

ICOM Statement
Natural Disasters Affecting Cultural Heritage
September 2017

The International Council of Museums (ICOM) wishes to express its sorrow and its solidarity with the people located in the parts of the Caribbean islands, Mexico, Guatemala, and United States of America that have been deeply affected by the recent succession of deadly natural disasters.

The world museum community, represented through ICOM's 37,000 members in 140 countries, is pained by the loss of lives and the destructions caused by the hurricanes Harvey, Irma, Jose, and Maria, and by the three successive earthquakes that struck Mexico and Guatemala. Those disasters have permanently affected the living environment and livelihood of millions of people, as well as caused irreparable damage to invaluable cultural heritage. Such dramatic events also remind us that the damage from natural disasters is amplified by global climate change.

In the aftermath of those natural disasters, the immediate priority has been to locate the missing, and to attend to the injured and homeless. While humanitarian organisations continue to carry out their mission saving lives, ICOM will place the expertise of museum professionals at the disposal of colleagues and institutions in affected areas in order to support cultural heritage damage assessment, salvage, stabilization, and recovery.

ICOM Disaster Risk Management Committee (ICOM-DRMC) is currently liaising with colleagues living in the affected regions to gather further information on both the situation in the area and on the possible needs and types of help required so as to mobilise its networks accordingly.

Everyone is invited to report information about damages to cultural property affected by disasters.

The DRMC can be contacted through its e-mail address drmc@icom.museum or its [Facebook page](#).

The Disaster Risk Management Committee is a Standing Committee of ICOM dedicated to emergency response for museums. DRMC gathers museum-related professionals from different parts of the world that monitor cultural heritage emergencies and stand ready to provide advice and assistance to international colleagues and their institutions upon request. For more information on the DRMC's mission and its members, please visit ICOM's [website](#).