

CUT & Sweden's Medelhavsmuseet Museum to cooperate on antiquity digitisation

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Current Affairs Reporter

The Cyprus University of Technology (CUT) and the Medelhavsmuseet Museum of Sweden have signed a cooperation agreement for the digitisation of antiquities outside Cyprus.

In a press release, CUT said that the agreement was signed in Stockholm between the Rector Professor Panagiotis Zafiris of CUT and Ann Follin, Director General of the Swedish State Museums / Medelhavsmuseet Museum (Museum of Mediterranean and Near Eastern Antiquities),

Describing the mission as "an extremely important mission for Cypriot Culture and the cultural assets of Cyprus, which are in museums abroad," it said that the museum houses archaeological finds spanning a period of more than 7,000 years - from the Stone Age to Imperial Rome and which testify to frequent and long-lasting contacts between Cyprus and other cultures in the eastern Mediterranean region. At the same time, it houses the largest collection of Cypriot antiquities outside Cyprus.

The agreement is a historic milestone in the global developments of the 21st century, because it is the first time that a country hosting foreign antiquities has officially invited an organisation from the country where the antiquities originate to cooperate in the digitisation of the entire collection, with the ultimate goal of making the results open access to the world and especially to researchers and educators, CUT said.

The finds were unearthed after excavations were carried out between 1927 and 1931 by the Swedish Archaeological Mission in Cyprus, led by King of Sweden Gustav VI Adolf and most of the archaeological material from those excavations is now kept in the Cyprus Museum in Nicosia and the Medelhavsmuseet in Stockholm.

A CUT scientific team, at the expense of the UNESCO Chair, examined these important archaeological finds (>25000) on-site and drew up a strategic plan for their digitisation, the duration of which will depend on the degree of difficulty and complexity of the project.

The Cypriot scientific team was visited by the Ambassador of the Republic of Cyprus to Sweden, Solon Savvas, at the Medelhavsmuseet Museum who expressed his satisfaction on the positive developments and the involvement of an emblematic Cypriot university in the preservation and promotion of Cypriot cultural heritage, which is unfortunately hosted outside Cyprus, in the Stockholm Museum, while being an integral part of the history and tradition of the Cypriot people.

The Ambassador said that upon assuming his duties in Sweden in 2022, he expressed to King Carl XVI Gustaf of Sweden his readiness and commitment to further strengthening and deepening bilateral relations, as well as for closer cooperation in addressing common challenges.

On his part, the King of Sweden referred to the excellent relations between the

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two countries, which date back centuries and made special reference to the importance of the Swedish Archaeological Mission to Cyprus in 1927-1931 and the urgent need to respect and protect the cultural heritage of all countries.

In the press release, CUT said that this cooperation with a Swedish Museum to digitise archaeological Cypriot material, which has been outside Cyprus for almost a century, is a global pioneer and creates new conditions in Cultural Diplomacy. The pieces of unique Cypriot cultural wealth will be available through open-source digital access and will be uploaded to Europe's digital library, Europeana.

Head of the scientific team which is already working at the Medelhavsmuseet Museum, and creator of the effort and international cooperation between Cyprus and Sweden Dr. Marinos Ioannidis - Director of the UNESCO/TEPAK Chair, expressed his satisfaction with the developments and the international and global recognition of the CUT.

He said this project is the first time that, through new technologies and digital repatriation, works from the cultural heritage of Cyprus housed in museums around the world will be reunited with collections in Cyprus.

(Source: CNA)

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