



**Association Européenne des Magistrats
Groupe régional de l'Union Internationale des magistrats**

**European Association of Judges
Regional Group of the International Association of Judges**

The President

M. Christophe REGNARD

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To Mr Bekir BOZDAĞ
Minister of Justice
HCJP President
Konya Yolu No:70
Beşevler / ANKARA
06330
TURKEY

Mister President,

As you will be aware, the EAJ held its meeting in Jerusalem on 21st to 24th May 2016. Shortly before the meeting was due to begin, the organizers were informed by the Turkish Association of Judges (Yarsav) that the High Council had just recalled its delegate's permission, given by the head of the competent chamber of the Council of State, to attend the meeting of the European Association.

The EAJ utterly deplores the decision of the council to recall that permission.

The ability of members of the Judiciary to form, and participate in activities of associations of judges is an important element in securing the independence of the judiciary. This is recognized in

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international texts, such as Art. 25 of the Recommendation 2010/12 of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe and Art. 9 of the UN Basic Principles of the Independence of the Judiciary.

Moreover, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe has recently adopted a Plan of Action on Strengthening Judicial Independence and Impartiality (CM(2016/36). It entrusts the bodies of the Council of Europe and the member states to monitor if the requirements of independent judges and judiciaries are in place in practice. One of the actions which will be monitored is expressed in Action 2.1. of this action plan is: "*Steps should be taken to support the functioning of professional associations of judges in order that they can effectively represent the interest of individual judges and contribute to the openness and transparency of the judiciary.*"

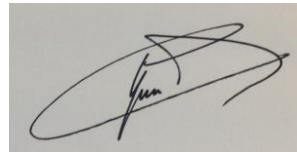
The High Council's action in prohibiting the Turkish delegate from attending the meeting is a wholly unacceptable interference in the right of judges to take part in associations of judges.

The prohibition which was put on the Turkish delegate is even more deplorable due to the fact that it was imposed by a body which should protect and not undermine the independence of the judiciary.

The EAJ therefore calls upon the High Council for its immediate assurance that there will be no such interference in future.

Kindest regards

Christophe REGNARD
President of the EAJ

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Christophe Regnard', is written over a light grey rectangular background.

PS :

This letter was unanimously approved by the delegations of the EAJ at its meeting in Jerusalem.

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