



شعبة الترجمة الرسمية  
Official Translation Department

## **Law of Antiquities, Museums and Urban Heritage**

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**Translation of Saudi Laws**



**NOTE:**

The translation of Saudi laws takes the following into consideration:

- Words used in the singular form include the plural and vice versa.
- Words used in the masculine form include the feminine.
- Words used in the present tense include the present as well as the future.
- The word “person” or “persons” and their related pronouns (he, his, him, they, their, them) refer to a natural and legal person.



## Law of Antiquities, Museums and Urban Heritage

### Chapter One: Definitions and General Provisions

#### Article 1

The following terms and expressions, wherever mentioned in this Law, shall have the meanings assigned thereto, unless the context requires otherwise:

**SCTA:** Saudi Commission for Tourism and Antiquities.

**Board:** SCTA Board of Directors.

**President:** SCTA President.

**Regulations:** Implementing Regulations of this Law.

**Antiquities/Archaeological Sites:** Movable or immovable, buried or submerged objects, which lie within the borders of the Kingdom and in maritime zones under its sovereignty or jurisdiction, which are built, made, produced, adapted, or drawn by man resulting in the formation of archaeological properties throughout the ages, including objects dating back to a recent period, provided they are not less than 100 years old. However, objects which are less than 100 years old may be considered by SCTA as antiquities. Antiquities include historical and folk heritage sites and artifacts.

**Immovable Antiquities:** Antiquities related to land, such as natural or human-excavated caves, rock drawings, rock carvings, rock engravings, rock inscriptions, stone piles, stone circles, urban and rural ruins, prominent or buried structures, water structures, ancient pilgrimage and trade routes, traditional cities, villages and neighborhoods, buildings constructed for various purposes as well as their ruins, and any related architectural elements.

**Movable Antiquities:** Artifacts which were originally made to be detached from the ground or from immovable antiquities, and which can be relocated, such as sculptures, coins, inscriptions, ornaments, jewelry, and heritage artifacts that have national significance stemming from their historical, scientific, aesthetic, artistic, or traditional value or ancient use.

**Urban Heritage:** Any man-built creations, including cities, villages, neighborhoods, or buildings, inclusive of any spaces, structures, and pieces with architectural, historical, scientific, cultural, or national value.

**Historical Sites:** Locations that have witnessed important historical or national events or that are cited in literary heritage and do not necessarily contain prominent or buried antiquities.

**Folk Heritage Sites:** Locations where social, cultural, handicraft, or economic activities related to folk heritage are held.

**Folk Heritage Artifacts:** Tools and objects that were made or used by man in ancient times in any region in the Kingdom for his daily needs or activities, including food, clothing, housing, education, self-defense, physical health, and



recreational tools.

**Museum:** A place where archaeological, artistic, cultural, historical, or scientific items are permanently exhibited for cultural, educational, or recreational purposes, and which is open to the public at specific times. The term "special collection" shall mean any other items.

**Archaeological Excavation:** All excavation, probing, searching, and diving operations which are conducted to find antiquities above or underground, in streams or lakes, or in maritime zones under the Kingdom's sovereignty or jurisdiction.

**Archaeological Survey:** Exploration of archaeological sites and documentation thereof using available scientific methods, whether above or underground, or under the water.

**Archaeological Excavator:** Any natural or corporate person qualified in the field of archaeological excavation.

**Classification:** Determination of the significance of antiquities based on their historical, cultural, artistic, scientific, or national value.

**Person(s):** Any natural or corporate person, whether public or private.

## Article 2

All movable and immovable antiquities available in the Kingdom or in maritime zones under its sovereignty or jurisdiction shall be considered public property of the State, excluding the following:

1. Immovable antiquities whose owners have proven ownership thereof before the competent authorities.
2. Movable antiquities registered by their owners with SCTA.
3. Movable antiquities whose registration is not deemed necessary by SCTA.

Any person who owns any movable antiquities shall present them to SCTA for registration within two years from the effective date of this Law.

## Article 3

SCTA shall, according to procedures set in the Law of Eminent Domain and Temporary Taking of Property, have the right to own or temporarily take any archaeological site, urban or folk heritage site, or historical building, as well as any building or land adjacent to registered immovable antiquities.

## Article 4

If the evacuation of an archaeological site is deemed necessary, SCTA may, in coordination and cooperation with the competent authorities, carry out the evacuation for a just compensation, in accordance with procedures set in the Law of Eminent Domain and Temporary Taking of Property. SCTA may also keep said sites and buildings under the control of their owners or beneficiaries in accordance with the Regulations.



