

The Blue Shield

Peter Stone OBE

The protection of cultural property in armed conflict and following natural and/or human-made disasters (CPP) will never be achieved by the heritage community shouting that CPP must be taken seriously by the political, military, and humanitarian communities because of its heritage importance alone. We need to show the relevance and importance of good CPP activity to all of these communities in the delivery of their own aims and missions.

This presentation introduces the work of the international NGO, the Blue Shield, which is committed to working with these communities, encouraging them to see the relevance and importance of CPP to their disparate agendas. Currently the Blue Shield comprises an international Board and Secretariat, presently based at and funded by Newcastle University through its UNESCO Chair in Cultural Property Protection & Peace, and together referred to as 'Blue Shield International (BSI)', and 28 national committees (<https://theblueshield.org/>). Our primary framework is the 1954 Hague Convention on the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict and its two Protocols, but the organisation works with the wider context of UN Security Council Resolutions (e.g. 2199, 2347, and 2368) and UNESCO's cultural conventions and wider cultural protection strategy (e.g. the 2003 UNESCO Declaration Concerning the Intentional Destruction of Cultural Heritage). It is also informed by international initiatives regarding natural/human-made disaster such as the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.

Biography

Peter Stone is the UNESCO Chair in Cultural Property Protection (CPP) and Peace at Newcastle University (UK) and President of the Blue Shield, advisory body to UNESCO on CPP (<https://theblueshield.org/>). He has published widely on heritage management, interpretation, and education. Peter was Honorary Chief Executive Officer of the World Archaeological Congress (1998-2008).

Since 2003 his work has focussed on the protection of cultural property in armed conflict and following natural or human-made disasters. He has written extensively on this topic including co-editing, with Joanne Farchakh Bajjal, The Destruction of Cultural Heritage in Iraq (2008) and editing Cultural Heritage, Ethics and the Military (2011). His article 'The 4 Tier approach' in the British Army Review led directly to the establishment of the Cultural Property Protection Unit in UK forces.