



## STATEMENT

The International Association of Judges (IAJ) follows with great concern the recent developments in Turkey.

Representing 84 national associations of judges of all continents, the International Association of judges and likewise the European Association of Judges (EAJ) composed by 44 associations in Europe, are organizations consistently apolitical, defending only the Independence of Judiciary and the pursuing of Rule of Law.

In a modern society, the only path to solve political differences must lie in a democratic way, which is provided by the Constitution and Law.

In this sense, a military “coup d'état” is not an acceptable mean to change a legitimate government.

IAJ /EAJ strongly and clearly rejects such forceful attempts. In accordance, responsible actors of such a coup should be held responsible through a fair and impartial ruling.

In recent hours, international media is informing the public around the world that about 3000 judges have been suspended today, the immediate day after the putsch. There was no single evidence reported that even one of these judges was in any way involved in the “coup d'état”.

It is very clear upon universal and agreed common standards that a suspension of a judge, being an important infringement of their constitutionally guaranteed independence, should be only foreseen in case of a concrete suspicion regarding a serious misbehaviour. There are serious and objective doubts if this is the case regarding such a massive number of judges.

IAJ/EAJ has noticed that already in the recent past the government, via the High Council of Judiciary, had exercised a large and unacceptable pressure on judges. Disciplinary procedures and suspensions have been enforced by the Council following decisions which were not in line with government expectations; in these circumstances, a relevant number of judges have been transferred against their will.

IAJ/EAJ is deeply afraid, that the “coup d'état” - which was a military coup and not a coup of the judiciary - is now being exploited to conclude the efforts already taken to remove judges and prosecutors, who are not in line with the government expectations, and to substitute them by loyal followers.

Therefore:

IAJ/EAJ urges the Turkish authorities to limit suspensions of members of the judiciary only to those against whom a concrete suspicion of an involvement in the “coup d'état” occurs and to respect the independence and irremovability of the other judges.

IAJ/EAJ urges also all the international authorities to be alert towards the present situation, expressing our deep and founded alarm about the safety of those judges and their families.

IAJ/EAJ will follow the developments on Turkey situation and urges the international community to closely do the same.