### **Article 5**

Ownership of a land shall not entitle the owner nor beneficiary to dispose of movable or immovable antiquities above or underground. A land owner or beneficiary may not undertake excavation work for antiquities in the land. Excavation shall be carried out by SCTA or by any party authorized by SCTA. Any archaeological finds shall be considered the property of the State. SCTA may, if necessary, relinquish claim on immovable antiquities in the land upon establishing their significance, classification, documentation, and registration, in accordance with the provisions of this Law and its Regulations.

### **Article 6**

1. It is prohibited to trespass to, distort, remove, damage, or deface archaeological sites or urban heritage sites by writing, painting, inscription, posting flyers, setting fire, or altering or obliterating their features.
2. No signs, banners, or any other advertising posters may be placed on archaeological sites or urban heritage sites without the approval of SCTA.

### **Article 7**

SCTA shall decide the archaeological value of antiquities and urban heritage and determine items that should be registered. The registration of any archaeological item entails the State's acknowledgment of its national, historical, cultural, or artistic significance, as well as the preservation, protection, and exhibition thereof in accordance with the provisions of this Law and its Regulations.

### **Article 8**

1. SCTA shall maintain a record named "Antiquities Record" for registering all antiquities. The Record shall include the following:
  - a) Movable and immovable antiquities.
  - b) Historical sites and folk heritage sites, according to their classification as specified in Article 25 of this Law.
  - c) Folk heritage artifacts, according to their classification as specified in Article 34 of this Law.
2. SCTA shall prepare registration lists to be approved by the President.
3. The registration of any antiquity may be cancelled in whole or in part, and the cancellation decision shall be issued by the President. The Regulations shall specify rules governing full or partial registration.
4. If SCTA, in exception to paragraph 1 of this Article, deems it unnecessary to register an antiquity or decides to cancel its registration, in whole or in part, it shall allow disposal thereof in accordance with the provisions of this Law and its Regulations.



### **Article 9**

1. SCTA shall determine archaeological and urban heritage sites and coordinate with the Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs and relevant agencies, each within their jurisdiction.
2. Archeological and urban heritage sites shall be preserved when carrying out projects for planning, expansion or improvement of urban or rural areas. In addition, easement rights shall be taken into consideration, including designation of construction-free areas, in coordination with the Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs. Planning projects, in which, or in the vicinity of which, there are archaeological and urban heritage sites, may not be adopted without the approval of SCTA.
3. Licenses for construction or renovation in areas adjacent to archaeological and urban heritage sites may not be issued without SCTA's agreement.

### **Article 10**

1. Land grants and distribution decisions may not be enforced on archaeological sites or urban heritage sites agreed upon with the Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs.
2. The Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Ministry of Agriculture shall coordinate with SCTA when designating lands for grants or farms in predetermined archaeological and urban heritage areas and areas adjacent thereto.

### **Article 11**

No hazardous installations may be established near immovable antiquities except upon SCTA's approval. The Regulations shall specify relevant controls.

### **Article 12**

1. The Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Transportation shall coordinate with SCTA in preparing studies for field projects.
2. The Ministry of Petroleum and Mineral Resources shall coordinate with SCTA prior to the issuance of mining and quarry permits and designation of quarry sites. SCTA shall inform the Ministry of its response within 30 days from the date of receipt of the coordination request, without prejudice to the responsibility of the entity working at the site to safeguard existing antiquities and urban heritage.
3. The Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs, as well as other competent government and private entities shall, when discovering antiquities or urban heritage sites during construction of their projects, safeguard such antiquities or sites and notify SCTA. SCTA shall provide its opinion within 30 days from date of receipt of such notification.



**Article 13**

SCTA shall coordinate with the Ministry of Interior and relevant agencies to set measures for the protection of archaeological and urban heritage sites.

**Article 14**

SCTA shall, in coordination with relevant agencies, devise rules for investment in archaeological and urban heritage sites.

**Article 15**

No auctions for the sale of movable antiquities and folk heritage artifacts may be organized without the permission of SCTA.

**Article 16**

SCTA shall, in coordination with competent agencies, seek to recover national antiquities and shall assist in the recovery of foreign antiquities smuggled or illegally transported from or to the Kingdom in accordance with relevant international conventions and treaties to which the Kingdom is party.

**Article 17**

The Board shall, without prejudice to the law, have the right to accept the assignment of ownership of archaeological, historical, or folk and urban heritage sites by means of donation, purchase at a nominal price, or placement of the same at the disposal of SCTA.

