

SAFE AND DONNY GEORGE HOLD GLOBAL CANDLELIGHT VIGIL FOR THE IRAQ MUSEUM

New York – March 27, 2007 – The non-profit organization SAFE/Saving Antiquities for Everyone, Inc., today announced its plan to organize, promote and help facilitate a three-day Global Candlelight Vigil on April 10-12, 2007 to mark the fourth anniversary of the looting of the Iraq Museum in Baghdad. The Vigil, which has received the endorsement of the Iraq Museum's former Director-General, Dr. Donny George Youkhanna, aims to draw attention to the 7,000 priceless artifacts still missing from the Museum, as well as the ongoing looting and destruction of Iraq's more than 10,000 archaeological sites that comprise the cradle of civilization.

SAFE is promoting the Global Candlelight Vigil at <http://www.savingantiquities.org/i-safe-alert.php> and at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sOsOe-dfgpE>, in a video "Remember Iraq's Heritage, Our Heritage. SAFE is also supplying schools, universities and organizations with downloadable flyers in various languages and other materials and suggestions, available while supplies last.

During the three-day Vigil period – April 10, 11 and 12 – groups from San Francisco to Baghdad will gather, light a candle and pause for a moment of silence. Dr. Donny George Youkhanna will lead the flagship Vigil on April 12 at 4:00pm Eastern time (20:00 GMT) at the Charles B. Wang Center at Stony Brook University, Stony Brook, NY.

As Dr. George recalls in the video: "On the 13th of April 2003, when I went back to the Museum, it was as if a hurricane had hit. What they could not take, they smashed.... But the main problem was the looting of the archaeological sites" because whenever ancient objects are looted from the ground, most of the cultural and historical information that proper excavation would have yielded is lost forever. "It is not something we are losing, and tomorrow we can buy again. It is the memory of the Iraqi people, the memories of mankind." Dr. George concludes with a call to action: "Let's gather together and see what we can do, so that people will not forget what happened... Here at Stony Brook, we will gather together with students and faculty to remember those three days. And if you can gather together and remember, light a candle ... lighting a candle is a very nice symbol, so that we will not forget."

The Global Candlelight Vigil for the Iraq Museum was conceived by SAFE president Cindy Ho, as a way to call attention to the missing museum pieces and the ongoing plunder at archaeological sites. "Although media coverage of these issues has dwindled, we must not forget the sacrifices of the Museum and its staff, the missing artifacts, as well as the looting of sites that occurs in Iraq and all around the world. Heightened public awareness does increase pressure on governments to enforce existing laws and treaties, which can help to curb the trade in illicit antiquities from Iraq and looted archaeological sites around the world."

By working with Dr. George and groups around the globe, SAFE hopes to focus the world's attention on the recovery of missing Iraq Museum pieces and the ongoing plunder of archaeological sites in Iraq and around the world.

After the Global Candlelight Vigil concludes, SAFE will compile photos and videos from the various gatherings and present a "video memorial" to Dr. Amira Edan, Director-General of the Iraq Museum, as well as policy-makers in Iraq and around the world.

As Vigil events around the world are confirmed in coming days, event information for those who wish to attend will be available on the homepage at www.savingantiquities.org

About SAFE

SAFE/Saving Antiquities for Everyone, a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization, creates educational programs and media campaigns to raise public awareness regarding the importance of preserving cultural heritage worldwide. SAFE is a coalition of professionals in communications, media, and advertising working alongside experts in the academic, legal and law enforcement communities. SAFE has no political affiliations.