

Raymond M. Brown Moderates Special Congressional Briefing Hosted by Bi-Partisan Senate Human Rights Caucus

September 27, 2016

Raymond M. Brown, a partner in the firm's Litigation Department and a leading participant in the ongoing global discussion of human rights concerns, served as the moderator of a Congressional Briefing on September 22, 2016, hosted by the Senate Human Rights Caucus and co-hosted by the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission. "Destruction of Cultural Heritage in Conflict: Promoting Accountability and the Rule of Law" brought together a panel of thought leaders to examine how the international community can ensure accountability for human rights crimes, promote the rule of law to protect cultural heritage in conflict, and discuss the role that the U.S. government can play in these efforts.

The special briefing, which was held at the Hart Senate Office Building in Washington DC, featured remarks by Patty Gerstenblith, professor of law at DePaul University and director of its Center for Art, Museum & Cultural Heritage Law; Helen Malko, postdoctoral fellow at the Italian Academy for Advanced Studies at Columbia University; Tess Davis, Executive Director of the Antiquities Coalition; and Anne-Marie Carstens, researcher at Georgetown University Law Center. Mr. Brown, co-founder of the International Justice Project and Chair of the firm's White Collar Defense and Corporate & International Human Rights Compliance Practice Groups, served as moderator.

The destruction of cultural heritage in conflict is an increasingly pressing concern for governments and civil society around the world. In Iraq and Syria, ISIS has targeted and destroyed, in visible and dramatic fashion, structures associated with minority sects of Islam, Christianity, and ancient and traditional cultures. In Mali, a rebel group affiliated with al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb attacked and destroyed religious sites in the famed city of Timbuktu – and one of the perpetrators of these crimes has pled guilty to the war crime of cultural heritage destruction at the International Criminal Court.

Cultural heritage is a crucial part of the history of a people, and enriches all of humanity. When it is destroyed, it is lost forever. Intentional destruction of cultural heritage is an attempt to undermine the identity and dignity of humanity. To learn more about these issues, please email Mr. Brown at rbrown@greenbaumlaw.com.