



Association of Art Museum Directors

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November 18, 2009

Dear AAMD Members,

On November 13, Max Anderson, Kaywin Feldman, Gary Vikan and I represented the AAMD at a meeting of the Cultural Property Advisory Committee (CPAC) in Washington, DC. We were among a number of professionals who presented statements as the Committee considered the renewal of the U.S. State Department's Memorandum of Understanding with Italy. Our comments reflected the much-improved relations between U.S. museums and the Italian government as we asked for the repeal of current limits on the length of long-term loans of objects from Italy to the U.S. We also stressed the need for the establishment of a government-sanctioned legal export market for cultural property. Stefano de Caro, General Director of the Italian Cultural Ministry, was present and also spoke on the improved relations between our two countries. He agreed that increasing cultural exchanges would benefit both U.S. and Italian publics. The Memorandum, first drafted in 2001 and renewed in 2006, will expire in two years. We hope that our efforts will result in language in the revised agreement that will lead to loans for longer periods of time, a greater range of opportunities for American museums to borrow ancient art from Italy, and demonstrable advances in the creation of legal markets. It was an unusually productive meeting and I thank my colleagues for their excellent presentations fully reflecting the more positive relationship that we are now enjoying with Italy. We will report to the membership as AAMD continues to advocate on behalf of these issues.

Michael Conforti
President