



# Between rock and hard place: Local leaders dealing with citizen protests against national policies

Murat Daoudov, Lecturer at Marmara University, Faculty of Political Science, Istanbul President of Middle East Development Network

NALAS General Assembly Meeting

Sarajevo/BiH / 10 April 2014

Session 2: Citizens' stocktaking in good governance



### Mayors with government and against protests (hard stance)

- Madrid Mayor wants city centre 'no protest' zone (27 Mar 2014)
- Ana Botella, mayor of Spain's capital city, wants to "regulate" the right to hold public demonstrations in the centre of Madrid in the wake of police clashes with protesters after last weekend's "March for Dignity".
- "The right to demonstrate can and must be regulated," she stated... Botella, of the right-wing PP (Popular Party) which also controls Spain's national government...



## Mayors with government and against protests (hard stance)

- Ankara Mayor vows to build 'vandalism museum' to exhibit damage inflicted by Gezi protesters (July 13, 2013)
- Ankara Mayor has said in a statement that a 'vandalism museum' will be built to exhibit the damage caused to public property by Gezi protesters.
- Gökçek had stirred much debate when he launched hashtag wars on Twitter against media outlets BBC and CNN, accusing them of conspiracy and misleading reports. He continued his Gezi-bashing crusade by announcing his plan to build the museum and describing the protests as "terror events."

#### Ankara Mayor vows to build 'vandalism museum' to exhibit damage inflicted by Gezi protesters



Ankara Mayor has said in a statment that a 'vandalism museum' will be built to exhibit the damage caused to public property by Gezi protesters.

### Mayors between «soft» and «absent» approach

- No shopping mall or hotel at Gezi Park, says Istanbul mayor (June 8, 2013)
- Kadir Topbaş emphasizes that plans to build replica Ottoman barracks will go ahead and be redesigned as a museum.
- Istanbul mayor Kadir Topbaş gave an interview expressing concern that the police's actions would jeopardise Istanbul's bid to host the 2020 Summer Olympics, (Wikipedia)
- Note: While Mayor was mainly absent from the stages, the Governor of Istanbul (representative of the central government)played the role of tempering the protesters.

# No shopping mall or hotel at Gezi Park, says Istanbul mayor

Kadir Topbaş emphasizes that plans to build replica Ottoman barracks will go ahead and be redesigned as a museum

BY TIMES OF ISRAEL STAFF AND AP June 8, 2013, 6:40 pm |



NEWSROOM

urkey will not build a shopping mall or hotels at Taksim's Gezi
Park, said Istanbul mayor Kadir Topbaş on Saturday, in a bid to
further ease tensions with protesters after more than 10 days
of mass demonstrations across the country.

# Mayors standing with protesters against government

- Opposition's candidate for Istanbul (former mayor of Şişli district of Istanbul) Mustafa Sarıgül
- (Note: Main opposition CHP had initially supported construction on the Gezi-park project in the municipal council)
- Mustafa Sarigül: The spirit of Gezi supports me (8. 10.2013). He reacted to the criticism that he did not support enough the Gezi protest movement. He said that from the very first ay of the protests he was present at the square, and that they undertook mission as municipality team. He declared that he supported Gezi protests from behind the scenes.





# Mayors going in between: active neutral stance

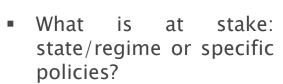
#### The Arab Spring: massive protests

- Mayor of Lab-wa-Mleeh (Jordan) Atef Rawahneh: Neutral and active approach. Stand by citizen against policies but not against the state.
- To channel the protests and anger into constructive ways: local consultation committees established with local community and religious leaders, youth, civil society.
- Caring for image of the community: Mayor pays from his pocket the reparation of the municipal hall, out of care for the image of the community.





# Between rock and hard place: Local leaders dealing with citizen protests against national policies



- Who is to blame: national or local policies/politics?
- Protests as politics:
   Party affiliation and political alliances

