Dear Prime Minister Erdoğan,

As President of the German Medical Association I am writing to express my grave concern about the disproportionate use of force, including excessive violence and chemical gases, against civilian protesters in Istanbul and other cities throughout Turkey.

We are particularly concerned about reports of people being prevented from accessing medical facilities by direct attacks and the disruption of temporary clinics. Our colleagues in Turkey have also informed us about the detention of healthcare workers attending to injured protesters. This is utterly unacceptable and deeply worrying.

Not only does the denial of medical assistance to injured protesters have serious humanitarian implications, targeting medical personnel who come to their aid also violates the international principle of medical neutrality as laid down in the Geneva Convention and medical ethics and human rights law. The primary obligation of physicians is to their patients, and they cannot be prosecuted for carrying out their work according to the principles of their profession.

The German Medical Association therefore calls upon your government to end the targeting of healthcare personnel and urges you to ensure uninterrupted access to adequate medical facilities for the injured.

Yours sincerely,

Prof. Dr Frank Ulrich Montgomery
President