

14 July 2017**One year after failed military coup,
academic freedom in Turkish universities severely curtailed**

One year after the attempted overthrow in Turkey, the German Rectors' Conference (HRK) views academic freedom in that country as severely curtailed. Just this week, there were renewed reports in the media of the arrest of numerous members of Turkish universities. The HRK protests strongly against this development, and stands in solidarity with the victims of state repression in Turkey.

Analyses by the international network Scholars at Risk underline the situation of the Turkish higher education sector. According to those analyses, since July last year 15 higher education institutions have been closed, and almost 5,300 academic personnel have been sacked by decree and banned for life from employment in the public service. Furthermore, 1,200 administrative personnel have been sacked. Scholars at Risk also reports on the arrest of at least 889 members of universities in the last twelve months.

HRK President Prof Dr Horst Hippler expressed his deep concern at the state's repression of members of the Turkish higher education sector. "The nature and extent of the acts of government aggression against academics, students and other university members suggest the systematic disregard of fundamental principles of the rule of law," Hippler declared. "I emphatically call upon Turkey to guarantee the full measure of academic freedom," the HRK President said. "The criminal prosecutions arising from the attempted coup must not be used as an instrument to restrict academic freedom."