http://www.egyptembassy.net/news/reclaiming-egypts-stolen-history/

N E W S

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Reclaiming Egypt's stolen history

Nobody owns history. The artifacts and antiquities that tell the story of our ancient and common humanity belong to everyone, regardless of culture or border. Sadly, though, many of these priceless and irreplaceable objects— statues, carvings, vases, parchments, tombs and other relics from thousands of years ago— are being illegally plundered away from our common access for individual gain. They are bought, traded and transferred around the world, just so they can be displayed privately in wealthy individuals' collections or earn enormous profit for thieves, often sophisticated armed gangs looking to finance criminal operations.

Many of these black market items are, of course, of Egyptian origin. As Egypt's minister for Antiquities, it is my solemn duty to safeguard the artifacts that provide a window into the heritage of all civilization, as told through the events and peoples that have inhabited Egypt. From the ancient age of Pharaoh to the Greek and Roman empires to the rise of Islam and the modern era, this prized heritage is now in extreme danger. Because of this large-scale looting, we risk losing the story of the achievements and accomplishment of a proud people that stretches back thousands of years. We risk losing the tourism and economic growth we in Egypt need to assure a proud future. And to turn back this tide, as vigilant and determined as the Egyptian authorities are, we cannot succeed without the help of the international community, particularly the United States.

Mohammed Ibrahim — The Hill