



Istanbul, 27 July 2015

**PRESS STATEMENT CONCERNING ONGOING DETENTION
TURKISH JUDGES ÖZÇELİK AND BAŞER**

Judges for Judges is an independent and non-political Dutch foundation set up by judges to support fellow judges abroad who are experiencing problems whilst executing their professional duties.

We are here now in Istanbul because we are very concerned about the ongoing detention of two Turkish judges Metin Özçelik and Mustafa Başer since April 30th and the 1st of May respectively.

In a society based on the rule of law it is the duty of the government to respect and protect the independence of the judiciary.

But we are alarmed by this apparent serious interference with the work of these judges in politically sensitive cases.

This because there are serious indications that these two judges were arrested and detained as a result of decisions they made while discharging their professional duties rather than on evidence of criminal activity.

We will keep following these cases and we plan to return next month with an international delegation to visit these two judges, meet with their lawyers and hopefully also with a representative of the High Council for Judges and Prosecutors, the HSYK.