

Blue Shield International Calls for Heritage Protection in Iran

Blue Shield International (BSI) has received reports of damage to cultural property in Iran and across the wider region, including damage sustained at the UNESCO World Heritage sites of Golestan Palace in Tehran and the White City in Tel Aviv. These reports underscore the vulnerability of non-renewable heritage during periods of instability and the critical necessity for its safeguarding. Destruction of tangible and intangible heritage compounds the loss and tragedy associated with armed conflict and we hope that a peaceful resolution to the current crisis can be achieved without delay.

While the protection of human life and dignity must always be the first priority in any crisis, the protection of people is intertwined with the protection of their heritage. Cultural heritage is more than a record of the past; it is a tangible anchor for human identity and a shared global asset. It reminds us of how much more we have in common than differentiates us.

The protection of cultural heritage is a fundamental principle of International Humanitarian Law and must remain a consistent standard of conduct, irrespective of political boundaries. We note the recent calls for restraint by [UNESCO](#), and emphasize the continued relevance and importance of the standards established under the 1954 Hague Convention and its two Protocols. These international instruments provide the essential legal and ethical framework for the protection of cultural heritage during armed conflict.

As a neutral, impartial, and independent non-governmental organisation, BSI is monitoring the status of heritage sites, archives, libraries and national monuments throughout the region. We are engaging with our international network of experts to support ongoing efforts to mitigate further damage. In this regard, we are encouraged by the efforts of individuals and institutions that continue to support the protection of heritage, despite other urgent and competing humanitarian needs.

The Blue Shield remains ready to assist all parties involved in the protection of cultural heritage and to contribute to initiatives that may lead towards a peaceful resolution.

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The Blue Shield is committed to the protection of the world's cultural property, and is concerned with the protection of cultural and natural heritage, tangible and intangible, moveable and immovable, in the event of armed conflict, natural- or human-made disaster. It is an international advisory body to the Committee for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict. It has 34 national and regional committees (with more under construction) and an international board composed of elected members and representatives of the major international organisations responsible for cultural heritage. See <https://theblueshield.org/>
