

19/10/2022

UNESCO Special Advisor Visits Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America



On October 18, 2022, Dr. Mounir Bouchenaki was received by His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros at the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese headquarters in New York. Dr. Bouchenaki serves as Special Advisor to UNESCO regarding Turkey's unilateral reconversion of Hagia Sophia to a mosque.

During the meeting, Dr. Bouchenaki briefed His Eminence on the latest developments in the status of Hagia Sophia— which had previously been preserved as a UNESCO World Heritage Site before its reconversion—and shared his findings from his investigations into the conduct of Turkish authorities.

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The Archbishop was provided insights about both the structural damage that has since resulted to the sites, as well as the religious and symbolic harm suffered by Orthodox Christians in the aftermath of Turkey's unlawful decision.

The meeting was joined by Dr. Elizabeth Prodromou, Senior Fellow at the Fletcher School for Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University, and Christina Hioureas, Esq., Chair of the UN Practice Group at Foley Hoag Law Firm. Also present was Rev. Protopresbyter Nicolas Kazarian, Director of the GOARCH Department of Inter-Orthodox, Ecumenical, and Interfaith Relations.

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