

Memo to Cabinet by the  
Minister of Commonwealth and Foreign Affairs  
and the Minister of Education,  
Cultura and Tourism.

European Convention on the Protection  
of the European Heritage.

This Convention is an instrument of protection of the archaeological heritage, whereby the countries of Europe agree together to defend, make known their archaeological heritage and facilitate the lawful circulation of articles of archaeological interest.

2. The Convention is placed in the context of the protection of Europe's heritage as defined in the European Cultural Convention to which Malta is already a party.
3. This instrument provides, inter alia, that Contracting Parties should undertake:
  - (a) to delimit and protect sites and areas of archaeological interest;
  - (b) to create reserve zones for the preservation of material evidence to be excavated by later generations of archaeologists;
  - (c) to prohibit and restrain illicit excavations;
  - (d) to take the necessary measures to ensure that excavations are, by special authorisation, entrusted to qualified persons, and
  - (e) to ensure the control and conservation of the results obtained.
4. The Convention stipulates also that each Contracting Party should co-operate in the most appropriate manner in order to ensure that the international circulation of archaeological objects should in no way prejudice the protection of the cultural and scientific interest attaching to such objects.
5. The provisions of the Convention fit in well with the Antiquities (Protection) Act, 1925 also because the views of the Maltese submissions were taken into consideration at the drafting stage of the Convention.
6. The Convention will be opened for signature during the next session of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe which will be held in London on 5th May, 1969.
7. The Crown Advocate General finds no legal objection to Malta becoming a Party to the present Convention and Honourable Ministers are requested to agree that Malta should sign this instrument on the day it is opened for signature.
8. A copy of the Convention is with the Secretary to Cabinet.

7th April, 1969.