



Exhibition "Against the Sands of Time. Documentation and Reconstruction of the World Heritage – the Polish Experience"

An exhibition presenting the Polish contribution towards the protection of World Heritage opened at the UNESCO seat in Paris on 19th April 2017. It was inaugurated by the Director-General of UNESCO, Irina Bokova, and the Polish Deputy PM and Minister of Culture, Piotr Gliński.

The exhibition, entitled **"Against the Sands of Time. Documentation and reconstruction of the World Heritage – the Polish experience"** has been co-organized by the Polish Centre of Mediterranean Archaeology, University of Warsaw. It presents, among others, the work of Polish archaeologists and conservators at UNESCO-listed sites.

Of almost 30 such sites on five continents investigated by Polish scholars, PCMA missions worked on six – three each in Africa and Asia. Among them is the famous desert city of Palmyra, recently badly affected by the war raging in Syria. A copy of the symbolic Lion of Allat, a relief depicting a lion protecting a gazelle, found and restored by a PCMA mission, was one of the highlights of the exhibition. The original sculpture, which had been standing for decades in front of the Palmyra Museum, was toppled and smashed in 2015 by Daesh fanatics. In 2016, upon withdrawal of Daesh forces from Palmyra, conservators working with the PCMA visited the site and secured the pieces, which can hopefully once be restored – in accordance with one of the exhibition mottos: "We can bring it back"!

The opening of the exhibition was attended by representatives of the University of Warsaw, including the director of the PCMA, prof. Tomasz Waliszewski, the director of the Institute of Archaeology, prof. Krzysztof Jakubiak, and the director of the Centre of Precolumbian Studies, prof. Mariusz Ziółkowski, who was the initiator of the exhibition.