**Article 18**

1. Any person who owns or has under his control any antiquity or urban heritage site registered in the Antiquities Record or in the Urban Heritage Record shall be responsible for the preservation thereof.
2. No antiquity or urban heritage site may be invested in or operated without authorization from SCTA. The Regulations shall set conditions for granting said authorization.
3. Any user, operator, or investor of any antiquity or urban heritage site shall maintain, restore, and use said antiquity or site in accordance with the Regulations.
4. An investor of any antiquity or urban heritage site may charge an entry fee to cover upkeep expenses. The Regulations shall specify necessary controls.

**Article 19**

Any person operating an archaeological, historical, or folk or urban heritage site shall give access to SCTA's officers to examine the site in accordance with statutory procedures.



### **Article 20**

1. A fund named "Antiquities, Museums, and Urban Heritage Fund" shall be established at SCTA to cover the expenses of the protection, preservation, maintenance, display, and utilization of antiquities and urban heritage; establish new museums; provide support to museums bearing the logo "Saudi Museum"; and provide support to efforts exerted by the private sector, whether individuals, associations, or societies, to realize the objectives set out in this Law.
2. The financial resources of the Fund shall consist of the following:
  - a) Revenues allocated to the Fund from projects run by SCTA.
  - b) Monetary compensation awarded against damages to antiquities and urban heritage sites.
  - c) Aids, donations, grants, gifts, and endowments given to the Fund by individuals, public or private institutions, as well as national, Arab, regional, or international bodies, which are approved by the Board, without prejudice to statutory provisions.
3. The Regulations shall set rules and instructions relating to the Fund's assets, including management, deposit, expenditure, and investment thereof.

### **Article 21**

SCTA shall, subject to applicable laws, promote the establishment of societies specialized in antiquities, heritage, and museums. Said societies shall be eligible to receive support from the Antiquities, Museums, and Urban Heritage Fund.

## **Chapter Two: Archaeological, Historical, and Folk Heritage Sites**

### **Article 22**

Archaeological and urban heritage sites may not be altered; the debris found thereat may not be used; and soil, rocks, or any other material may not be removed therefrom without the permission and supervision of SCTA.

### **Article 23**

Any person who discovers or becomes aware of the discovery of any immovable or movable antiquities shall immediately notify SCTA or the nearest government authority. Said authority shall safeguard said antiquity and promptly notify SCTA.

### **Article 24**

1. The following activities may not be carried out within the limits of archaeological and urban heritage sites without the prior approval of SCTA:





- a) Whole or partial demolition.
  - b) Utility, communication, and road works, as well as any activity or process that may change the physical appearance of the archaeological and urban heritage sites, or buildings thereon, or disturb their archaeological layers.
  - c) New construction or landscaping projects.
2. SCTA shall respond within 60 days from the date of receipt of the application for performing any of the activities set out in paragraph 1 of this Article.
  3. Activities set out in paragraph 1 of this Article shall be subject to SCTA's control.
  4. SCTA shall, in coordination with the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs, develop technical and procedural mechanisms for dealing with any dilapidated heritage buildings.

#### **Article 25**

1. Classification of historical and folk heritage sites shall be as follows:
  - Category A: Sites of high significance.
  - Category B: Sites of moderate significance.
  - Category C: Sites of low significance.
2. These sites shall be governed by archaeological site protection regulations provided for in this Law.
3. The Regulations shall specify controls for the classification of such sites.

### **Chapter Three: Submerged Antiquities**

#### **Article 26**

Submerged antiquities in maritime zones under the sovereignty or jurisdiction of the Kingdom, whether movable or immovable, discovered or undiscovered, shall be deemed property of the State.

#### **Article 27**

1. Any person who discovers an underwater archaeological site, a shipwreck, or a movable antiquity shall leave it in place and not cause any damage or alteration thereto, and shall promptly notify SCTA or notify the nearest government authority, which shall, in turn, notify SCTA.
2. Any person who accidentally lifts an antiquity out of water shall, within one week from date of recovery, report and hand over such antiquity to SCTA, or to the nearest government authority.

#### **Article 28**

If antiquities that are submerged in or lifted out of maritime zones under the



sovereignty or jurisdiction of the Kingdom are exposed to risk, SCTA shall take necessary measures to preserve such antiquities.

