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Imamoglu to skip Erdogan’s colossal provocation at Hagia Sophia



The mayor of ancient Constantinople, modern-day Istanbul, Ekrem Imamoglu, said he will not attend a Muslim prayer service on Friday at the greatest of all cathedrals of eastern Christendom, the Hagia Sophia, a planned and widely advertised event by the Islamist Erdogan administration to “celebrate” the UNESCO World Heritage site’s conversion into mosque.
The popular Imamoglu, now seen as the authoritarian Turkish president’s biggest political rival, cited events commemorating the 1923 Treaty of Lausanne as preventing him from attending.

Erdogan’s decision to revoke a landmark 1934 ministerial decree, signed by modern Turkey’s secular founder, Kemal Ataturk, to change the Hagia Sophia’s status from an imperial mosque into a museum , has generated immense international condemnation. The move is also seen as a by major provocation by Christian leaders, and no less than insulting and sacrilegious by many of the world’s Orthodox faithful.

In a related development, Athens Polytechnic professor Tonia Moropoulou spoke with the Orthodoxia news agency this week, some 25 years after leading a

research team from the university participating in preservation works at the Hagia Sophia, part of an international program at the time to reinforce the 6th century basilica's earthquake resistance and foundations.

Prof. Moropoulou last week announced that she will head an international initiative against Erdogan's decision to convert the Hagia Sophia into a mosque.

Church bells on Crete to ring in mourning on July 24

On their part, members of the Holy Eparchial Synod of the Church of Crete this week announced that church bells will ring in mourning throughout the large island, for 10 minutes, beginning at noon on July 24, in expressing grief over the conversion of the Hagia Sophia into a mosque.

Archbishop of America: Conversion of Hagia Sophia part of mentality of 'sword of the conqueror'

Elsewhere, the Archbishop of America, His Eminence Elpidophoros, on Monday called on the Greek-American community not to forget the Turkish atrocities on Cyprus, while directly referring to what he called a mentality of the "…sword of the conqueror".

He said this mentality is behind the shocking conversion of Hagia Sophia.

The Archbishop added "…It is impossible to remain silent in the face of this injustice, it is impossible to remain silent when we see the history of nations written in blood…The mentality of the conqueror, the mentality of the conquest…the law of the conqueror that governs even today is, unfortunately, the same with the mentality that converted Hagia Sophia into a mosque…"