



Ms. Rezan Zuğurli

Co-Mayor of Lice

Province: *Diyarbakır*
Population of Lice: 25K

*Has been in Van T Type
 Prison since August 2017
 with her 13-m-old baby*

Ms. Zuğurli was born in 1988 in Lice, Diyarbakır. She came to recognize difficulties of being part of struggle for Kurdish collective rights during early ages because Zuğurli Family has played a prominent role within the Kurdish liberation movement and suffered considerably. After completing high school, Ms. Zuğurli started to work in a local TV station in 2010. She was enrolled to Radio and Television Department

in Dicle University the year after. While Ms. Zuğurli was taking courses at the university, she also continued to be part of the struggle for gender equality. She started to work at Kardelen Women's House that was functioning as a shelter for women subjected to violence as well as providing vocational courses for women, in corporation with the Bağlar Municipality in Diyarbakır. In 2012, she was arrested on the ground that she participated into a protest and sentenced to 5-year imprisonment. She was released after spending 13 months in prison because the Supreme Court decreased the sentence to 4 years and postponed execution of punishment. Ms. Zuğurli continued her efforts for gender equality after the release. Ms. Zuğurli was nominated as a co-mayor candidate by majority of local delegates of the party in Lice and got 90 percent popular vote in local elections that ranked as the highest in 2014 Municipal Elections. She has also become the youngest mayor in Turkey. Nevertheless, she was dismissed from mayoral office and the government appointed a state commissioner to Lice Municipality in February 2017. She was arrested in August 2017 and put into Diyarbakır Prison with her 13 month-old baby. Later in September, she was exiled to Van T Type Prison that is 7 hours away from Diyarbakır where her family lives.



Ms. Dilek Hatipoğlu

Co-Mayor of Hakkari

Province: Hakkari
Population of Hakkari:
275K

*Has been in Sincan
Women's Prison since*

Ms. Hatipoğlu was born in 1975 in Varto, Muş. She completed her education in Adana. Following her graduation from the Business Administration Department, she started to work as a teacher. She was elected as the first female mayor of Hakkari after getting 66 percent popular vote in the municipal election in 2014. After the inauguration, Ms.

Hatipoğlu focused on reinvigorating municipal services which aimed at provision of gender equality. After the Turkish government ended the peace process following the HDP's electoral victory in June 2015, re-escalation of the armed conflict led to serious challenges for Hakkari Municipality in terms of preventing it from functioning effectively. After the AKP government resorted to security-minded policies about the Kurdish question, the Kurdish people in Turkey started to voice their demands for self-governance more loudly. In 14th of August, 2015, People's Assemblies organized a public statement demanding self-governance in Hakkari. Ms. Hatipoğlu also attended this public statement and immediately arrested. Since August 2015, namely for more than 2 years, Ms. Hatipoğlu has been imprisoned in Ankara Sincan Women's Prison. In trial held on 25th of March, 2016, Ms. Hatipoğlu was sentenced to 15-years of imprisonment because of demanding self-governance. Ms. Hatipoğlu is married and has 2 kids.



Ms. Diba Keskin

Co-Mayor of Erciş

Province: Van
Population of Erciş:
172K

*Has been in Sincan
 Women's Prison since
 October 2015*

Ms. Keskin was born in Malazgirt in 1973. Her father was an imam and she spent 15 years in Erciş before she was nominated as a candidate for co-mayorship in Erciş by local delegates. Ms. Keskin started to activism in the early 1990s when human rights violations targeting Kurdish populations in Turkey was at peak point. While thousands of Kurdish politicians and grassroots activists were disappeared by Turkish security forces in the 1990s, Ms. Keskin fearlessly joined into Kurdish rights campaigns as an organizer and continued to work within various political parties for 20 years. In addition to her political work, Ms. Keskin also worked a coordinator in various NGOs and struggled for adoption of UN Agenda 21 by the NGOs in Van province, specifically within the Women's Assembly. In 2014 municipal elections, Ms. Keskin was elected as co-mayor of Erciş by 49,5 percent popular vote. Ms. Keskin has been the first female mayor of Erciş. Increasing participation of women into workforce was a priority for Ms. Keskin and that is why she initiated creating a workshop called Buka Barane, where women could get new job skills as well as start working at manufacturing. Ms. Keskin was planning to initiate projects that would increase tourism potential of the city. She joined various international meetings for this purpose but crack down on Kurdish municipalities in 2016 prevented her from carrying out projects in mind. Ministry of Interior appointed a state commissioner to Erciş Municipality on 11th of September, 2015. Ms. Keskin was detained immediately after and she was arrested over allegations of "disrupting the unity and territorial integrity of the state" because she had participated a public statement that raised locals' demands for self-governance. In March 2017, Ms. Keskin was sentenced to 13 years and 9 months imprisonment. Ms. Keskin has been in Sincan Women's Prison for more than 2 years. Ms. Keskin is married and mother of 4.



