

**Rede von ICOM Präsident Alberto Garlandini  
anlässlich des Festakts zum 75-jährigen Jubiläum von ICOM  
am 12. November 2021 im Europäischen Hansemuseum Lübeck**

Dear members of ICOM Germany,  
Dear friends and colleagues,

It is a great pleasure for me to participate in this event organised by ICOM Germany and the European Hansemuseum to celebrate the 75th Anniversary of ICOM. I thank the organisers, Beate Reifenscheid, chair of ICOM Germany, and Felicia Sternfeld, Hansemuseum director for inviting me to give the opening remarks.

In just four days, ICOM will celebrate its 75 Year Anniversary. On 16 November 1946, during the first General Conference of UNESCO, Chauncey Jerome Hamlin, the Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Buffalo Museum of Science and George Salles, Directeur des Musées de France, convened the Constitutive Assembly of ICOM at the Musée du Louvre in Paris. This event gathered eminent museum directors from fifteen countries and the support of many others from all over the world.

This historic milestone comes at a pivotal moment, for the global museum community and for ICOM. The COVID 19 emergency has brought on enormous new challenges and exacerbated some of the old ones. While some museums have reopened with limitations, others remain closed. As we slowly emerge from the pandemic, we have both the opportunity and the duty to build back better.

Beyond mere recovery, we must reinvent ourselves, and reimagine the museum of the future. I am confident that the museum of the future is already being built. Every day museum professionals are creating new connections with their communities and experimenting with innovative forms of cultural engagement and approaches to conservation.

The pandemic has dramatically increased inequality in accessing heritage and participating in cultural life. Innovation and inclusiveness are key issues. In a world where 41% of the population has no Internet access, innovation must be inclusive, and inclusiveness requires innovation.

During the past year our international network found a spirit of innovation and creativity that made ICOM as active as ever. ICOM and its committees reacted to the crisis by offering guidelines, dedicated resources, opportunities for exchange and discussion. In times of crisis, when we face unprecedented challenges, the importance of an international network becomes more evident.

This 75th Anniversary is a unique occasion to take stock of the situation, look back at the history of ICOM and move forward. Our Communication Department published an excellent Communication Kit and shot a 10 minute film in the Louvre and in ICOM's archives comprising historical contributions from ICOM leaders. I assure you that I was greatly moved walking and talking in the very rooms where our founding fathers met 75 years ago. The film will be presented at the next Advisory Council and distributed to all ICOM Committees.

The 75th Anniversary is an opportunity to celebrate ICOM's backbone: the National Committees. Among our national committees, ICOM Germany is one of the most active in professional training, knowledge exchange and public outreach. The German museum community has always been at the forefront of inclusion and intercultural dialogue within and outside ICOM. I would like to take this opportunity to commend you on your excellent work and your contribution to our network.

Dear friends and colleagues,

The devastating impact of the climate crisis continues to impact our natural and cultural heritage globally. The loss of biodiversity and the effects of climate change show us how close the relationship between man, the biosphere and the geosphere is. The cultures of the Anthropocene are suffering because landscape, natural resources and liveability are endangered.

Indigenous communities are at the forefront. Not only are their livelihoods threatened, also their cultural heritage cannot survive without their natural habitats. Even native languages are in constant decline as a result of the climate crisis.

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals are essential for a post-pandemic recovery that aims for greener and more inclusive economies and for more resilient societies.

Museums are one of the most trusted institutions. They are in a unique position to promote inclusion and diversity, support environmental policies and post-pandemic strategies, disseminate scientific information and foster sustainable practices in the local communities.

In 2016 ICOM's General Assembly in Kyoto passed the resolution "On Sustainability and the Implementation of Agenda 2030". Achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and fighting for climate justice have become the fundamental reference point for ICOM's work over the next decade and beyond.

ICOM supports all the initiatives promoting awareness about climate justice as well as responsibility and civic participation. ICOM actively participated in the recent Meeting of the G20 Ministers of Culture in Rome to make sure that decision-makers across the world recognise and integrate museums into their policies addressing heritage, sustainability and climate crisis.

Global challenges call for global responses. International cooperation is needed now more than ever. ICOM calls museums to face the challenge and lead the change. As ICOM's founding fathers stated in 1946, only together will we be able to move forward.

Thank you for your attention.