

**Question for written answer E-003045/2023  
to the Commission  
Rule 138  
Costas Mavrides (S&D)**

**Subject:** Desecration and cultural genocide of church monuments in occupied Cyprus

The ethnic cleansing of Greek Cypriots by Türkiye, which took place in occupied Cyprus in 1974, was followed by the desecration and cultural genocide of hundreds of church monuments. These acts continue to this day, as shown by recent reports published in the Phileleftheros newspaper which include photographic evidence from two churches.

One of the churches in question is Agia Anna in occupied Kythrea. After 1974, the church was used as a mosque for decades until it was abandoned two or three years ago because it had fallen into disrepair. The Kythreans repaired it and erected a makeshift altarpiece so that they could go on practicing their faith even in suboptimal conditions. The occupation regime recently granted use of the church to Turkish settlers who removed the altarpiece and turned the church into a gym, desecrating it for the second time and violating basic human rights and religious freedoms.

As a result of Türkiye and its vassal state's systematic policy of destroying Christian monuments and places of worship, most Christian monuments in the occupied territories have been desecrated and are now on the verge of collapsing. One such case is the monastery of Agios Anastasios in the village of Peristeronopigi in Famagusta.

In view of this:

What steps will the Commission take to ensure that sacrilegious acts of this kind cease and that the churches that are in a state of collapse are protected and preserved?

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