Mr. Nurullah Çiftçi

Co-Mayor of Hakkari

Province: Hakkari
Population of Hakkari:
275K

*Has been in Kırıkkale F
 Type Prison since August
 2015*

After being elected as a co-mayor with 66 percent popular vote, Mr. Çiftçi focused on two main issues. The first was long lasting infrastructural problems of the city that started to be resolved after Mr. Çiftçi and Ms. Hatipoğlu were elected in 2014. The second crucial focus of Mr. Çiftçi was advocacy for peace. Together with Beşiktaş Municipality from Istanbul, two municipalities cooperated to realize the project called “Let’s

Meet in Hakkari for Peace” that created a widespread awareness for peace. The project brought 200 artists together as well as deepened the corporation between two municipalities in order to highlight the need for resolution of the Kurdish question in Turkey. The end of peace process and re-escalation of armed conflicts in 2015 influenced activities and services of Hakkari Municipality negatively. After the Turkish government ended negotiations and resorted to war, the Kurdish people started to raise demands for self-governance. Mr. Çiftçi also participated a public statement organized by People’s Assemblies on 14th of August, 2015, after which he was arrested. Following appointment of a state commissioner to Hakkari Municipality on 11th of September, 2015, Mr. Çiftçi was also officially unseated from mayorship. For more than two years, Mr. Çiftçi has been imprisoned Kırıkkale F Type Prison. Mr. Çiftçi was sentenced to 15-year imprisonment during the trial held on 25th of March, 2016.



Mr. Rahmi Çelik

Co-Mayor of Bulanık

Province: Muş
Population of Bulanık:
83K

*Has been in Rize L Type
 Prison since February
 2016*

Mr. Çelik was born in 1968, in Muş and completed his elementary education in his village. Participation of Mr. Çelik into politics was mostly related with what his family went through in the 1990s. In 1994, his family was severely affected from forced evacuation of villages, raids and human rights violations committed by the Turkish security forces.

Thereafter, Mr. Çiftçi started to struggle for collective Kurdish rights in the 1990s within HADEP, that was the legal political party closed down by Turkish authorities later on. In following years, he became regional executive of the party as an organizer. In 2014, Mr. Çelik was elected by party delegates as a co-mayor candidate with Ms. Figen Yaşar and they were elected as mayors with 48 percent popular vote. Mr. Çelik had a prominent role in institutionalization of transparency and accountability principles in Bulanık Municipality. Mr. Çelik and Ms. Yaşar introduced a new practice that was holding municipal tenders open to public. Mr. Çelik also participated and initiated various peaceful demonstrations against the war when the peace process was at stake in 2015. Mr. Çelik was arrested after he participated to a public statement on 14th of August, 2015, that demanded self-governance for people of Bulanık. He is accused of “disrupting the unity and territorial integrity of the state” and imprisoned on 11th of February, 2016. For more than 1,5 years, he has been imprisoned in Rize L Type Prison that is 380 KMs away from Bulanık where his family lives. Mr. Çelik is married and father of 9.



Ms. Figen Yaşar

Co-Mayor of Bulanık

Province: Muş
Population of Bulanık:
83K

*Has been in Rize L Type
Prison since February
2016*

Ms. Yaşar was born in 1970 in Bulanık. She completed her elementary and high school education in Bulanık and enrolled to Department of Fine Arts at Erzurum Atatürk University in 1990. She started her political activities during early years of her university education. Unfortunately, she could not graduate from university due to heavy repression targeting the Kurdish and leftist students in Erzurum and thus Ms. Yaşar had to move to Van city. Then she worked as a human

rights journalist for 3 years in various national newspapers during the peak years of the armed conflict in the Kurdish region of Turkey. In following years, Ms. Yaşar started to work in women's branch of the political parties advocating the Kurdish cause. After spending about 20 years within the struggle for gender equality at grassroots level as well as with advocating the Kurdish rights, she became co-mayor of Bulanık with 48 percent popular vote in 2014. Following her taking the office, Ms. Yaşar strived for empowerment of women and increasing participation of women in economic life. Besides she worked studiously in developing effective campaigns to stop violence against women and helping women to have access to women's health trainings. Ms. Yaşar was arrested on 23rd of April, 2016 with accusations of "being member of a terrorist organization" and "forming neighborhood and village commissions". Ms. Yaşar has been in Bayburt Prison since April 2016. When a state commissioner was appointed to Bulanık Municipality, Ms. Yaşar was in prison and thus her earned title via democratic elections was taken away. Ms. Yaşar is married and mother of three.



