

The Middle East Council of Churches: The Turkish Government's decision to convert the “Hagia Sophia” church into a mosque is Violation of religious freedom and coexistence



Following the Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's signature on the Turkish Supreme Court's decision to transform the Hagia Sophia Church into a mosque, the Middle East Council of Churches issued a statement through its General Secretariat considering that this decision is an assault on religious freedom, the freedom that has become the cornerstone in international consciousness and that is protected by international laws. Therefore, the MECC calls for a decisive position from the United Nations and the League of Arab States by filing a legal appeal of the Turkish Supreme Court's decision to find justice based on the principles of religious freedom, as well as preserving the historical symbolism represented by the Church

of “Hagia Sophia”.

The General Secretariat adds: “The most dangerous element is that this decision comes out of the context of the Christian-Muslim coexistence journey, the most prominent manifestation of which was on February 4, 2019 in “The Document on Human Fraternity for World Peace and Living Together”, which concluded in the historic meeting between Pope Francis and Sheikh Al-Azhar Al-Sharif Ahmed Al-Tayeb, as well as all ecumenical initiatives and interfaith dialogues in the last three decades, which makes this decision to go beyond a pure process of convergence on the common good and peace in the face of radicalism and extremism ”.

The Statement concludes: “By this decision, the whole World is called upon to stand together and conscientious, and calls on the societal and religious authorities living in Turkey to get mobilized at all levels to put an end to this aggression and transgression in a way that preserves the true meaning of coexistence in all its profundity.”

Middle East Council of Churches

General Secretariat

Communication and Public Relations Department

[Source](#)