

[The International Council of African Museums \(AFRICOM\)](#)

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The International Council of African Museums (AFRICOM)

Celebrates the Restitution of African Heritage on International Museum Day on 18th of May, 2019

To mark the 2019 International Museum Day (IMD), Africa, is celebrating with the rest of the world's museums this year's theme « Museums as Cultural Hubs—The Future of Tradition » to voice its support for the restitution of museum collections to the African continent this year and in years to come.

Today, the International Council of African Museums (AFRICOM) announces its renaissance on this IMD 2019. After having surveyed African members and galvanized museum and heritage delegates, the decision to join the international movement for the protection of African heritage has been unanimous.

The first meeting of the revived AFRICOM will be held at the ICOM General Conference in Kyoto, Japan on September 3, 2019 on the theme « Heritage Restitution as the Future of Tradition Since its founding in 1999 in Lusaka, Zambia, AFRICOM has been the sole Pan-African Museums NGO.

More and more, Africans recognize cultural and natural heritage as key to peacemaking and sustainable development. As cultural hubs, African history, arts, sciences, craft, natural history in traditional and modern, local, national and innovative museums are conserving the future of tradition, the tangible and intangible heritage of generations to come. African heritage is protected in local communities, museums, universities, archives, libraries, heritage centers and on urban, rural, archeological and natural sites.

New and renovated museums in Africa are thriving: the recently opened Museum of Black Civilisations (Musée des civilisations noires) in Dakar, Senegal ; the restored Abomey Palace in Benin ; the renovated Musée national du Cameroun in Yaoundé ; the new Zeitz Museum for Contemporary Art (MOCAA) in Cape Town, South Africa, Musée des civilisations de Côte d'Ivoire... AFRICOM's network is working for pan-African collaboration with national museums from Algeria to Zimbabwe, starting with Egypt, Ethiopia, Morocco, Kenya's 20 museums and 9 sites, Nigeria's 52 national museums in 34 states, South Africa's IZIKO network of 11 national museums, libraries and archives, with cultural stewardship from Botswana, Ghana, Mozambique, Tanzania, Sénégal & Seychelles...

The International Council of African Museums has revived the AFRICOM network with delegates from all 54 African countries. AFRICOM has formally addressed support for French President Emmanuel Macron's Declaration of Ouagadougou (November 2017) and recommendations to return African heritage and museum collections as per the restitution report by Felwine Sarr & Benedicte de Savoy (2018), as well as a future international convention on restitution of indigenous heritage to former colonial states.

All African parties surveyed are unanimous in supporting the return of colonial-era museum collections to Africa. In France, and throughout Europe, in Germany, Belgium, Holland, and the United Kingdom, as well as in the United States and elsewhere, museums with significant African collections are reconsidering where, why and how this African tradition should be best protected now and into the future.

The AFRICOM Heritage Community is here to say that :
« Heritage Resitution is the Future of African Tradition »...

Best wishes for a Happy International Museum Day !

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