Ms. Zeynep Şipçik

Co-Mayor of Dargeçit

Province: Mardin
Population of Dargeçit:
27K

*Has been in Sincan
 Women's Prison since
 March 2016*

Ms. Şipçik was born in Diyarbakır in 1984. After completing high school in Diyarbakır, she was enrolled to Sociology Department at Van Yüzüncü Yıl University. Ms. Şipçik became active in women's liberation struggle since the early years of her undergraduate years. She graduated from collage in 2010 and continued to work within the Democratic Free Women's Movement (DOKH) that was the umbrella grassroots movement bringing various women's organization

together. On the other hand, she begun to work as a coordinator in Peljin Women's Center established by Derik Municipality. In that 4-year period, she became of one the prominent figures of women's right struggle because Ms. Şipçik participated various conferences, awareness trainings and panels about the gender equality across the Kurdish region. Moreover, she was also involved in projects initiated by grassroots organizations aiming at halting assimilation of Kurds. On this vein, Ms. Şipçik thought Kurdish language for 7 years on voluntary basis. Ms. Şipçik was elected as co-mayor of Dargeçit with 60 percent popular vote in 2014. After the Turkish government decided to end the peace talks with the Kurdish Movement in 2015, Dargeçit became one of districts that seriously affected from the re-escalation. As a result of armed clashes took place within the urban center of Dargeçit, about a hundred houses and shops were either seriously damaged or destructed. Ms. Şipçik used all means available for encountering basic needs of the local people affected from the armed conflict. However, Ms. Şipçik was arrested on 31st of March, 2016, on the grounds that she has been "member of a terrorist organization". When she was in prison, the district governor was appointed as state commissioner to Dargeçit Municipality on 11th of September, 2016, thus, Ms. Şipçik officially dismissed from mayoral office as well.



Mr. Mehmet Muhdi Aslan

Co-Mayor of Dargeçit

Province: Mardin
Population of Dargeçit:
27K

*Has been in Şanlıurfa T
 Type Prison since
 September 2016*

Mr. Aslan was born in Kızıltepe district of Mardin province in 1955. He was arrested when he was 25 year-old, following the military coup in 1980 after which the junta committed gross human rights violations for years. He was imprisoned for 10 years in that period. The court acquitted Mr. Aslan of all accusations after 10 years of imprisonment. He continued his political activities after the release. He became provincial

chair of legal pro-Kurdish party in Mardin during 1991-94. Nevertheless, he had to migrate to Izmir, a metropolitan city located in the west of Turkey, due to heavy pressure by the security forces. Mr. Aslan continued his political activities in Izmir as well and worked as a party executive during 1994-2004. Mr. Aslan was elected as a co-mayor of Idil with Ms. Nevin Girasun by gaining 79 percent popular vote in 2014 municipal elections. Idil urban center was heavily affected from armed conflicts which started after the Turkish government ended peace talks with the Kurdish movement. In January and February 2016, armed conflicts, which lasted 45 days, caused total destruction of 120 buildings while leaving 1200 buildings damaged. Thousands of people in Idil were forced to migrate by the Turkish security forces with round-the-clock curfews. Mr. Aslan put a serious effort in order to supply the needs of people displaced and left homeless. On 21st of September, 2016, the mayorship of Mr. Aslan was officially ended after appointment of a state commissioner to Idil Municipality. Mr. Aslan was detained and arrested in following days with accusation of "being member of a terrorist organization". Mr. Aslan has been incarcerated in Şanlıurfa T Type Prison since then. Mr. Aslan is married and father of five.



