

**Question for written answer E-000499/2022  
to the Commission  
Rule 138  
Elissavet Vozemberg-Vrionidi (PPE)**

**Subject:** Protecting the character of Hagia Sophia as a World Heritage Site

In July 2020, Turkey defiantly proceeded to convert Hagia Sophia into a mosque, riding roughshod over the concerns expressed by UNESCO and the EU and disregarding the internationally recognised status of Hagia Sophia as a historic World Heritage site.

According to French newspaper reports, the conversion has left visitors to Hagia Sophia unable to access a number of the mosaics in the temple, such as those on the apse and the upper floor, which are currently veiled.

Given that the UNESCO deadline for Turkey to submit a report on problems resulting from of change of use of the monument expired on 1 February:

1. Is the Commission aware of the above-mentioned changes to the character of Hagia Sophia?
2. What action does it plan to take, in cooperation with UNESCO, in order to protect Hagia Sophia as a World Heritage Site and a universal symbol of Christianity?