Resolution 636 (1976)[1]

Protection of the architectural heritage of Istanbul

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

1. Referring to the report of its Committee on Culture and Education on the protection of the architectural heritage of Istanbul (Doc. 3845) ;

2. Considering the protection of this architectural heritage, which is unique in Europe, to be essential, and that any delay is likely to result very rapidly in the disappearance of ensembles of outstanding cultural, historical and artistic interest ;

3. Noting that a combination of several factors, not only economic and financial, but also social and human, in particular the high level of immigration, is seriously threatening to destroy Istanbul's architectural heritage ;

4. Recalling its Resolution 617 (1976), and reaffirming its commitment to the principles of integrated conservation set out in the European Charter of the Architectural Heritage and in the Declaration of Amsterdam ;

5. Aware that the protection of Istanbul calls not only for a series of regulations and overall strategies, but especially for their more stringent implementation locally and nationally ;

6. Welcoming the effort already made by the Turkish authorities, and approving the principle underlying various initiatives and projects for the protection of Istanbul, in particular of certain old quarters, consisting largely of wooden houses, needing particularly urgent attention ;

7. Believing that greater public awareness and understanding is essential as regards the protection and promotion of the architectural heritage of Istanbul, a place of great significance in both Byzantine and Ottoman civilisations ;

8. Aware that a programme for protection of this magnitude calls for considerable resources, and that action at European and international level could help the Turkish authorities in its implementation,

9. Calls for the effective implementation by the local and national authorities of the existing laws and administrative powers concerning the protection of the architectural heritage ;

10. Calls upon cultural organisations and associations, both national and international, to assist the appropriate Turkish authorities - and especially the municipality of Istanbul - in mobilising in a spirit of European solidarity all the forces necessary to achieve concrete results as soon as possible ;

11. Asks Unesco in particular to make an active contribution to finding ways and means of protecting Istanbul.

1. Assembly debate on 17 September 1976 (12th Sitting) (see Doc. 3845, report of the Committee on Culture and Education). Text adopted by the Assembly on 17 September 1976 (12th Sitting).