Ms. Nevin Oyman Girasun

Co-Mayor of İdil

Province: Şırnak
Population of İdil: 73K

*Has been in Şanlıurfa T
Type Prison since August
2016*

Ms. Girasun was born in Malatya. Her family is originally from Cizre that has been one of the strongholds of the Kurdish movement for decades. After completing her education before university in Malatya, Ms. Girasun was moved to Şırnak in 2005 in order to continue her education in the Accounting Department at Şırnak University. She worked in private sector of 7 years before being a co-mayor candidate in İdil district of Şırnak. Ms. Girasun and Mr. Muhdi Aslan were elected as co-mayors with 78 percent popular vote in 2014 local elections. Unfortunately, İdil urban center was heavily affected from armed conflicts which started after the Turkish government ended peace talks with the Kurdish movement. In January and February 2016, armed conflicts, which lasted 45 days, caused total destruction of 120 buildings while leaving 1200 buildings damaged. Thousands of people in İdil were forced to migrate by the Turkish security forces with round-the-clock curfews. Mr. Aslan put a serious effort in order to supply the needs of people displaced and left homeless. Ms. Girasun was detained on 15th of August, then arrested on 28th of August, 2016. She has been incarcerated in Şanlıurfa T Type Prison for more than a year. Ms. Girasun is married and has one child.



Ms. Zilan Aldatmaz

Co-Mayor of Saray

Province: Van
Population of Saray: 22K

Has been in Elazığ E Type Prison since October 2016

Ms. Aldatmaz was born in Saray district of Van. After completing high school in Van, she was enrolled to Political Science and Public Administration Department at Kocaeli University in 2006. Ms. Aldatmaz was arrested due to her political activities when she was a university student and imprisoned for a while in 2009. She continued to be part of youth branch of Peace and Democracy Party after she was released. Following her graduation in 2011, Ms. Aldatmaz studiously worked as a coordinator to increase participation of women and youth into politics and the struggle for gender equality. After Ms. Aldatmaz was chosen as a candidate by local delegates, she got 69 percent popular vote in 2014 municipal election. In a short period time, Ms. Aldatmaz initiated crucial projects for the people of Saray. A campaign that aimed at increasing public awareness on women's health, specifically for women in rural areas and opening daycare centers for women in urban region of Saray were two important projects realized. Moreover, Ms. Aldatmaz also started a new campaign that would increase tourism potential of Saray unfortunately could not be finalized because co-mayors of Saray were detained. Ms. Aldatmaz was arrested on 30th of September, 2016. She is currently held in Elazığ T Type Prison where she was also subjected to violence by prison guards in August 2017. As her lawyer, Mr. Resul Aslan announced on 10th of August, 2017 that one of the fingers of Ms. Aldatmaz was broken due to the torture by the guards.



Mr. Bekir Kaya

Co-Mayor of Van

Province: Van
Population of Van: 1.1 M

*Has been in Silivri F Type
 Prison since November
 2016*

Mr. Kaya was born in 1977 in Ağrı. He graduated from Faculty of Law at Dicle University in 1999. Mr. Kaya started to work as a lawyer in Van in 2001 where he was also elected as a deputy chair at Van Bar Association. One of the main issues Mr. Kaya focused on was litigation of legal cases opened by ten thousands of Kurdish families who were forced to migrate from their villages as a result of counterinsurgency measures by the Turkish security forces. In 2009, Mr. Kaya was elected as the mayor of Van with 53,5 popular vote. Just after initiating crucial infrastructural projects needed by the people of Van city, Mr. Kaya was arrested over allegations of “being member of terrorist organization” due to his peaceful political activities and spent 9 months in prison, in 2013. The lawsuit continued after his release and judges asked for 15-year prison sentence. Mr. Kaya was found not guilty by the Supreme Court belatedly in June 2017. Bekir Kaya continued his mayoral activities after being released from prison in 2013, and re-elected in 2014 local elections with 53.1 percent popular vote. Mr. Kaya was also representing Van Metropolitan Municipality as World Council member of United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG). Mr. Kaya is married and father of 1.



