



31.5.2013

Press Release

Public Announcement by Europa Nostra Turkey about the Taksim Gezi Park

The announcement of the plans to reconstruct the Taksim (Topçu) Military Barracks, which was demolished in 1940, with the possibility of housing a multi-functional center including shopping mall, five star hotel and residence, within Taksim Gezi Park, a public open space in Istanbul, have raised the concerns of different segments of society and the experts. The protests that have been going on in Gezi Park and in many other locations and cities in Turkey have attested the intensity of social concern once more. Unplanned demolitions on the north of the park for widening the road have jolted the society and the sensibility of many institutions and responsive individuals is elevated.

The Society of Europa Nostra Turkey, together with ICOMOS Turkey, have expressed its concerns on the development plans in and around Taksim by publishing a joint press release on February 3, 2012. Furthermore, the association have appealed on February 8, 2012 to Istanbul No 2 Regional Commission on the Conservation of Cultural Property and petitioned for the registration of Gezi Park and Taksim Square on the national inventories, by considering its place in the history of Republican Period and in the social memory, yet the commission did not respond positively.

Europa Nostra Turkey proclaims its argument once more, pleading that the Taksim Military Barracks project and new development plans should be cancelled, as it has been stated many times by the experts that there is no any historical necessity for the reconstruction of Taksim Military Barracks that will lead to the loss of public space characteristics of Gezi Park and advocates the essentiality of the experts managed planning process, through internationally accepted scientific, transparent, participatory planning and design approaches, if there is a need for re-planning the park, and calls out the concerned authorities and institutions for the fulfillment of these issues.

For the information of the press and the public.

Respectfully,

The Society of Europa Nostra Turkey Executive Committee

Attachments:

1. Press Release, dated February 3, 2012
2. Petition for registration of Gezi Park and Taksim Square, February 8, 2012