#### **Article 29**

SCTA shall coordinate with the Ministry of Defense, the Ministry of Interior (Border Guard), the Ministry of Petroleum and Mineral Resources, the Ministry of Agriculture, the General Commission for Survey, the Saudi Geological Survey, the Saudi Ports Authority, the Saudi Wildlife Authority, the Presidency of Meteorology and Environment Protection, and the Customs Authority to develop a mechanism for the protection of submerged antiquities. Said agencies shall notify SCTA or the nearest security agency of any recovered submerged antiquities and of individuals in possession of such antiquities, and shall seize any recovered antiquities and hand them over to SCTA.

### **Chapter Four: Movable Antiquities and Folk Heritage Artifacts and Trading therein**

#### **Article 30**

SCTA may exchange with domestic and foreign museums and scientific institutions duplicate movable antiquities or their replicas and may lend such movable antiquities to be displayed at international museums and exhibitions. The Regulations shall determine necessary procedures.

#### **Article 31**

SCTA may accept movable antiquities offered to it as gifts or loans, and may store said antiquities or display them in the name of the person offering them.

#### **Article 32**

SCTA may leave accidentally discovered movable antiquities in possession of the person who discovered them after being registered. Said person may not dispose of such antiquities without obtaining SCTA's approval.

#### **Article 33**

Restoration of movable antiquities may not be carried out for commercial purposes without authorization from SCTA. The Regulations shall specify necessary controls.

#### **Article 34**

1. Classification of folk heritage artifacts in the Antiquities Record shall be as follows:
  - Category A: Artifacts of high significance.
  - Category B: Artifacts of moderate significance.



- Category C: Artifacts of low significance.
- 2. Folk heritage artifacts classified in the Antiquities Record shall be subject to the protection of movable antiquities provided for in this Law.
- 3. SCTA shall contribute to the authentication, study, and display of folk heritage artifacts and shall support documentation and research programs carried out by institutions and individuals in the field.
- 4. The Regulations shall specify controls for classification of folk heritage artifacts.

### **Article 35**

1. Registered movable antiquities owned by the State may not be sold.
2. Without prejudice to conventions to which the Kingdom is party, registered movable antiquities owned by the State may not be presented as gifts without the approval of the Prime Minister.

### **Article 36**

Movable antiquities may not be acquired by any means without proper proof of ownership. Said antiquities shall be presented to SCTA for registration. The person in possession of the antiquity shall be responsible for preserving it and may not cause any alteration thereto. If the antiquity is lost, damaged, or stolen, he shall promptly notify SCTA in accordance with the procedures set in the Regulations.

### **Article 37**

SCTA may own, by means of purchase or exchange, any movable antiquity, in accordance with the conditions set in the Regulations.

### **Article 38**

Movable antiquities and folk heritage artifacts with proof of ownership may be traded in, upon authorization from SCTA in accordance with the terms and conditions set in the Regulations.

### **Article 39**

1. Movable antiquities and folk heritage artifacts owned by individuals, which are registered in the Antiquities Record as national heritage, may be traded in solely within the Kingdom, with the permission of SCTA. In case of sale, SCTA shall have the right of first refusal.
2. Any person selling an item registered in the Antiquities Record as national heritage or transferring its ownership by any means shall notify the assignee of said registration and the preservation procedures and shall notify SCTA upon completion of the transaction, in accordance with the Regulations.



#### **Article 40**

Any person who brings into the Kingdom an antiquity or heritage item shall comply with relevant international conventions to which the Kingdom is party; declare said item to customs officers; and register it with SCTA or any of its branches within three weeks from the date of its entry into the Kingdom. Said person may, upon SCTA's approval, take said object outside the Kingdom.

#### **Article 41**

Antiquities may not be replicated and no models of them may be made for commercial purposes without authorization from SCTA. The Regulations shall set relevant terms and conditions.

### **Chapter Five: Archaeological Survey and Archaeological Excavation**

#### **Article 42**

SCTA shall have the sole right to carry out archaeological survey and archaeological excavation. This shall include submerged antiquities in maritime zones under the sovereignty or the jurisdiction of the Kingdom. SCTA, in coordination with relevant authorities, may authorize universities; national organizations, institutions, and scientific societies; archaeological excavators; and foreign missions to conduct archaeological survey and archaeological excavation, either individually or in conjunction with SCTA, in accordance with the provisions of this Law and its Regulations.

