

**POLA STATEMENT OF CONCERN ON RECENT DEVELOPMENT
IN TURKEY RELATING TO THE RULE OF LAW**

The Presidents of Law Associations of Asia (POLA) during their 27th annual Summit meeting in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, have expressed deep concern over the recent developments in Turkey in the aftermath of the failed coup attempt. A number of judges have been removed from office and even detained. A large number of lawyers have similarly been either detained or prevented from discharging their professional duties and functions.

While POLA is not in a position to comment on the factual aspects of the events that have occurred in Turkey, it is nevertheless deeply concerned that, whatever the circumstances, there should be no undue restraint on the legal profession or the judiciary preventing them from acting independently.

POLA takes note of the UN Basic Principles on the role of lawyers, especially paragraph 16 which says, "Governments shall ensure that lawyers (a) are able to perform all their professional functions without intimidations, hindrance, harassment or improper interference; (b) are able to travel and to consult with their clients freely within their own country and abroad; and (c) shall not suffer, or be threatened with, prosecution or administrative, economic or other sanctions for any action taken in accordance with recognized professional duties, standards and ethics".

Whatever the circumstances, POLA urges the Turkish authorities to follow the UN Basic Principles in letter and spirit because that is the only way the international community can rest assured that the rule of law still prevails in Turkey.

The POLA SUMMIT in Ulaanbaatar was attended by 12 Bar associations from Asia Pacific, as well as the Presidents of the International Bar Association, LAWASIA and Inter-Pacific Bar Association.

21-22nd of July
POLA SUMMIT 2016