Protecting Cultural Property: the ICRC Advisory Service brand new Model Law

In spite of the existence of detailed norms of international law for the protection of cultural property in the event of armed conflict, cultural property remain the object of destruction and looting.

The compliance of those international rules needs therefore to be strengthened. It is in this spirit that the Advisory Service on International Humanitarian Law has developed this new Model Law. As François Bugnion remarked: “when monuments, places of worship and works of arts are attacked, the aim is to destroy the enemy’s identity, his history, his culture and his faith, so as to eradicate trace of his presence and, in some cases, his very existence”

This model law seeks therefore to provide guidance on how to incorporate into domestic law the rules of the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict and its two Protocols of 1954 and 1999 respectively.

It has been drafted for consideration by States with a common-law legal tradition. For States with a civil-law legal tradition, the model law may as well prove useful as a checklist of provisions that need to be implemented through domestic law.
Model Law on the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict:

1954 Convention on the Protection of Cultural Property - Fact Sheet: