

les de la humanidad y las advertencias de los científicos sobre el daño irreversible que el afán de lucro incontrolado pueda causar a la vida humana en el planeta.

Como trabajadores intelectuales y científicos que toman muy en serio su responsabilidad social, nos dirigimos a todos nuestros colegas y amigos en el mundo, con el objeto de solicitar se unan a nosotros en este nuevo empeño, para luchar contra los planes y acciones ominosos de una superpotencia que ha declarado «irrelevante» el papel de las Naciones Unidas, y no vacila en recurrir a la fuerza, con su secuela de muerte y destrucción, para adueñarse de los más importantes recursos naturales del planeta e imponer su voluntad al resto del mundo.

INTERNATIONAL UNION OF THE HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE DIVISION OF HISTORY OF SCIENCE

JUAN JOSÉ SALDAÑA
The Secretary General

TO: - THE WORLD PUBLIC OPINION,
- THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF UNESCO MR. KOICHIRO MATSUURA,
- THE AGENCIES IN CHARGE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY IN ALL COUNTRIES,
- THE INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF SCIENCE (ICSU) AND
- THE CONSEIL INTERNATIONAL DE LA PHILOSOPHIE ET DES SCIENCES HUMAINES.

The International Union of History and Philosophy of Science/Division of History of Science (IUHPS/DHS) has gotten acquainted through the news publicized by the International Federation of Libraries Associations and Institutions (IFLA) and other news services with the fact that as a consequence of the military invasion to Iraq and the uncontrolled social riots produced by it, a cultural and scientific crime has been perpetrated by the burning and looting not only of the Iraq National Library and its National Archives (Baghdad), but also the Central Library of Awqaf (Baghdad), the Iraqi Archaeology Museum (Baghdad Museum), the Al-Mustansiriyyah University (Baghdad), the Central Library of Mosul University and the Central Library of Basrah University. These repositories gather documents of undetermined value for the history of science and technology, as well as for other important areas for the history of the Iraqi people and the history of Humanity. Therefore the IUHPS/DHS.

Council would like to make the following statements:

1. Regretfully this is not the first occasion in which armed conflicts, invasions, territorial conquests or governmental negligence has put in risk of disappearance,

and as a matter of fact have disappeared valuable documents for the history of science and technology that have become true losses for the history of Humanity.

2. The IUHPS/DHS considers that joint actions with specialists from other fields of documentation are necessary and urgent to set forth efficient actions to impede that in the future the sources for history of science and technology become jeopardized as well as plans for the rescue of scientific documents that are currently at risk. The new information technologies allow us to preserve and disseminate in an efficient way the scientific information.
3. The IUHPS/DHS is willing to offer its technical expertise, advice, and assistance to act together with other organizations to assess the damage caused to this cultural heritage and to implement plans for the necessary repairs and restoration. At the same time it invites international organisms and governments to launch an international project for the preservation of libraries and archives in all areas, and specially in the science and technology area.
4. At the time when our organization is putting in practice a project to elaborate a World History of Science Online: databases of bibliographical and archival sources, the terrible news of what has happened in Baghdad leads us to the commitment that it is urgent to catalogue and disseminate the existing scientific documentation in all countries as a way of preserving them from barbaric actions such as the one carried out against the libraries and archive institutions of Baghdad. The loss of this heritage constitutes an impoverishment of the heritage of all the peoples of the world and it would therefore be a tragedy if this were to happen again whatever the cause. Thus, the IUHPS/DHS Council urges all parties to initiate joint actions to protect the rich cultural and scientific heritage of the world by ensuring the preservation of this legacy.

Mexico City, 15 April 2003

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