

Lisbon Declaration

The participants of the International Symposium on the Archaeology of Medieval and Modern Ships of Iberian-Atlantic Tradition which convened at Lisbon on the occasion of Expo'98;

Believing that ships and watercraft of all descriptions and ages hold essential information on the history of humankind;

Knowing that the archaeological heritage is a non-renewable resource, deposited over thousands of years, but vulnerable to destruction through modern technologies;

Impressed by the rapid and most rewarding developments in underwater archaeological protection and research ensuing from the adoption and implementation of the Portuguese heritage legislation in 1997;

1. Urgently call on other States

- **To adopt and implement national legislation** to similarly reduce continuing threats and non-precautionary incentives to the exploitation of this heritage and
- **To support and contribute to negotiations at UNESCO for an international convention** on the protection of the world's underwater cultural heritage.

In this process States' delegates must be well informed on issues regarding underwater archaeological heritage and the urgency to exclude such heritage from the regime of salvage legislation. Protection must be ensured regardless of location and questions of sovereignty or ownership.

2. Note their concern that in the UNESCO/DOALOS (United Nations Law of the Sea Unit) Convention for the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage the operational provisions of the ICOMOS International Charter on the Protection and Management of the Underwater Cultural Heritage should be adopted as a minimum.

Adopted by all present at the International Symposium on the Archaeology of Medieval and Modern Ships of Iberian-Atlantic Tradition in Lisbon on the 9th of September 1998.