



Turkey's leader offered protesters concessions early Friday, officials and protesters said, in a step that may help quiet the demonstrations that have swept the country for two weeks.

Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan told a delegation of protesters in a closed-door meeting in Ankara that he would be willing to soften his approach to redevelopment in Istanbul's central Gezi Park, the issue that originally sparked demonstrations.

Erdogan said that he will not press ahead with razing the park while a court case to stop the construction is pending, saying that if he wins the court case, he will put the matter to a referendum in Istanbul, according to a spokesman and a member of an umbrella group for protesters.

Protesters hailed the move as a positive step hours after Erdogan had warned that his patience for the demonstrations was running out.

"The prime minister said that if the results of the public vote turned out in a way which would leave this area as a park, they will abide by it," Tayfun Kahraman, a member of Taksim Solidarity, the umbrella protest group told reporters after the meeting, Reuters reported.

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