PRESS RELEASE **November 25, 2026**

Gürok Group to Continue Supporting Kütahya's Ancient Heritage, Aizanoi, in 2027

Gürok Group has extended its support for the excavation and restoration works at Aizanoi Ancient City, for which it has served as the main sponsor since 2020, through a newly signed protocol, extending its commitment through 2027. Emphasizing the importance of not only uncovering Aizanoi's cultural treasures but also telling its story to wider audiences, Esin Güral Argat, Vice President of the Board of Gürok Group, said: "Our greatest wish is to see Aizanoi permanently included on the UNESCO World Heritage List. We are proud to have extended our support for Aizanoi into its seventh year."

Through its support for Aizanoi, Gürok Group continues to contribute to preserving Kütahya's cultural identity, strengthening the city's tourism potential, and supporting local development. Having served as the main sponsor of excavation and restoration works at the ancient city, located in Kütahya's Çavdarhisar district, since 2020, Gürok Group has decided to continue its collaboration with the Ministry of Culture and Tourism through a new protocol. The protocol was signed in the presence of Esin Güral Argat, Vice President of the Board of Gürok Group; Barış Başoğlu, Deputy Provincial Director of Culture and Tourism of Kütahya; Dr. Sevgi Gürdal, Director of Kütahya Museum; and Prof. Dr. Gökhan Coşkun, Head of the Aizanoi Ancient City Excavation and faculty member at Kütahya Dumlupınar University (DPÜ).

Dating back 5,000 years and referred to as the "Second Ephesus" during the Roman period, Aizanoi is included on UNESCO's Tentative List of World Heritage Sites. Home to one of Anatolia's best-preserved Temples of Zeus, the world's oldest known commercial exchange, and the only adjacent stadium-theatre complex of its kind in the ancient world, Aizanoi has entered a new phase of restoration with work on the Temple of Zeus commencing this year. Through ongoing initiatives encompassing the theatre and stadium areas, the aim is to transform Aizanoi into a major cultural tourism destination with international recognition.

'Our greatest wish is for Aizanoi to be permanently included on the UNESCO World Heritage List'

Emphasizing the importance of long-term support, **Esin Güral Argat** stated:

"As a group with roots in Kütahya, we see protecting the history, culture, and identity of the city that has shaped who we are as both a responsibility and a duty. Archaeology is a discipline that requires patience, dedication, and time. That is why we believe in the importance of providing continuous support that goes beyond one-off contributions. We are proud to have extended our support for Aizanoi into its seventh year. Our greatest wish is for Aizanoi to be permanently included on the UNESCO World Heritage List. Achieving this

goal requires public institutions, universities, local governments, and the private sector to work hand in hand. Aizanoi's story began thousands of years ago. Carrying this legacy forward for future generations is our shared responsibility."

'At Aizanoi, it is not only the past but also Kütahya's future that is being built'

Speaking about the significance of Aizanoi for Kütahya, **Esin Güral Argat** added:

"Aizanoi carries the memory not only of Kütahya but of Anatolia as a whole. This invaluable treasure, included on UNESCO's Tentative List of World Heritage Sites, has been entrusted to us as the people of Kütahya. Aizanoi holds a very important place in Kütahya's Tourism Master Plan because it is not only the past but also the future of Kütahya that is being built here. Cultural tourism creates a value chain that touches every part of the city's economy, from accommodation and gastronomy to handicrafts and local producers. In this respect, uncovering Aizanoi's cultural treasures is just as important as telling their story accurately and promoting them effectively. With this perspective in mind, we also produced a documentary this year titled 'An Architecture of Eternity', aiming to bring Aizanoi's ancient story to wider audiences."

'One of the strongest assets in cultural tourism'

Barış Başoğlu, Deputy Provincial Director of Culture and Tourism of Kütahya, commented:

"Aizanoi is one of Kütahya's strongest assets in cultural tourism. We would like to thank Gürok Group for its longstanding and uninterrupted support for the excavation and restoration works. Long-term and committed partnerships between the public and private sectors play a decisive role in preserving our cultural heritage and passing it on to future generations. We believe that the restoration works launched at the Temple of Zeus, together with the new building of the Kütahya Archaeology and Mining Museum, will enable Aizanoi to welcome significantly more visitors from Türkiye and around the world."

Visitor interest continues to grow year after year

Visitor interest in Aizanoi continues to increase each year. With its new building, the Kütahya Archaeology and Mining Museum is also presenting the region's rich heritage in a much more comprehensive way. The museum, covering approximately 16,000 square metres, houses around 3,300 items from a collection of 62,701 artefacts. Figurines unearthed at Aizanoi, along with scale models of the Temple of Zeus, Macellum, theatre, and stadium, are among the highlights on display for visitors.

In addition to supporting excavation and restoration works at Aizanoi, Gürok Group continues to contribute to promoting the ancient city. The documentary *"An Architecture of Eternity"*, produced with the sponsorship of Gürok Group to bring the ancient story of a city whose roots date back to the 3rd millennium BC to wider audiences, is available on Gürok Group's YouTube channel.