Ms. Gültan Kışanak

Co-Mayor of Diyarbakır

Province: Diyarbakır
Population: 1.8 M

Has been in Koceli F Type Prison since October 2016

Gültan Kışanak was born in Elazığ, in 1961. She started her political activities during high school years in the 1970s, while the Kurds were not being recognized as a distinct ethno-national group in Turkey. She enrolled at Education Faculty of Dicle University but had to drop because of her imprisonment during the military junta period (1980-83). She was

incarcerated for 2.5 years in Diyarbakir Military Prison No 5, known as one of the most notorious prisons ever existed in the world. After she was released, she studied Journalism and Public Relations at Ege University in Izmir. Afterwards, she worked in a variety of positions ranging from news correspondent to editor in chief in several newspapers including Yeni Ülke and Özgür Gündem, distributed country-wide. She was one of pioneering figures in Women's Liberation Movement in the 1990s. Kurdish parties were allowed by central government to take part in municipal elections by 1999. Thus she started to work as a Social Services advisor in Bağlar district, the poorest area in Diyarbakir and coordinated a number of social projects towards empowerment of women and the poor. She successfully run for parliament elections as an independent candidate backed by pro-Kurdish party in 2007 and served as an MP in national assembly for two terms. She was the co-chair of the party between 2009-14 until she was nominated for the municipality elections in 2014 when she was elected as the co-mayor of Amed/Diyarbakir together with Mr. Firat Anli. Ms. Kisanak was also representing Diyarbakır Metropolitan Municipality as an Executive Bureau member of United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG). Moreover, Ms. Kisanak was elected co-chair of Union of Southeastern Anatolia Region Municipalities (GABB) that was an officially recognized union bringing municipalities in the Kurdish region together. Ms. Kışanak was detained in November 2016 and has been in Kocaeli F Type Prison since then. A state commissioner was appointed to the municipality shortly after Ms. Kışanak was arrested. She is married and mother of 1.



Mr. Hüseyin Kılıç

Co-Mayor of Eruh

Province: Siirt
Population: 20K

*Has been in Siirt E Type
Prison since November
2016*

Mr. Kılıç was born in 1981 in Eruh. He completed his education in Eruh during a period when the armed conflict in Kurdish region, specifically in Eruh peaked. Mr. Kılıç was grown up in an environment where gross human rights violations committed by Turkish security forces continued non-stop from 1984 to 1999. His motivation to be part of legal political parties was largely shaped by urgent need for peace in Eruh. Therefore, he actively worked and chaired local branch of Peace and Democracy Party (BDP) before he was elected as a co-mayor. Mr. Kılıç was elected as a co-mayor with Ms. Eda Kilis after getting 53 percent popular vote in 2014 municipal elections. In addition to his ceaseless efforts in Eruh for peaceful resolution of Kurdish question, Mr. Kılıç also focused on ecological issues and infrastructural problems of the town before he was dismissed from office. Mr. Kılıç was detained in August 2015 on grounds that he participated a public statement demanding self-governance and subjected to house arrest. Mr. Kılıç was dismissed from the office by Ministry of Interior in September 2015. Afterwards, Mr. Kılıç was arrested again on 7th of November, 2016 and sent to Siirt Prison. He has been incarcerated for 11 months. Mr. Kılıç is married and father of 5.



Ms. Sabite Ekinçi

Co-Mayor of Varto

Province: Muş
Population: 32K

Has been in Muş E Type Prison since November 2016

Ms. Ekinçi was born in Varto, in 1970. After completing high school in Varto, she was enrolled to Department of Education at Gazi University in Ankara. Following her graduation, she became a teacher and served in various cities of Turkey for 18 years. During this period, Ms. Ekinçi also got professional training in visual arts and cinema. She became a director and shot 3 movies and documentaries which have focused on gender-based inequalities. One of her documentaries, “Everything is White” won the award for the best documentary by the 48th International Antalya Golden Orange Film Festival. While continuing her career as a director, Ms. Ekinçi was always part of a political struggle that has aimed at gender equality and recognition of collective rights of the Kurds in Turkey. She was elected as co-mayor of Varto in 2014 municipal elections with 63 percent popular vote. After being a co-mayor, she worked studiously to empower women and introduced a new policy in Varto that substantially increased locals’ participation and access to cultural activities. Implementation of these progressive policies were disrupted when armed conflicts started within the urban area of Varto in August 2015 which was followed by locals’ public statement for demanding self-governance. Ms. Ekinçi was arrested in November 2016 over allegations of “being member of a terrorist organization” and taken to Muş E Type Prison. Ms. Ekinçi as an elected co-mayor was also dismissed from the mayoral office, a state commissioner was appointed to the municipality shortly after her arrest. Ms. Ekinçi is married and mother of two children.



