

ARCHAEOLOGICAL ARTIFACTS CONTINUE TO FACE THE RISK OF DESTRUCTION!

It is wrong and damaging to move the storage rooms of the Istanbul Archaeology Museums to a remote location!

The Istanbul Archaeology Museums, housed in the first purpose built museum venue of our country, is among the leading museums not only in our country but also in the world.

Today, it is reported in the news that some of the artifacts found in the storage rooms of the Istanbul Archaeology Museums, which host more than 1 million artifacts registered in their inventory, are to be moved to Istanbul Ataturk Airport site. We have also heard, with astonishment, statements that not only the mentioned works, but also the Istanbul Central Laboratory for Restoration and Conservation shall be moved to this site, which is located many kilometers away from the Istanbul Archaeology Museums. While the removal of the aforementioned artifacts from the storage rooms will constitute a risk and a security problem in itself, the news of their removal to such a long distance from the museum building is alarming.

We find it difficult to understand the rationale of moving these archaeological treasures to remote locations in order to provide for the spatial needs of the Museum, rather than considering the use of venues that were previously allocated to the Museum which are; suitable for cultural functions, in close proximity to the Archeology Museums and in most convenient location for the the museum staff to more easily supervise and carry out the handling of the artworks.

The storage of the collections in the closest location to the exhibition areas, in accordance with museology criteria and under suitable air conditions, should be considered as a priority. In order to minimize possible risks, a process should be followed that can be documented and audited, and that is transparent and open to the public.

We would like to emphasize that if relocation is inevitable, possible risks should be studied in all aspects in this process, and actions must be taken in line with the opinions and directions of professional experts and academic units working in the fields of museology and the protection and conservation of cultural assets!

We respectfully announce to the public.

**Istanbul Citizens' Assembly
Urban Culture and Cultural Heritage
Working Group**