

**BRITISH MUSEUM
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
20 JULY 2005
AT
1.00 PM**

PRESENT

Sir John Boyd (Chairman)
Chief Anyaoku
Mr Hasan Askari
Mr Francis Finlay
Mrs Val Gooding
Dr Olga Kennard
Baroness Kennedy
Mr Philip Lader
Mr Richard Lambert
Mr David Lindsell
Mr Tom Phillips
Sir Keith Thomas

The Director (Neil MacGregor) and the Head of Legal Services (Tony Doubleday) were also present.

Dr Justin Morris attended the meeting for item 6.

The reports and minutes referred to below may contain exempt information within the meaning of Part II of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

PRELIMINARY

1.1 *Apologies:* Apologies had been received from Lord Broers, Sir Ronald Cohen Professor Barry Cunliffe, Ms Bonnie Greer, Professor Martin Kemp, Mrs Edmée Leventis Mr David Norgrove, Lord Powell, Mr Eric Salama, Mr Vikram Seth and Sir John Tusa

1.2 *New Trustees:* The Chairman welcomed Chief Anyaoku and Mr Francis Finlay to their first meeting of the Board. Chief Anyaoku had been appointed pursuant to section 1(1)(a) British Museum Act 1963 for a term of four years commencing on 20 June 2005. Mr Finlay appointed as a Trustee pursuant to section 1(1)(d) British Museum Act 1963 for a term of four years commencing on 1 April 2005. The Chairman reported that Mr Stephen Green had been appointed as a Trustee pursuant to section 1(1)(b) British Museum Act 1963 for a term of four years commencing on 7 July 2005.

1.3 *Declaration of Interests:* No conflicts of interest were declared.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

2.1 *Chairman's Report:* The Chairman thanked Trustees for their kind agreement at short notice to hold both the extraordinary meeting on 13 July (to approve the annual report and accounts before the Parliamentary recess) and today's meeting (to conduct the remaining business on the agenda for the cancelled meeting of 7 July). The Board noted that the Marketing Presentation (item 7) would be postponed until a later meeting.

2.2 *Succession to the Chairman:* Ms Gooding reported that MWM Consulting continued to provide assistance on a pro bono basis. Names of external and internal candidates were being collected for consideration by the working group, whose desired aim would be to offer the Board a choice of candidates. Any Trustee wishing to be considered, and who had not yet applied, was invited to do so before September.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS AND MATTERS ARISING

3.1 *Minutes of previous Board meetings:* The Board agreed that (i) the minutes of the Board meeting of 17 March 2005 be signed by the Chairman as a correct record of their proceedings; and (ii) the minutes of the extraordinary meeting of the Board on 13 July 2005 (as amended) be signed by the Chairman as a correct record of their proceedings.

3.2 *Matters Arising:* The Director said that consideration would be given to the publication of an annual review based on the calendar year rather than the financial year.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE COMMITTEES

4.1 *Matters Arising for Decision by the Board:* The Board affirmed the Standing Committee's endorsement of proposals for the reserves, early retirement, the re-tendering of the catering activity and the investigation of off-site storage (as more particularly described in the papers presented to the Standing Committee on 16 June 2005).

4.2 The Board wished to record its appreciation of the recent work of Professor Cunliffe in connection with the British Museum Friends; and Mr Christopher McCall QC, who had acted pro bono for the Trustees in the recent case of *HM Attorney General v Trustees of the British Museum* [2005] All ER (D) 463.

HUMAN REMAINS

5.1 *Policy on Human Remains:* The Board thanked Dr Morris for his work on the draft policy (item 6). Trustees were invited to submit drafting points to Dr Morris. The Chairman referred the Board to the tabled paper setting out a series of amendments to the Trustees' existing policies that would be required in order to adopt the draft policy before the Board. The Trustees agreed that (i) the draft policy on Human Remains be adopted (as amended) with effect from the date that the DCMS Code of Practice on Human Remains and section 47 Human Tissue Act 2004 (Power to de-accession human remains) shall come into force; and that (ii) the Trustees' policies on Acquisitions, De-Accession, Display, Loans and Storage, Conversation and Documentation be amended as proposed in the tabled paper with effect from the same date.

5.2 *Request for the Repatriation of two bark bundles containing cremation remains:* The Trustees received a report on a claim for the repatriation of two bark bundles containing cremation remains vested in the Museum's collections (Oc1882, 1214.1 & 2), submitted through the office of Indigenous Policy Coordination at the Australian High Commission (item 10). The Trustees agreed that the Australian High Commission be advised that it would not be possible for them to reach any decision of principle at this stage, but that:

5.2.1 In due course the claim would be considered against the Trustees' Policy on Human Remains, the final version of which would not be adopted until the DCMS Code of Practice on Human Remains and section 47 Human Tissue Act 2004 (Power to de-accession human remains) were in force; however

5.2.2 The onus would be on the claimant to submit evidence in support of its claim, which the Trustees would expect to identify the relevant community or successor community on whose behalf the claim was made and/or to whom the remains would be returned to if the Trustees were minded to repatriate them; and

5.2.3 In order to determine the claim, the Trustees would require the advice of independent experts, whose opinions they would commission.

Management Reports

6.1 The Board received the Management Report (item 8.1).

6.2 *Events on 7 July 2005:* The Director reported that no members of staff had been physically hurt in the bomb explosions on 7 July and that the emergency plan had worked. The Museum had evacuated its offices facing onto Russell Square and closed to the public at 4.00pm. It had opened for normal hours since 8 July. However, the Montague Place entrance, which had been closed on 7 July, would remain shut for the time being so that the re-deployment of staff to carry out bag searches at the Great Russell Street entrance could be maintained. The Board heard that visitor numbers had fallen sharply in the days immediately after 7 July and remained below the seasonal norm since. The Board wished to record its appreciation of the Museum's staff, who had efficiently implemented the Museum's emergency plan as soon as events came to their attention.

6.3 *London Olympics 2012:* The Director explained the potential future funding implications that may follow for the Museum from the success of the Olympic bid, as well as the particular opportunities that were implicit in the world-cultural theme of the bid for the games.

6.4 *International Relations:* The Board noted the course of action set out in the report in connection the Exhibition *Forgotten Empire: the world of ancient Persia* (8 September 2005 - 8 January 2006) and endorsed the Director's proposal that it should proceed as planned.

6.5 *Berlin 28-30 September 2005:* The Director proposed that the Gallery visits would be to (i) the Greek and Roman collections on Museum Island and to the Pergamon Museum on 29 September; and (ii) the Ethnological Museum at Dahlem on 30 September. Accommodation would be in a three star hotel. The Chairman asked as many Trustees as possible to attend. Spouses and partners would be welcome to join the visit at their own expense.

8.5 *Fundraising:* The Board considered the requirements for fund raising in the USA in the context of the Museum management arrangements changes set out in the report (item 8.5). The Board also noted a letter from Mr Claude Hanks-Drielsma to Mrs Barbara Fleischman dated 23 June 2003, which had been copied to the Director and all Trustees. The Board was pleased to note that, under the new arrangements between the American Friends and the Trustees, previous levels of US financial support for the Museum were being maintained.

MINUTES OF COMMITTEES

9. *Minutes of Committees:* The minutes of the meetings of the Standing Committee on 21 April 2005 (item 9.1) and 16 June 2005 (item 9.3) and the Audit Committee on 1 July 2005 (item 9.4) were noted. The minutes of the Nominations and Governance Committee on 9 June 2005 would be presented to a later meeting of the Board.