Mr. Tuncer Bakırhan

Co-Mayor of Siirt

Province: Siirt
Population: 320K

*Has been in Bolu F Type
Prison since November
2016*

Mr. Bakırhan was born in 1970, in Kars province. After completing high school, he was enrolled to Department of Economics at Uludağ University. Mr. Bakırhan started political activism during the early 1990s in youth branch of HADEP, the legal political party struggled for recognition of the Kurdish rights in Turkey. He worked as the chair of provincial branch of the HADEP and also as an executive committee member. He also served as the chair of the party. Mr. Bakırhan was arrested and incarcerated for 1.5 years in prison due to the KCK operations (2011-13) during which thousands of party members were arrested over allegations of “being member of a terrorist organization”. Like others, Mr. Bakırhan was released when governments’ suppression on the Kurdish politicians decreased. Mr. Bakırhan was elected as co-mayor of Siirt with 49 percent popular vote in 2014 municipal elections. He was arrested on 11th of November, 2016 without any credible evidence as it had happened before. Mr. Bakırhan has been incarcerated in Bolu F Type Prison, that is a thousand kilometre away from his family. Moreover, Mr. Bakırhan was elected co-chair of Union of Southeastern Anatolia Region Municipalities (GABB) that was an officially recognized union bringing municipalities in the Kurdish region together. Mr. Bakırhan speaks Kurdish, Turkish and English. He is married and father of two.



Ms. Nurhayat Altun

Co-Mayor of Tunceli / Dersim

Province: Tunceli
Population: 86K

*Has been in Kocaeli F
Type Prison since
November 2016*

Ms. Altun has been part of the struggle for the Kurdish rights and gender equality in Turkey since her youth. She worked in various legal political parties continuously, most of which were closed down by the Turkish government. Before she was elected as co-mayor of Tunceli, she had chance to have a lot experience by working at Diyarbakır Metropolitan Municipality as a deputy mayor. Ms. Altun has been one of the pioneering figures in terms of shaping local democracy

perspective of her party. Ms. Altun was elected as a co-mayor with 42 percent popular vote in 2014 municipal elections. In corporation with NGOs in Tunceli, she initiated various projects that aimed at empowering women via increasing their participation into decision-making processes. Ms. Altun also represented her party within the delegation from Turkey at the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe. Ms. Altun was officially dismissed from mayoral office when a state commissioner was appointed to Tunceli Municipality on 17th of November, 2016. With the other co-mayor, Mr. Mehmet Ali Bul, she was arrested at the same day and sent to Kocaeli F Type Prison. This prison is approximately a thousand kilometres away from her hometown that causes serious problems for Ms. Altun to communicate with her lawyers and family members effectively. According to the indictment, prosecutors asks 22.5 years of prison sentence for Ms. Altun due to her mayoral activities.



Mr. Mehmet Ali Bul

Co-Mayor of Tunceli / Dersim

Province: Tunceli
Population: 86K

*Has been in Kocaeli F
Type Prison since
November 2016*

Mr. Bul was born in 1967, in Tunceli. After completing his education in vocational high school in 1981, he started to work in Saudi Arabia and turned back to the country where became a public employee at Directorate of Rural Services in 1992. His studious efforts to contribute poorly developed infrastructure of the city were appreciated by local people. On the other hand, Mr. Bul continued to be an active member of trade unions and advocated rights of workers. For many years, he also served as an executive member of the Construction Workers Trade Union of Turkey (YOL-IS). He also served as founding provincial chair of Peace and Democracy Party (BDP) in Tunceli. Mr. Bul was already quite a popular local figure in Tunceli before he was elected as a co-mayor with 42 percent popular vote in 2014 municipal elections. Having valuable experience about infrastructural problems persisting in Tunceli, Mr. Bul initiated a bunch of projects that would finally offer sustainable solutions. Mr. Bul was officially dismissed from mayoral office when a state commissioner was appointed to Tunceli Municipality on 17th of November, 2016. With the other co-mayor, Ms. Nurhayat Altun, he was arrested at the same day and sent to Kocaeli F Type Prison. Over allegations of “being member of a terrorist organization”, judges sentenced Mr. Bul to 8 years 9 month imprisonment during the trial held on 29/03/2017 at Tunceli Court of Serious Crimes No.1.



