

## **Commander of Order of St. Andrew addresses letter to Donald Trump over Erdogan govt attempts to reconvert Hagia Sophia into mosque**



A looming decision by Turkey's high court on whether the iconic Hagia Sophia can be reconverted into a so-called "conquest mosque" by the Turkish state is expected on July 2. This latest provocation by the Turkish state has sparked concerns throughout the Orthodox world.

The greatest of all cathedrals in eastern Christendom is now a UNESCO World Heritage Site and functions as Turkey's most visited museum, its status since the mid 1930s.

In a letter addressed to US President Donald Trump, the national commander of the Order of St Andrew, Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, Dr. Anthony Limberakis, calls on the American president to use his influence to block the Hagia Sophia's reconversion into a mosque by the Erdogan administration.

Among others, Dr. Limberakis writes: "...We urgently request that you ensure that the government of Turkey will affirm its commitment to religious freedom and discard all plans to change the status of the Hagia Sophia, which will, in effect, wipe out the quintessential historical presence of Christ and the Christian Church in modern-day Turkey."