



United Confederation of Taíno People

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• Bimini (United States) • St. Thomas • Kuba • Guadeloupe

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Nov. 7, 2021

To: Fatma Turkkan-Wille,
Specialist, Christie's Auction House
via email: fturkkan-wille@christies.com

Re: Pending Auction of Taíno artifacts

Greetings Fatma Turkkan-Wille:

I am writing on behalf of the United Confederation of Taíno People (UCTP), an International Indigenous Representative Institution advocating for the rights of Taíno and other Indigenous Peoples for over 20 years.

It has come to our attention that Christie's Auction House plans to auction off several Taíno artifacts in collaboration with Musee de l'Homme from the Fiore Art Collection on Nov. 10, 2021. The UCTP condemns these auction plans and demands a halt to the scheduled proceedings. The UCTP further calls upon the seller to immediately enter into a dialogue with Taíno leadership and the Government of the Dominican Republic to plan an appropriate repatriation process. The UCTP offers its assistance to facilitate such a meeting and ensure proper Indigenous repatriation protocols are observed.

The UCTP finds the actions of Christie's Auction House, Musee de l'Homme, Fiore Art Collection to be in violation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Article 12, which reads:

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to manifest, practise, develop and teach their spiritual and religious traditions, customs and ceremonies; the right to maintain, protect, and have access in privacy to their religious and cultural sites; the right to the use and control of their ceremonial objects; and the right to the repatriation of their human remains.
2. States shall seek to enable the access and/or repatriation of ceremonial objects and human remains in their possession through fair, transparent and effective mechanisms developed in conjunction with indigenous peoples concerned.

Please note that we are in the process of contacting the appropriate governmental offices and representatives in the Dominican Republic about this issue. Further, the UCTP will continue to support affiliated and unaffiliated initiatives to bring this injustice to the attention of our diverse communities, as well as other Indigenous Peoples and allies around the world.

Hahom (Thank you) for your attention,

R. Múkaró Aqúeibaná Borrero

R. Múkaró Borrero,
President, UCTP;
Kasike, Iukaieke Guainía

CC: Andrea Carmen, International Indian Treaty Council; Jose Francisco Cali Tzay, United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples; Miriam Masaquiza, United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues Secretariate; UN Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples