

Association of Greek Judges and Prosecutors

Court of First Instance of Athens

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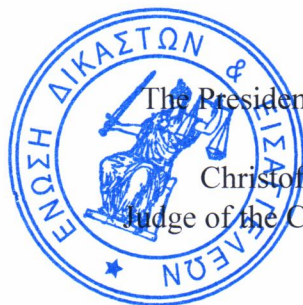
Dear Colleagues,

On Thursday 26 January 2017, Greece's Supreme Court (Areios Pagos) ruled in relation to an extradition request for eight military officers made by the Turkish authorities. Turkey had requested their extradition accusing them of playing a part in a coup attempt in 15 July 2016. In the three judgments handed down by the Supreme Court of Greece, it was held that a possible extradition would put their lives in danger and they would face a real risk of being subjected to torture or degrading and inhuman treatment and on these grounds, the Supreme Court ruled against their extradition.

The principles of priority to human dignity and respect for human rights, both enshrined in the Greek and European law, laid the foundation for the rulings. These judgments of the Supreme Court of Greece are final and are not subject to appeal. After the judgments were handed down, Turkey issued arrest warrants in absentia for the 8 military officers and the Turkish Government made an announcement stating that *“this stance of the Greek judiciary is encouraging impunity of criminals and is violating the rights of the victims of the coup as opposed to international law norms and principles. As a country that has experienced coups in the past, Greece, with this decision has regrettably put itself in a position of a country that provides shelter and protection to putschists. We will continue our efforts for the prosecution of these criminals using all legal remedies against this judgment of the Greek judiciary. The implications on our bilateral relations, our cooperation against terrorism and other common cooperation in bilateral/multilateral matters of this decision,*

which we consider has been taken for political motives, will also be comprehensively evaluated”.

As it is clearly understood, the Turkish Government is challenging directly this final judgment of the Supreme Court of Greece, accusing our Country that is “*encouraging the impunity of criminals*” and is “*providing shelter and protection to putschists*”, whilst, finally, is threatening to impact the international relations of the country. We feel that with this stance, Turkey is trying to apply undue pressure over the Greek judiciary. We kindly request the International Association of Judges to evaluate the situation as it is shaping and to make similar announcements and initiate similar interventions.



The President of the Association
Christoforos Sevastidis
Judge of the Court of First Instance