Mr. Hüseyin Olan

Co-Mayor of Bitlis

Province: Bitlis
Population: 342K

*Has been in Bitlis E Type
Prison since November
2016*

Mr. Olan was born in 1959, in Bitlis. After finishing the high school in Bitlis, he was enrolled to Pharmacy Department at Ege University in Izmir. Following his graduation from university, he started to work as a pharmacist in his hometown. While continuing his business on the one hand, Mr. Olan was always part of grassroots activism on the other. Since early years of the 1990s, he worked as an organizer

and executive in various legal political parties which advocated

the Kurdish rights and closed down by the Turkish authorities due to the same reason. Beginning with 2001, Mr. Olan actively worked in Chamber of Pharmacists and Pharmacists Association of Turkey as an executive in local, regional and national levels to ensure distribution of medicine in the Kurdish region where has been historically discriminated in terms of people's access to health care and medicine. Mr. Olan has also been one of pioneering figures of Peace Assembly of Turkey that aims at increasing civic engagement into political efforts for peaceful resolution to the Kurdish question. Before being elected as a co-mayor, Mr. Olan also served as the provincial co-chair of People's Democratic Party (HDP) in Bitlis. Mr. Olan was elected as co-mayor by 44 percent popular vote in 2014 municipal elections. He was arrested on 25th of November, 2016 and taken to Bitlis E Type Prison after which a state commissioner was appointed to Bitlis Municipality and he was officially dismissed from the mayoral office by the Ministry of Interior. On 28th of September, 2017, Mr. Olan was sentenced to 7 years 6 months imprisonment over allegations of "being member of a terrorist organization". Mr. Olan is married and father of three.



Mr. Mehmet Emin Özkan

Co-Mayor of Güroymak

Province: Bitlis
Population: 46 K

*Has been in Bitlis E Type
Prison since November
2016*

Mr. Özkan was born in 1959, in Bitlis. After completing high school in Bitlis, he started work as a public employee in Güroymak Municipality, in 1984. Since he started his professional career, Mr. Özkan actively strived for protecting rights of workers. As an organizer and coordinator, he spent years in Confederation of Public Workers' Unions (KESK) and All Municipal Employees' Trade Union (TÜMBEL-SEN). Mr.

Özkan first became a candidate for mayoral office in 2004. He was first elected as mayor in 2009 local elections. His successful policies created widespread appreciation among locals in Güroymak and local delegates shortlisted him before 2014 local elections. Thus, Mr. Özkan and Ms. Nazime Avras were elected as co-mayors with 48 percent popular support in 2014. In addition to solving persisting infrastructural problems, Mr. Özkan and Ms. Avras also focused on various memorialization efforts from a human rights perspective, especially to commemorate victims of state violence. Mr. Özkan was arrested on 26 November, 2016 and a state commissioner was appointed to Güroymak Municipality a few days later. Thus, Mr. Özkan as an elected co-mayor was dismissed from his mayoral office by the Ministry of Interior. Mr. Özkan has been incarcerated in Bitlis Prison since November 2016. He is married and father of four.



Mr. Halis Coşkun

Co-Mayor of Malazgirt

Province: Muş
Population: 54 K

*Has been in Muş E Type
Prison since November
2016*

Mr. Coşkun was born in 1957, in Malazgirt. He started to work in Electricity Distribution Corporation of Turkey (TEDAŞ) in 1983. He continued to work in this company until 1996 as a manager. Mr. Coşkun became one of pioneering local figures to spread awareness about peaceful resolution for the Kurdish question, especially in the 2000s. On this vein, he actively worked in local branch of Peace and Democracy Party (BDP). His studious efforts in promoting peace enabled him more local support and local delegates of the party nominated him as a co-mayor candidate. Mr. Coşkun and Ms. Memnune Söylemez were elected as co-mayors of Malazgirt with 39 percent popular vote in 2014 local elections. Following the election, co-mayors came up with a new policy concerning decision-making processes within the municipality and decided to hold public meetings before every crucial decision to be taken. High level of participation into public meetings evidenced that this new approach in local governance was widely appreciated by their constituencies. Mr. Coşkun was arrested over allegations of “being member of a terrorist organization” on 28th of November, 2016, and taken to Muş E Type Prison. A state commissioner was also appointed to Malazgirt Municipality and Mr. Coşkun, as an elected co-mayor, was dismissed from the mayoral office by the Turkish Ministry of Interior. Mr. Coşkun is married and father of 6.



