

# Taksim Solidarity press release, June 5, 2013

To the Government of the Republic of Turkey and the Public

Citizens have been expressing their democratic outrage in Taksim Istanbul and all around the country against the insensitivity of the government for the public concern about the de-facto destruction of the Taksim Gezi Park that took place around 10 PM on May 27th.

We share the pain of Abdullah Comert's and Mehmet Ayvalitas's families and wish to extend our get-well wishes to thousands of wounded citizens.

Unfortunately, the government insists on its violent, repressive and prohibitionist policies against the public's wish to express its democratic and human rights based demands. We would like it to be known that we are making an extreme effort to reach a social climate where no one is hurt, tensions are resolved and democratic demands can be expressed.

For these reasons, as Taksim Resistance, we are waiting for the government to take substantive steps towards the realization of the demands below.

## WE DEMAND THAT:

- Gezi Park should remain a park. There should be no construction on the park under the name of TopcuKislasi or under any other name. An official statement should be made announcing the cancellation of the project. The attempts at the demolition of Ataturk KulturMerkezi should be stopped.
- Starting with the Governors and Chief of Police of Istanbul, Ankara and Hatay, all responsible persons who have stood in the way of people's right of expression in

the resistance at Taksim and other places; persons who ordered the use of violence; and persons who supervised and carried out these orders should be removed from office. The use of tear gas bombs and similar devices should be banned.

- The citizens who have been detained all around the country for supporting the resistance should be freed immediately. There should be a statement announcing that no further investigation will be pursued against these individuals.
- The prohibition and de-facto obstruction of meetings, protests and demonstrations in our squares and public places should end, starting with Taksim and Kiziliay Squares, the sights of May 1st celebrations. Barriers to freedom of expression should be lifted.

Furthermore, we think that the authorities should understand the content, spirit, hopes and demands of the reaction that came from the streets and all kinds of public places since May 27th, 10 PM. Trying to explain away what happened by referring to “marginality” would be the same as ignoring these events. We can see that citizens interpret the intervention in Gezi Park, which symbolizes the government’s general thinking, as “an intervention in their beliefs and lifestyles and a sign of condescension,” eliciting a cry of “we are here and we have demands” and a public outrage from all kinds of people, whether they be women, men, young or old.

We would like the ruling authorities to realize that the reaction of the citizens is also about the Proposed Law on The Protection of Nature and Biodiversity that came into the National Assembly’s agenda and the projects that plunder our ecological riches, starting with the third airport in Istanbul, the third bridge over The Bosphorus, the construction on AOC, and the hydro-electric power plants (HEPP). The reaction is also an expression of “the wish for peace, and resistance to the war politics being played in our country and

in the region; the sensitivities of Alevi citizens; the rightful demands of the victims of urban transformation projects; the voices raised against the conservative male politics that control women's bodies; the resistance to the coercion against universities, the judicial branch and artists; the demands of all workers, starting with the employees of Turkish Airlines, against the appropriation of their rights; the struggle against discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity; and the demands for the clearing of the way for citizen's right of access to education and healthcare."

TAKSIM RESISTANCE