

## **Patriarchate of Georgia: We think it will be a wise step today if the Hagia Sophia remains a neutral place**



We think it will be a wise step today if the Hagia Sophia remains a neutral place, This is stated in the statement released by the Georgian Patriarchate.

As statement notes, the Georgian Patriarchate hopes that “attitude to this matter will be understood by the friendly country not as our interference in its internal affairs but rather as the opinion and expression of heartache from one of the oldest Orthodox Churches”.

“The Orthodox Church of Georgia is following and observing the promulgated information that the Hagia Sophia, which was built as an outstanding Christian church and functioned as such for nearly 1,000 years, may change its status.

It is also known that this statement made by the Turkish side was conditioned by certain reasons; however, at present, as humanity is facing many global challenges, maintaining and strengthening benevolence between Christians and Muslims is very important. We think it will be a wise step today if the Hagia Sophia remains a neutral place.

Holding in respect the sovereignty of the Republic of Turkey, we hope that our attitude to this matter will be understood by the friendly country not as our interference in its internal affairs but rather as the opinion and expression of heartache from one of the oldest Orthodox Churches.

We hope that the good neighbourly, friendly and strategic relations between Turkey and Georgia will continue to deepen, which will be very beneficial for both countries” – reads the statement.

Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan has proposed restoring the mosque status of Hagia Sophia. As Reuters [reports](#), a Turkish court is likely to announce on Friday that the 1934 conversion of Istanbul’s Hagia Sophia into a museum was unlawful, two Turkish officials said, paving the way for its restoration as a mosque despite international concerns.

[Source](#)