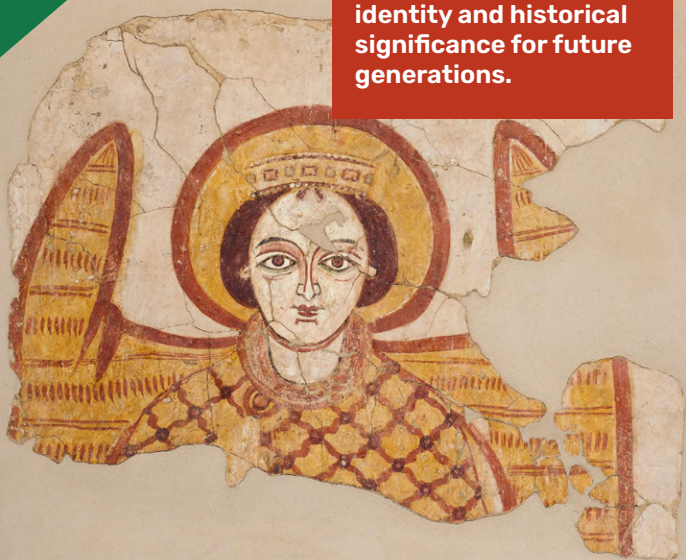
saving a legacy for future
generations



A unique HERITAGE

Sudan is home to some of Africa's most remarkable archaeological and cultural sites, including Meroë Island, Gebel El-Barkal, Kerma, and Old Dongola. These sites embody the legacy of powerful Kingdoms like Kush and Makuria which ruled the region in ancient and medieval times. They contain royal pyramids, temples, and artefacts that showcase an advanced civilization with distinctive art, religious practices, and technologies. They are extremely important to local communities and remain a testament to Sudan's connection to its land and people. UNESCO World Heritage status underscores their global value, yet they face critical threats from armed conflict, environmental degradation, and looting. National museums and archives hold irreplaceable collections that capture the depth and diversity of Sudanese living cultural practices and traditions.

Protecting Sudan's tangible and intangible heritage is critical to preserve its identity and historical significance for future generations.





Destruction and DAMAGE

Since the outbreak of the war in 2023, Sudan rich cultural heritage has suffered severe damage:

- Complete or partial destruction of museums, historic monuments, archives, libraries and cultural sites due to the fighting
- Theft of national museums' collections from the Sudan National Museum in Khartoum, Nyala Museum, and Khalifa House Museum
- Widespread illicit digging and looting of archaeological sites
- Act of vandalism against artefacts and cultural sites

Moreover, the war has caused enormous damage and disruption to cultural practices of various communities and forced many heritage professionals, creators and bearers of traditions to flee.

The risks are high that further destruction to and irreparable loss of Sudan's heritage will occur.

RULES

protecting heritage

Heritage is protected by a number of rules, applicable both in times of peace and war.

Under these rules, the following acts are prohibited:

- Attacks on cultural property (unless excused by imperative military necessity)
- Military use of cultural property
- Any forms of theft, pillage or misappropriation of cultural property
- Acts of vandalism against cultural property

These rules are based on Sudan national law and international treaties, notably the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, which Sudan has ratified. These rules also reflect Islamic law and customary norms.

Intentional destruction of cultural property may be a war crime under international law.



What can you do to **PROTECT** heritage?

- Respect cultural sites and take all possible measures to protect them from the effects of military operations
- In case of use of cultural sites for military purposes, consider all other options before attacking
- Do not set up military forces or equipment in cultural sites or their immediate surroundings
- Do not dig in archaeological areas
- Do not steal, loot or vandalize cultural property
- Cooperate with specialized organizations and heritage professionals by granting them access to cultural sites for assessment, maintenance, and emergency protection purposes



Why is it important to **PRESERVE** Sudan heritage?

- To maintain the shared memory and identity of Sudan
- To foster a sense of common belonging and pride
- To promote peaceful coexistence and social cohesion
- To transmit knowledge and cultural values to future generations
- To develop tourism and other income-generating activities

