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Greek FM Dendias referring to Hagia Sofia conversion: All countries have the obligation to protect Byzantine cultural heritage



Greek Foreign Affairs Minister Nikos Dendias addressed the opening of an exhibition at the Byzantine and Christian Museum on Wednesday evening in Athens. At least 200 archival documents are displayed at the exhibition, which is organized by the Foreign Ministry's Diplomatic & Historical Archives service, and on the occasion of the 200th anniversary of the beginning of the War of Independence.

Among others, Dendias referred to an obligation of all countries to protect Byzantine cultural heritage, in particular, as he said, monuments that are part of world cultural heritage, such as the Hagia Sophia and the Monastery of Chora.

He added: "These monuments are now being used for other reasons, in violation of relevant international commitments," a clear reference to the insolent decision by the Erdogan regime last year to reconvert the Orthodox basilicas into mosques.

Moreover, Dendias underlined that "…we expect Turkey to change its neo-Ottoman policy; To return to the tradition of the secular state. To respect the monuments that other robust spiritual civilizations…"