



Presidents of Churches Together in England, representing the full breadth of Christian traditions in England, are saddened at the decision of the Turkish Government to change the status of Hagia Sophia in Istanbul.

For a long period of time Hagia Sophia has been a unique centre symbolising a co-existence of people of faith. It is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and, as a place where the rich history of Istanbul is told visually, can be a living example of religious tolerance and respect. The decision to alter the status quo in this way is a powerful, symbolic change that is lamentable and painful for many people of faith the world over.

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Presidents of Churches Together in England:

Archbishop Justin Welby, The Archbishop of Canterbury

Cardinal Vincent Nichols, The Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster

Revd Dr Hugh Osgood, The Free Churches Moderator

Archbishop Angaelos of London, Archbishop of the Coptic Orthodox Diocese of London and CTE President for the Orthodox ChurchesÂ

Pastor Agu Irukwu, head of Redeemed Christian Church of God UK and CTE Pentecostal President

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Further information:

- Churches Together in England (CTE) is the national ecumenical instrument supporting and encouraging churches from a wide range of traditions to work together in unity. Nationally, CTE brings together 50 Member Churches from many diverse traditions. In fact, we unite the broadest range of churches in the whole of Europe. CTE's strapline is: *One in Christ Jesus, engaged in God's mission, empowered by the Spirit*. Read more about CTE at www.cte.org.uk/WhoWeAre

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- Read more about CTE's Presidents at www.cte.org.uk/Presidents

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