Mr. Mustafa Bayram

Co-Mayor of Halfeti

Province: Şanlıurfa
Population of Halfeti:
38 K

*Has been in Şanlıurfa T
Type Prison since
December 2016*

Mr. Bayram was born in 1962, in Halfeti. After completing high school, he started work as a peasant. Mr. Bayram has also worked as an activist in Peace and Democracy Party (BDP) for many years. The old Halfeti was one of the ancient cities in the region which unfortunately submerged due to a dam project. Therefore, the old city practically remained under water and had to be rebuilt in a new location close to the old center. This enforced relocation that was carried out

by the central government caused a series of challenges for locals and also widespread reactions. Therefore, Mr. Bayram was elected as a co-mayor that would ease this troublesome process. Mr. Bayram and Ms. Ayşe Durmuş were elected with 58 percent popular vote in 2014 local elections. Co-mayors took every necessary measure to respond grievances of people who were relocated. In addition to this, a new urban setting that brought to many infrastructural issues were also handled successfully by the municipality. Nevertheless, Mr. Bayram was arrested on 13th of December, 2016 and he is Şanlıurfa T Type Prison since then. Mr. Bayram is married and father of 5.



Mr. Mehmet Sait Karabakan

Co-Mayor of Karayazı

Province: Erzurum
Population of Karayazı:
29 K

*Has been in Erzurum H
Type Prison since*

Mr. Karabakan was born in 1972, in Karayazı. After completing high school in Konya, he was enrolled to Faculty of Law at İstanbul University. Mr. Karabakan worked as a lawyer in Istanbul for many years and provided pro bono assistance in lawsuits in order help people who had been victims of human rights violations. Mr. Karabakan won local elections in 2014 with 62 percent popular vote. Karayazı

Municipality used to be governed by a mayor who was from the AKP, the party in government. Unfortunately, when the previous mayor completed his term, the municipality was financially broke. Although co-mayors had to deal with serious budgetary problems inherited from the previous administration, they worked studiously to offer solutions to long standing infrastructural problems existing in the town. Mr. Karabakan was arrested on 13th of December, 2016, over allegations of “being member of a terrorist organization”. A state commissioner was appointed to Karayazı Municipality and Mr. Karabakan was also officially dismissed from the mayoral office. Unfortunately, Mr. Karabakan has an ongoing health problem. He has a heart condition and his health worsened seriously since he started to spend time in prison, mainly because he cannot get effective medical treatment. Mr. Karabakan is married and father of three.



Mr. Zeynep Han Bingöl

Co-Mayor of Karayazı

Province: Erzurum
Population of Karayazı:
29 K

*Has been in Erzurum E
 Type Prison since*

Ms. Bingöl was born in 1960, in Karayazı. She completed high school in Karayazı, however, she had to struggle for her family in her young ages since the family faced serious human rights violations in the course of military junta period (1980-84) in Turkey started with the advent of a military coup. In order to hold the family together, she worked as an accountant in private sector as well as in NGOs until the early 1990s. Ms. Bingöl started to be politically active in the early 1990s and struggled for peace, democracy and gender equality via working in various political parties as a coordinator and a party executive. Ms. Bingöl and Mr. Mehmet Sait Karabakan won local elections in 2014 with 62 percent popular vote and started to serve as co-mayors. Karayazı Municipality used to be governed by a mayor who was from the AKP, the party in government. Unfortunately, the previous mayor completed his term with a huge municipal debt and serious allegations of corruption. Although co-mayors had to deal with serious budgetary problems inherited from the previous administration, they worked studiously to offer solutions to long standing infrastructural problems existing in the town. Ms. Bingöl was arrested on 13th of December, 2016, over allegations of “being member of a terrorist organization”. In her indictment, one of the accusations directed at Ms. Bingöl is posting a song on Facebook signed by Mr. Selahattin Demirtaş, co-chair of People’s Democratic Party (HDP).



Mr. Ali Aydın

Co-Mayor of Baykan

Province: Siirt
Population: 26 K

*Has been in Bafra T Type
Prison since December
2016*

Mr. Aydın was born in 1969, in Baykan. After completing high school in Baykan, Mr. Aydın was enrolled to the Education Faculty at Dicle University in Diyarbakır. Following his graduation in the early 1990s, Mr. Aydın worked as a teacher in various cities of Turkey and the Kurdish region. Mr. Aydın also worked 9 years in Baykan and thus had chance to interact with local people extensively in this period and also to figure out true problems persisting in the town. Baykan has

been one of towns where traditional structures have remained relatively more powerful in the Kurdish region. That specific dynamic left the town with comparatively low level of education among youth as well as a powerful patriarchal social structure causing serious pressures on women. Mr. