

Head of Turkey's religious foundations says restoration works ongoing on various monuments in order to 'attract tourists'



The state-appointed general director of religious foundations, Burhan Ersoy, this month was quoted as saying that the restoration and preservation of Constantinople's historic monuments is a priority.

He nevertheless added that this priority is linked with attracting more tourists to recession-battered Turkey.

The specific state entity is under the jurisdiction of Turkey's culture ministry, with religious foundation in the predominately Muslim country widely known as Vakufs.

In comments to Turkey's state-run news agency, Ersoy also claimed that the most significant project undertaken in 2020 was the inclusion of the Hagia Sophia under the jurisdiction of the general directorate of religious foundations.

He was referring to the shocking and insolent decision by the Erdogan regime to reconvert the greatest of all basilicas of eastern Christendom into a mosque, a decision widely criticized by the international community.

He also said that works are also continuing to reconvert the Chora Church back into

a mosque, another pre-eminent Byzantine-era cathedral in the Bosphorus metropolis, which, like the Hagia Sophia, operated as a museum in secular Turkey and is also a UNESCO world heritage site.