



Judicial Conference of Australia

AUSTRALIAN JUDGES EXPRESS GRAVE CONCERNS ABOUT TURKISH JUDICIARY

**Media release by the President
of the Judicial Conference of Australia
17th July 2016**

The reported removal from duty of about 2750 Turkish judges in the aftermath of the failed coup on 16 July 2016 is deeply troubling, Justice Steven Rares, President of the Judicial Conference of Australia said today.

In democracies, judges can only be removed or suspended from office by following constitutional safeguards that protect their independence from political and other improper outside influences.

It is vital to ensure the rule of law that the political branches of government respect and protect the independence of courts and judges.

Justice Rares said that any attempt to interfere with a judge exercising his or her judicial office only occur by use of transparent procedures in accordance with the due process of law.

There has been no reported suggestion that any Turkish judge was involved in the staging of the attempted coup, let alone as large a number as those affected by yesterday's mass removal from duty. Such an action suggests that judicial independence is under severe threat in Turkey. This threat is consistent with the current Turkish government's actions over the last several months to undermine respect for the independence of that nation's courts and judges, said Justice Rares.

Justice Rares said that the JCA fully supported the stance of the International Association of Judges that any action by Turkish authorities against individual judges in relation to any alleged involvement would only be justified if based on a concrete allegation and the due process of law.

The Judicial Conference of Australia is the professional association of judges and magistrates in Australia.

For further information, contact Christopher Roper, the Secretary of the Judicial Conference of Australia: secretary@jca.asn.au | 0407 419 330