

The Hague, 10 September 2010

Mr. Abdullah Gül

President of Turkey

Cumhurbaşkanlığı Genel Sekreterliği Yürütme ve Koordinasyon Başkanlığı

06689 Çankaya, Ankara

TURKEY

Your Excellency,

Europa Nostra, the Voice of cultural heritage in Europe, has learned with deep regret that the unique and invaluable archaeological site of Allianoi near Bergama is being covered with sand in preparation for flooding behind the Yortanlı irrigation dam. I am writing you today with the ultimate hope that such a cultural tragedy can still be avoided thanks to your courage and clear vision of Turkey's long term interests.

Europa Nostra, the European federation assembling more than 250 heritage NGOs which together represent millions of concerned supporters of protecting Europe's cultural heritage, has for almost a decade been advocating the safeguarding of Allianoi, one of the world's best preserved and biggest Roman thermal spas. Allianoi is an important European historical site which could be further developed to increase its touristic potential.

As already expressed in the letter sent you recently by Dr Orhan Siliér, Europa Nostra Board member and coordinator of Europa Nostra Turkey, we believe that the destruction of Allianoi goes against:

- international standards for heritage preservation;
- international regulations and covenants signed by Turkey;
- its designation of the site as a Heritage Site of the First Order by the Region of Izmir;
- injunctions by both the Izmir Administrative Court and the State Council Office n°6 against the Izmir Committee n° 2 for the Protection of Natural and Cultural Heritage, to not proceed with the inundation;
- the opinions of experts and NGOs from Turkey and abroad, knowledgeable in the preservation of heritage sites;
- and not leastly, the long-term interests of Turkey and Europe as a whole.

We wish to recall that in March 2007, Europa Nostra, together with ICOMOS and the European Association of Archaeologists, launched an international appeal to the highest authorities in Turkey, expressing deep concern at the alarming and immediate threats facing this important archaeological site (see Annex). Since then we have continued supporting the campaign to save Allianoi.

Europa Nostra was delighted to hold its 2010 Annual Congress this June in Istanbul, bringing heritage experts and volunteers from across Europe to Turkey to share in the city's wonders and to discover the numerous restoration works being carried out on many of Istanbul's most important monuments and archaeological sites.

We were extremely pleased that your Minister of Culture, Ertuğrul Günay, participated in our European Heritage Awards Ceremony at Aya Irini, presenting the awards to the winners of the European Union Prize for Cultural Heritage /



**The Voice of
Cultural Heritage
in Europe**

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en Europe**

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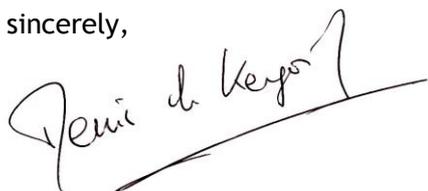
Europa Nostra Awards 2010 alongside Androulla Vassiliou, European Commissioner responsible for Education, Culture, Multiculturalism and Youth. We appreciated that in his speech, Mr Günay stressed the government's commitment to protecting its cultural heritage from the many periods in Turkey's long history and development.

I therefore make a personal appeal to you to use your authority and far-sighted vision for Turkey, to find an alternative solution to save Allianoï and to stop the current destructive measures at the site. Europa Nostra continues to believe that flooding Allianoï is a grave mistake, sacrificing as it does potential sustainable touristic development of the region; it will also put an end to the archaeological excavations and the related historical inquiry. Both of these help foster understanding and ties between peoples across our continent.

Europa Nostra gladly offers the expertise and cooperation of its members to help find alternative solutions for Allianoï and other similar sites in Turkey, where your country's development and energy plans conflict with the preservation of Turkey's cultural and natural heritage.

Please help us save Allianoï and other such treasures in Turkey. This is a cultural legacy not only to your country but to Europe as a whole.

Yours sincerely,



Denis de Kergorlay
Executive President of Europa Nostra

NB: This same letter has been sent simultaneously to the following persons:

- Prime Minister, Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan
- Minister of Culture and Tourism, Mr. Ertuğrul Günay
- Minister in Charge of EU Affairs, Mr Egemen Bağış

