



CANADIAN HELLENIC CONGRESS
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For immediate release

**THE CANADIAN HELLENIC CONGRESS CALLS
FOR BOYCOTT OF TURKISH GOODS**

Montreal, July 19, 2020--The Canadian Hellenic Congress (CHC) is calling on Canadians and all levels of government to boycott Turkish goods. Recent actions by Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and the Turkish Council of State, Turkey's top administrative court, have the potential to incite further religious intolerance toward the ancient Christian community in Turkey and beyond.

The Turkish President has moved rapidly to convert the monumental ancient Church of Hagia Sophia into a mosque, despite calls from the European Union and the international community, including religious organisations of all beliefs to halt the conversion. The US, Greece, Russia, as well as, Orthodox and Catholic Churches, the Islamic Society of North America, the World Council of Churches and even Pope Francis have added their voices.

Built almost 1500 years ago, this Great Church of Orthodox Christianity was converted into a mosque when the Ottoman army conquered Christendom in 1453, into a museum in 1934 and in 2020 again into a mosque while bearing the name of the Christian martyr Hagia Sophia, its original Greek Orthodox name.

Diplomacy is not working and international voices of protest have fallen on deaf ears. President Erdogan is bent on a policy that will fuel conflict and war. As Erdogan has stated, “the resurrection of Hagia Sophia heralds the liberation of the Al Aqsa Mosque”, located on the Temple Mount, the holiest site of Judaism in the heart of Jerusalem. In essence, this statement makes it clear that the conversion of Hagia Sophia is linked to Erdogan’s wider agenda which will impact Judaism and Israel too. Erdogan is demanding for his faith and his country, what he is intent on denying to others. This is cause for international concern.

The time has now come for economic sanctions against the Erdogan regime. The CHC calls for the following measures:

1. Do not buy Turkish textiles or other products;
2. Do not fly Turkish Airlines; and
3. For the Canadian Government to deny Turkish Airlines landing rights at our airports.

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The Canadian Hellenic Congress is a national democratic communal institution that represents, advances, advocates and promotes the interests and concerns of Canadians of Hellenic descent and Hellenism in general. The Congress is the national voice of Hellenes and their communities and/or organizations across Canada.