#### **Article 43**

SCTA and authorized agencies shall have the right to conduct archaeological survey and archaeological excavation on public and private property in coordination with owners or persons having control over such property. If there is a need to acquire the discovered immovable antiquity, the owners of the private property shall be compensated for the value of the land in which the archaeological find is located. If there is no need to acquire the discovered immovable antiquity, compensation shall be assessed upon completion of the excavation work in accordance with procedures set in the Law of Eminent Domain and Temporary Taking of Property.

#### **Article 44**

1. Any antiquity discovered by SCTA or an archaeological excavation license holder shall be considered property of the State and may not be assigned. The President may allow the license holder to display the discovered movable antiquity for an agreed upon period of time.
2. Movable antiquities may be loaned to an archaeological excavation license holder or to individuals affiliated with a scientific body for a period of time for study, analysis, or restoration, and shall be returned to SCTA afterwards.



The Regulations shall provide relevant controls.

## **Chapter Six: Urban Heritage**

### **Article 45**

1. SCTA shall maintain a record named "Urban Heritage Record" in which all urban heritage sites and buildings are recorded and classified as follows:
  - Category A: Buildings and sites of high significance.
  - Category B: Buildings and sites of moderate significance.
  - Category C: Buildings and sites of low significance.
2. Classification shall include the following:
  - a) Buildings, sites, or any parts thereof, including movable antiquities associated therewith, such as fixtures, accessories, windows, doors, furniture, paintwork, and ornaments.
  - b) Urban areas which consist of several buildings, forming an urban fabric of cities, villages and neighborhoods. This shall include areas surrounding the buildings or urban areas and registered sites, necessary for the protection, display, or use of said buildings or registered sites.
  - c) Natural areas surrounding said buildings or urban areas, or supplementing the landscaped environment, such as gardens and green areas.
3. The Regulations shall determine the criteria for the classification of urban heritage buildings and areas.
4. SCTA shall prepare registration lists to be approved by the President.
5. Registration of heritage sites, in whole or in part, may be cancelled. Cancellation decision shall be issued by the President. The Regulations shall set controls for full and partial registration.
6. If SCTA, as an exception to paragraph 1 of this Article, deems it unnecessary to register a heritage building or site, or a cancellation decision of full or partial registration is issued, SCTA shall allow disposal of the same in accordance with the provisions of this Law and its Regulations.

### **Article 46**

1. The radius of the protection zone of the classified urban heritage or archaeological site or building shall be two hundred meters from such building or site, particularly the side on which the façade of the building or the site is located. Controls and conditions related to the protection zone shall be determined in coordination with the Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs. Said zone may be extended or reduced pursuant to a decision by the President, in coordination with the Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs and relevant agencies.



2. An urban heritage protection zone shall be established and designated in cities and villages if they have historical, cultural, artistic, or scientific significance justifying the preservation. A decision to this effect shall be made by the President, in coordination with the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs, which shall include an urban heritage protection and development plan. Full or partial classification of the protection zone may be cancelled pursuant to a decision by the President.
3. The protection zone may be changed under the supervision of SCTA and pursuant to a decision by the President, in coordination with relevant agencies in accordance with protection requirements of classified urban heritage when developing or reviewing detailed architectural and structural plans and designs, provided they meet protection zone requirements.

#### **Article 47**

1. SCTA shall, in coordination with the Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs and relevant agencies, prepare and develop an urban heritage protection and development plan as part of a comprehensive protection and development program for the area.
2. The urban heritage protection plan shall identify classified buildings and sites, protection guidelines and requirements, easements, and intervention controls, including: restoration, urban rehabilitation, urban renewal, building codes, land use controls, construction intervention methods, determination of heights as well as plans for transportation, traffic, services, and so on.
3. Building codes and construction specifications may be applied to classified urban heritage buildings and sites, unless the application of said codes and specifications is inconsistent with the classification or protection requirements.

#### **Article 48**

The preparation of detailed architectural and structural plans and designs shall comply with the protection requirements of classified buildings and sites. Immovable antiquities registered in the Antiquities Record, classified urban and folk heritage buildings and sites, classified historical sites, and their associated protection zones shall be included in the detailed architectural and structural plans and designs as well as in the urban heritage protection and development plans.

#### **Article 49**

A decision for the creation and development of an urban heritage protection zone shall entail the incorporation of the urban heritage protection plans and their requirements within the detailed architectural and structural plans and designs and replacement thereof in the classified area.



