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## Italy's culture minister favours return of Parthenon Sculptures



Cooperation between Italy and Greece in the recovery and conservation of looted antiquities should serve as a model for the return of the Parthenon Sculptures to Athens, Italy's culture minister has said.

Alessandro Giuli made the remarks at the Archaeological Museum of Thessaloniki during a ceremony alongside his Greek counterpart, Lina Mendoni, where 145 bronze coins were formally returned from Italy to Greece.

"I reread these days a book by Christopher Hitchens in favour of the return of the Parthenon Sculptures. I hope that today and the Greek-Italian cooperation in the field of the protection of archaeological heritage will serve as an example for our British friends," Giuli said.

The two ministers also signed an extension of a memorandum of understanding on the joint management of looted antiquities recovered from the London-based art dealership Robin Symes Limited.

Mendoni said the agreement now covers approximately 70,000 fragments of antiquities linked to illicit excavation and trafficking networks.

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