

## BLUE SHIELD AWARD 2012

The Austrian National Committee of the Blue Shield bestows the Blue Shield Award 2012 on Dr. Joris Kila. On this occasion the Committee will host the symposium “Currents in Cultural Property Protection” that will take place on

Wednesday, 17th of October 2012, starting at 2 p.m.  
in the Museum of Military History Vienna.

Dr. Joris Kila is well known to the international expert community as one of the pioneers of the new academic field of Cultural Property Protection in the Event of Armed Conflict. Kila studied Art History and Classical Archaeology at the University of Leiden. After gaining first professional experiences at the renowned Smithsonian Institution and the Kunsthall Rotterdam he focused on the field of Egyptology, which led him to Egypt multiple times in the 1990s. He participated in a series of projects in leading scientific, artistic or administrative positions: in light design at prominent sites like Karnak, Giza and Abu Simbel („sound and light shows“) as well as in museums in Cairo, al-Arish and others, at cultural heritage projects in Wadi Natrun and Abu Simbel, in the archaeological field projects at Berenike and in the Dahkleh oasis – in all these capacities working for the University of Leiden and the Erasmus-University of Rotterdam, for Philips and for the Netherlands Ministries of Cultural, Foreign and Economic Affairs. After the end of the wars in former Yugoslavia he switched his field of activity and moved on to Macedonia in the year 2001, where he again worked in museology and soon also in cultural property protection – an area of specialization within which he is still involved until today. Already in 2002 he participated in a course for functional specialists in civil-military cooperation and in 2003 he received a military diploma from the Royal-Netherlands Military Academy in Breda and completed the Operational Strategic CIMIC Course at the NATO School Oberammergau in Germany. In the years between 2002 and 2007 he served as Network Manager Cultural Affairs CIMIC in the Netherlands Ministry of Defence at the rank of a Lieutenant Colonel. In 2003 to 2004 he was deployed as a Cultural Property Protection Officer to southern Iraq and later to Baghdad. Since 2007 he is a free research associate at the Netherlands Defence Academy and affiliated with a series of other academic and university institutions. Since that time he has also been a frequent guest in Austria: at the Austrian Society for the Protection of Cultural Property, at the National Defence Academy Vienna, and at the Austrian National Committee of the Blue Shield. He is founding president of the International Military Cultural Resources Working Group and in this function since 2009 official partner of the U.S. Combatant Commands Historical Cultural Action Group (the former Centcom Historical/Cultural Advisory Group), as well as advisor to U.S. Africom. Together with Karl von Habsburg-Lothringen he conducted the most prominent Blue-Shield Fact-Finding-Missions to Egypt and Libya in 2011. For their achievements in the context of these missions they received the Award for Art Protection and Security by the Association for Research into Crimes against Art (ARCA) in Rome and Kila also received the Medal of the Military Order of Foreign Wars of the U.S. Armed Forces. Meanwhile Kila is research associate at the University of Amsterdam, where he defended his PhD thesis at the beginning of this year: “Heritage under siege: Military implementation of the 1954 Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property”, which has now appeared with the prestigious Brill Publishers and for which he will receive the Blue Shield Award 2012; with Brill he is also editing the new series “Heritage and Identity. Issues in Cultural Heritage Protection”. Since this year he is also free research associate at the Competence Centre for Cultural Heritage and Cultural Property Protection as well as at the Alois Musil Centre for Oriental Archaeology at the University of Vienna. His current research focus is Libya.

