



FRIENDS OF CULTURAL HERITAGE-FOCUH (Kültürel Mirasın Dostları Derneği-KUMID)

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H. E, Grigol MGALOBLSHVILI, Ambassador of Georgia in Turkey,
H. E, Vladimir IVANOVSKIY, Ambassador of Russian Federation in Turkey,
Minister , Ali BABACAN, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey
Minister, Ertuğrul GÜNAY, Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the Republic of Turkey
H. E. Mr Ali Tinaz TUYGAN, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Permanent Delegate to UNESCO
Chair Person, Dr. Arsin AYDINURAZ, Turkish National Commission for UNESCO,
Chairperson, Prof. Dr. Nur Akın Turkish National Committee for ICOMOS,
President, Orhan DÜZGÜN, Turkish National Committee for ICOM, ,

APPEAL FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE CULTURAL HERITAGE IN GEORGIA AS WELL AS IN THE REGION OF CAUCASUS

We, Friends of Cultural Heritage (FOCUH) founded in Istanbul, Turkey as Non Governmental Organization whose mission is to protect cultural heritage all over the World, both in times of peace or before and in the aftermath of armed conflicts follow with concern the ongoing the armed conflicts among different communities and states in the Caucasus.

Due to these conflicts, we announce that our compassion goes first to the men, women and, especially, the children, who are suffering during the armed conflict taking place in the region.

Nevertheless, we think about our immense responsibility to protect the cultural properties in Georgia as they stand as the important relics of civilization. As it is known that three of them, Bagrati Cathedral and Gelati Monastery (1994), Historical Monuments of Mtskheta (1994), Upper Svaneti (1996) are also listed in the Word Heritage List of UNESCO.

It is a fact that the cultural heritage is vulnerable to armed conflicts or to social turbulences; regardless of ethic or religious origins, the relics of the past had, regretfully suffered during such episodes. In particular, the looting of museums, destruction of sites that have happened in the course of recent armed operations in the different countries stand as an example on such occasions; thus we are deeply concerned for security of the museums in the cities of Georgia.

So, by recalling with The Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (1954), and the Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (1972), of which both Georgia and Russian Federation are signatories, we invite all parties whether or not they are contracting parties of these Conventions in the region to respect the spirit and the articles of these Conventions and take immediate measures of the protection of the cultural properties (monuments, sites, museums and their collections) in Georgia and the different regions in Caucasus

At least, we also appeal to UNESCO, ICOM, ICOMOS, Bleu Shields, Europa Nostra...etc. to come into action to protect these cultural properties as well as to the media institutions, press agencies ..etc to transmit news about the situation of the cultural properties in Georgia and the different regions in Caucasus during these conflicts.

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President of the Executive Board

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