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CLERK, U. S. BANKRUPTCY COURT
MIDDLE DISTRICT OF FLORIDA

Robert Yorke
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Lee Ann Bennett, Clerk of Court
United States Bankruptcy Court
Middle District of Florida
Jacksonville Division
300 North Hogan Street, Suite 3-150
Jacksonville, Florida 32202, USA

Re RMS Titanic Inc v. French Republic a/k/a Republic of France
Case number 16-02230-3G1
Attention The Honourable Paul M Glenn

As Chairman of the UK's Joint Nautical Archaeology Policy Committee (JNAPC), I am writing to ensure you are aware of the international ramifications that will result from this case if RMS Titanic are allowed to sell off individual items from their collection. The JNAPC is the UK Committee, formed in 1988, that represents both institutions and individuals concerned with the nautical and maritime heritage. Since 2013 we have been accredited as an NGO to the Scientific and Technical Advisory Board and to the Meeting of State Parties of the 2001 UNESCO Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage (UCH).

We would like to add our voice to the international pressure asking that you should not allow any relaxation of the covenants and conditions placed on RMS Titanic with regard to the 'French Collection' of artefacts raised from the Titanic. These conditions were specifically created to ensure that the collection remained together and would not be dispersed. Commercial salvage on historic wrecks is causing untold damage and loss of our shared heritage. If you allow RMS Titanic to break the covenants and restrictions that were imposed on them on acquiring the collection, it would send a signal around the world that our precious and shared heritage can be bartered or sold in a commercial manner. Since the UNESCO 2001 Convention on the Protection of Underwater Cultural Heritage came into force on 2 January 2009 such practices are deemed as unacceptable. The convention specifically states that "Underwater cultural heritage shall not be commercially exploited" and as the remains from the Titanic are now over 100 years old, they come within the scope of the convention.

If the owners of a high-profile collection such as the Titanic material are allowed to break their covenants and sell off individual items, it does far greater damage than merely making the collection smaller. It implies that all looting and commercial exploitation of heritage is acceptable and that even the largest economies of the world can ignore international conventions that are set up to safeguard our heritage and culture.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Yorke', is written over a light-colored background.

Mr Robert Yorke
Chairman, Joint Nautical Archaeology Policy Committee, UK

Joint Nautical Archaeology Policy Committee

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