



## **German Museums Association revises recommendations for the care of human remains**

Berlin, May 05, 2020

**The "Recommendations for the Care of Human Remains for German Museums and Collections", published by the German Museums Association, has been consulted by museums and sponsors since 2013. A new version of the recommendations is currently being prepared and it will be published in German, English and French.**

The appropriate care of human remains is an important topic for museums worldwide, especially within the discussion about colonial collections and in connection to return requests. In 2013, the German Museums Association published the guideline "Recommendations for the Care of Human Remains for German Museums and Collections", providing an urgently needed guidance for museums. The publication made a significant contribution toward raising awareness in museums; in the following years numerous returns were noted. Since autumn 2019, an interdisciplinary working group made up of ethnologists, archaeologists, anthropologists, lawyers and ethicists has been revising the guide and bringing it up to date, with the support of international colleagues. In order to promote international exchange, the new version will be published in German, English and French.

Prof. Dr. Wiebke Ahrndt, head of the working group at the German Museums Association and director of the Übersee-Museum Bremen:

"The will for an appropriate care of human remains in museum collections and an open-mindedness towards returns have reached museums. The debate about the care of human remains has been advanced by the discussion about collections from colonial contexts. The links between objects from colonial contexts and human remains are sometimes very close, since the acquisition of such objects usually are quite similar. A link between the contents of the two publications, for example on the subject of return, is therefore obvious."

With the new edition of the publication, the German Museums Association offers sponsors and decision-makers in museums and collections clear rules and working aids for the care of human remains, in particular in the context of restitution claims and as part of the ongoing discussion about colonial heritage.

The German Museums Associations has represented the interests of German museums and their employees since 1917. It connects people, diverse institutions, and relevant topics related to museums. With its efforts it is committed to quality museum work and the promotion of exchange between museum experts.

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