### **Article 50**

The classification of an urban heritage building or site in the Antiquities Record shall entail the following:

1. The State shall protect, preserve, and develop the building or site if it owns it; participate in the protection, preservation, and development thereof if it is owned by the private sector; and expropriate the same if protection conditions are not satisfied, in accordance with procedures set in the Law of Eminent Domain and Temporary Taking of Property.
2. The building or site shall be maintained, restored, and operated in a manner consistent with its nature without altering any of its components except to the extent necessary for operation.
3. Any change to the protection zone that would cause damage or distortion to the building or site or obstruct its operation or use shall be banned.

### **Article 51**

1. No construction or restoration work may be performed in classified urban heritage buildings, neighborhoods, or villages without a permit from the Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs. The Ministry and SCTA shall agree on conditions and procedures for granting said permit.
2. No maintenance, partitioning, or division work may be carried out in classified urban heritage buildings, neighborhoods, or villages without the approval of SCTA. SCTA shall respond to the request for approval within 90 days from date of submission.
3. Works set in paragraphs 1 and 2 of this Article shall be subject to SCTA control and supervision, in accordance with rules drafted by SCTA in agreement with relevant agencies.

### **Article 52**

The Regulations shall specify the manner for contribution towards the costs of the maintenance, repair, and restoration of a classified urban heritage building or site, if the owner is unable to do so.

### **Article 53**

Without prejudice to relevant statutory provisions:

1. a State-owned classified urban heritage building or site may not be assigned in any way to a private natural or corporate person without the approval of SCTA. The buyer or new owner shall comply with classification conditions set in this Law and its Regulations; and
2. a classified urban heritage building or site owned by the private sector may be sold, rented, or assigned upon obtaining the approval of SCTA. The new owner or tenant shall comply with the sale, assignment, or lease conditions set in the Regulations.





#### **Article 54**

SCTA shall coordinate with the Ministry of Petroleum and Mineral Resources regarding the classification and registration of urban heritage buildings located within the concession and reservation areas of oil and gas companies, as well as in the designation of protection zones of said buildings and the protection zone between the archaeological sites and the facilities of said companies.

#### **Article 55**

A person may not engage in the business of restoration and maintenance of heritage buildings without obtaining SCTA's approval and classification, in accordance with the Regulations.

### **Chapter Seven: Museums**

#### **Article 56**

Any person may establish a culture, folk heritage or science museum, or any other museum (as a cultural or investment project, or both) after obtaining a classification and a license from SCTA and relevant agencies in accordance with the law. The Regulations shall specify conditions and controls for the classification and license issued by SCTA.

#### **Article 57**

Museums shall be classified into three categories: A, B, and C, based on their collections and activities. Any other items shall be referred to as private collections. The Regulations shall set criteria for museum classification.

#### **Article 58**

SCTA shall adopt the logo "Saudi Museum" to be accorded to public and private museums. Said museums shall continue to bear the logo if ownership of said museum is transferred. The Regulations shall set provisions for the granting, suspension and cancellation of the logo.

#### **Article 59**

A museum shall:

1. preserve, maintain, restore, study, and enrich its collections;
2. display its collections and make them accessible to the public;
3. organize cultural and educational activities upon coordination with relevant agencies; and
4. participate in research projects and contribute towards advancement and dissemination of knowledge.





### **Article 60**

1. SCTA may provide financial support to private museums that bear the "Saudi Museum" logo and assist said museums in obtaining funds or loans from government or private sources to be utilized for the development of the museum, in accordance with controls set by the Regulations.
2. A Museum that bears the "Saudi Museum" logo may benefit from the expertise of SCTA and receive scientific and technical support in the areas of exhibition; preservation, maintenance, and restoration of displayed objects; operation and management; and obtaining international expertise in these fields within the framework of joint cooperation between SCTA, international museums and relevant international bodies.

### **Article 61**

A fee may be charged for admission to museums and other venues holding temporary exhibitions, in accordance with controls set by the Regulations.

### **Article 62**

SCTA may register in the Antiquities Record museum exhibits that meet the specifications of national antiquities. Said exhibits may not be sold or taken abroad without the approval of SCTA.

### **Article 63**

Only museums bearing the "Saudi Museum" logo may, subject to the approval of SCTA, participate in exhibitions outside the Kingdom and in activities jointly held with foreign museums. The relevant controls shall be set in the Regulations.

### **Article 64**

Only museums that bear the "Saudi Museum" logo may accept financial aid and in-kind gifts from outside the Kingdom, upon obtaining SCTA's approval, and in accordance with relevant controls.

### **Article 65**

The National Museum and regional museums designated by SCTA shall have a board of trustees formed by the Board upon a recommendation by the President. The board of trustees shall propose the museum's operation programs and shall supervise its affairs, its various scientific activities and areas of cooperation with local and foreign museums, in accordance with the Regulations.

