



Council of the
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INFORMATION NOTE

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Council
Subject:	Council of Europe Convention on Offences relating to Cultural Property – Treaty open for signature (Nicosia, 19 May 2017) <i>- Information from Cyprus delegation</i>

Delegations will find attached an information note from the Cyprus delegation on the above subject, which has been put on the agenda under 'Any other business' for the next Education, Youth, Culture and Sport Council meeting on 20-21 November 2017.

**Council of Europe Convention on Offences relating to Cultural Property –
Treaty open for signature (Nicosia, 19 May 2017)**

Cyprus attaches great importance to the protection of cultural property and has as a priority promoted the conclusion of a Convention on Offences related to Cultural Property, now known as “The Nicosia Convention”, during its Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe.

The Convention is a unique instrument in enhancing the legal framework against the illicit trafficking in cultural goods, by defining offences against cultural property and enabling international legal co-operation. It is of utmost importance that this instrument is universally ratified. Taking into consideration the increase in scale and frequency of the destruction of cultural heritage in the context of armed conflict or other circumstances it is evident that to deal with the threat effectively global cooperation is necessary.

The European Union and its Member States are thus encouraged to consider acceding to this instrument.

The Nicosia Convention opened for signature on 19 May 2017, in the framework of the Cyprus Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers and will come into force after five (5) members, including at least three (3) Council of Europe (CoE) member States will have ratified it. To date seven (7) member States and one (1) non-member State of the CoE have signed it.
