

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN
THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
AND
THE GOVERNMENT OF BELIZE
CONCERNING THE IMPOSITION OF IMPORT RESTRICTIONS
ON CATEGORIES OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL MATERIAL REPRESENTING THE
CULTURAL HERITAGE OF BELIZE FROM THE PRE-CERAMIC (APPROXIMATELY
9000 B.C.), PRE-CLASSIC, CLASSIC, AND POST-CLASSIC PERIODS OF THE PRE-
COLUMBIAN ERA THROUGH THE EARLY and LATE COLONIAL PERIODS**

The Government of the United States of America and the Government of Belize;

Acting pursuant to the 1970 UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, to which both countries are States Party; and

Desiring to reduce the incentive for pillage of irreplaceable archaeological material representing the rich cultural heritage of Belize;

Have agreed as follows:

ARTICLE I

A. The Government of the United States of America, in accordance with its legislation entitled the Convention on Cultural Property Implementation Act, shall restrict the importation into the United States of archaeological material originating in Belize and representing Belize's cultural heritage that is at least 250 years old, dating from the Pre-Ceramic (from approximately 9000 B.C.), Pre-Classic, Classic, and Post-Classic Periods of the Pre-Columbian era through the Early and Late Colonial Periods, including categories of sculpture, vessels, and other objects made of materials such as stone, metal, ceramic, bone, shell, wood, and glass, identified on a list to be promulgated by the United States Government (hereafter known as the "Designated List"), unless the Government of

Belize issues a license or other documentation which certifies that such exportation was not in violation of its laws.

B. The Government of the United States of America shall offer for return to the Government of Belize any object or material on the Designated List forfeited to the Government of the United States of America.

C. Such import restrictions shall become effective on the date the Designated List is published in the U.S. Federal Register, the official United States Government publication providing fair public notice.

ARTICLE II

Public Awareness / Outreach

A. The Government of the United States of America and the Government of Belize shall publicize this Memorandum of Understanding and its purposes through appropriate means, respectively.

B. In order to establish public and scholarly access to the collections of Belizean cultural property, the Government of Belize shall use its best efforts to open a national museum at the earliest practicable time.

Protection / Conservation

C. The Government of Belize shall use its best efforts to place informational material such as signs and brochures at airports, border crossings, and other points of entry and exit that explain the laws prohibiting illicit excavation and the removal and sale of artifacts.

D. The Government of Belize shall use its best efforts to ensure that the practices that have given rise to its positive international relationships, including in its efforts related to loans of Belizean cultural property, procedures for conducting archaeological research, and training of students, are institutionalized as the standard of practices within the National Institute of Culture and History.

Collaboration / Interchange

E. Both Governments shall seek to encourage academic institutions, non-governmental institutions, and other organizations to cooperate in the interchange of knowledge and information

about the cultural patrimony of Belize, and to collaborate in the preservation and protection of such cultural patrimony, particularly through best practices in conservation and training.

F. The Government of Belize shall use its best efforts to work with other Commonwealth and European countries to combat the illicit trafficking of Belizean cultural property.

G. The Government of the United States of America shall use its best efforts to facilitate technical assistance in cultural resource management and security to Belize, as appropriate under existing programs in the public and/or private sectors, particularly recognizing the increasing destabilizing influence of drug traffickers in the Central American region.

Law Enforcement

H. Both Governments agree that, in order for United States import restrictions to be fully successful in thwarting pillage, the Government of Belize shall continue its efforts to prevent the illegal sale and export of archaeological objects, especially at ports of transit and shipment; and shall continue to strengthen cooperation within Central America, and especially with neighboring states, for the protection of the cultural patrimony of the region.

ARTICLE III

The obligations of both Governments and the activities carried out under this Memorandum of Understanding shall be subject to the laws and regulations of each Government, as applicable, including the availability of funds.

ARTICLE IV

A. This Memorandum of Understanding shall enter into force upon signature. It shall remain in force for a period of five years, unless extended.

B. This Memorandum of Understanding may be amended through an exchange of diplomatic notes.

C. The effectiveness of this Memorandum of Understanding shall be subject to review in order to determine, before the expiration of the five-year period of this Memorandum of Understanding, whether it should be extended.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned, being duly authorized by their respective Governments, have signed the present Memorandum of Understanding.

DONE at Government House/House of Culture, Belize City, Belize, this 27th of February, 2013, in duplicate in the English language.

**FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF
THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:**



His Excellency Vinai K. Thummalapally
U.S. Ambassador to Belize

**FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF
BELIZE:**



The Honourable Jose Manuel Herdia Jr.
Minister of Culture and Tourism