### **Article 66**

Individuals, institutions, and companies operating in the Kingdom may purchase antiquities or artifacts or collections for museums, and the donor may,



in return, receive privileges and benefits. SCTA shall, in coordination with relevant agencies, propose such privileges and benefits and submit them to the Council of Ministers for approval. The Regulations shall set necessary controls.

**Article 67**

Museums shall coordinate with SCTA when relocating or when substantial changes are made to their exhibits.

**Article 68**

A museum shall not suspend its activities permanently or for an extended period of time without authorization from SCTA. SCTA shall determine the fate of the museum exhibits. The Regulations shall set necessary controls.

**Article 69**

A museum may not restore any of its objects that are registered in the Antiquities Record without SCTA's approval. The Regulations shall set necessary controls.

**Article 70**

A museum may not be operated without a license from SCTA. The Regulations shall determine conditions for granting said license.

**Chapter Eight: Penalties**

**Article 71**

Any person who illegally acquires an antiquity owned by the State shall be punished by imprisonment for a term not less than three months and not more than two years, and a fine not less than 25,000 riyals and not more than 200,000 riyals, or by either penalty.

**Article 72**

Any person who commits any of the following acts shall be punished by imprisonment for a term not less than one month and not more than one year, and a fine not less than 10,000 riyals and not more than 100,000 riyals, or by either penalty:

1. Transgression on an antiquity, archaeological site, or urban heritage site by means of destruction, alteration, removal, digging, damage, or changing or defacing its features.
2. Surveying or excavating antiquities without authorization.



### **Article 73**

Any person who commits any of the following acts shall be punished by imprisonment for a term not exceeding six months and a fine not exceeding 50,000 riyals, or by either penalty:

1. Counterfeiting or forging an antiquity and claiming it to be genuine.
2. Carrying out full or partial demolition, or construction, within the perimeters of archaeological sites or urban heritage sites, without authorization from SCTA.
3. Violating easement rights and conditions on lands adjacent to archaeological sites.
4. Intentionally recovering a submerged antiquity or moving it from its original place.

### **Article 74**

Any person who commits any of the following acts shall be punished by a fine not exceeding 30,000 riyals:

1. Altering an urban heritage building or site, or making modification to the surrounding environment that would cause damage to the building or site, without authorization from SCTA.
2. Moving debris, rocks or soil from archaeological sites or urban heritage sites without authorization from SCTA.
3. Dumping debris or waste in archaeological sites or urban heritage sites.
4. Defacing an antiquity or an urban heritage building or site by means of writing, painting, inscription, posting announcements, or setting fire.

### **Article 75**

Any person who violates the terms and conditions of the permit for restoration of archaeological and urban heritage buildings shall be punished by a fine not exceeding 20,000 riyals.

### **Article 76**

Any person who commits any of the following acts shall be punished by a fine not exceeding 15,000 riyals:

1. Acquiring or making models or replicas of antiquities for commercial purposes without SCTA's authorization.
2. Hiding antiquities he discovered or found, or refusing to hand over said antiquities to SCTA.
3. Exporting, selling, or disposing of a movable antiquity, in violation of the provisions of this Law and its Regulations.
4. Placing banners, signs or any other advertising posters on archaeological sites or urban heritage sites without authorization from SCTA.



### **Article 77**

Any person who commits any of the following acts shall be punished by a fine not exceeding 10,000 riyals:

1. Failing to submit to SCTA a statement of antiquities in his possession.
2. Acquiring an unregistered antiquity.
3. Acquiring an antiquity without a proof of ownership.
4. Selling, leasing or transferring the ownership of an immovable antiquity or a classified urban heritage site, without SCTA's approval.
5. Engaging in restoration of immovable antiquities for commercial purposes without authorization from SCTA, or violating authorization conditions.
6. Carrying out any maintenance, division, or partition works in classified urban heritage buildings, districts, or villages without SCTA's approval.
7. Restoring an antiquity registered in the Antiquities Record without SCTA's approval.
8. Engaging in the operation of a museum without a license from SCTA or violating license conditions.
9. Obstructing the work of SCTA teams at archaeological sites or urban heritage sites.

### **Article 78**

Smuggling of antiquities shall be subject to smuggling provisions set out in the GCC Unified Customs Law. The Customs Authority shall hand over seized antiquities to SCTA.

### **Article 79**

Without prejudice to the rights of *bona fide* third parties, any movable antiquities, whose owner violates Articles 2, 36, and 40 of this Law, and proceeds generated therefrom, as well as any tools, materials, machines, and transportation means used in the violations set out in Articles 71, 72, 73, and 78 of this Law shall be confiscated by virtue of a court ruling.

### **Article 80**

Without prejudice to penalties stipulated in this Law:

1. any person who finds an antiquity, unlawfully acquires a State-owned antiquity, or obtains an antiquity in violation of the provisions of this Law must hand over the same to SCTA;
2. any person who causes damage to a registered archaeological site or urban heritage site shall pay damages, as determined by the competent court. Such damages shall be deposited in the Antiquities, Museums, and Urban Heritage Fund, and earmarked for repair of the damage; and
3. any person who carries out construction, or partial or full demolition works



within the boundaries of an archaeological site or urban heritage site without authorization from SCTA, and any person who violates easement rights and conditions on lands adjacent to archaeological or urban heritage sites shall rectify the violation and reinstate the site to its original condition at his expense, under the supervision of SCTA.

#### **Article 81**

Without prejudice to penalties stipulated in this Law, in the event of violation of the provisions and conditions related to survey, excavation, trading, or museum permits, the Committee referred to in Article 90 may take a decision to suspend the activity, or suspend or permanently cancel the permit, in accordance with the Regulations.

#### **Article 82**

Any person who participates by agreement, incitement, or assistance in committing any of the violations stipulated in this Law shall be punished by the same penalty prescribed for such violation.

#### **Article 83**

Any attempt to commit a violation stipulated in this Law shall be punished by not more than half the maximum limit of the prescribed penalty.

#### **Article 84**

If the violation is punishable under this Law and other laws, the harsher penalty shall be applied.

#### **Article 85**

- A. The punishment maximum limit for the violations stipulated in this Law may be doubled in the event of repetition. In the application of the provisions of this Law, a repeat offender is any person who repeats the commission of the violation within three years from the date on which a final or enforceable decision or judgment was rendered against him.
- B. The judgement or decision imposing any of the penalties provided for under this Law may include a stipulation to publish the same at the expense of the violator in a newspaper(s) issued in the area of his residence or, if not available, in the nearest area, or publish it in any other appropriate medium, depending on the type, severity, and impact of the violation, provided the judgment or decision is published upon becoming final.



## **Chapter Nine: Detection, Investigation, and Trial**

### **Article 86**

SCTA personnel, authorized to record violations of the provisions of this Law, shall, in the course of their duty, be considered criminal investigation officers within their respective powers. SCTA, in agreement with other agencies, may seek the assistance of such agencies in the detection of said violations.

### **Article 87**

Government agencies shall notify SCTA upon knowledge of any violation of the provisions of this Law.

### **Article 88**

Any antiquity seized in accordance with the provisions of this Law shall be promptly handed over to SCTA.

### **Article 89**

SCTA shall grant a financial reward, in accordance with the Regulations, to any person who:

1. assists in detecting an antiquity found or circulated in violation of the provisions of this Law and its Regulations;
2. provides information that leads to the discovery of any violation of the provisions of this Law and its Regulations;
3. finds a significant movable or immovable antiquity by accident. The reward shall be commensurate with the value of the antiquity;
4. guides or assists in finding antiquities or archaeological sites unknown to SCTA, provided the reward is commensurate with the value of such antiquities or archaeological sites; and/or
5. contributes to the preservation of and prevention of damage to urban heritage and antiquities.

### **Article 90**

1. A committee of three members, one of which at least must be a Sharia or legal consultant, shall be formed pursuant to a decision by the President to consider violations and impose fines set out in Articles 74, 75, 76, and 77 of this Law.
2. Committee decisions shall be approved by the President. Any person against whom a decision is issued may appeal such decision before the Board of Grievances in accordance with its Law.
3. The Regulations shall identify committee work procedures and remunerations of its members.



**Article 91**

Without prejudice to Article 90(1) of this Law, the Bureau of Investigation and Public Prosecution shall have jurisdiction to investigate the violations of this Law and prosecute before the criminal court.

**Chapter Ten: Final Provisions**

**Article 92**

This Law shall supersede the Antiquities Law promulgated by Royal Decree No. M/26 dated 23/6/1392H, and shall repeal any conflicting provisions.

**Article 93**

The Board shall issue the Regulations within 120 days from the date of publishing this Law in the Official Gazette.

**Article 94**

This Law shall come into force 120 days from the date of its publication in the Official Gazette.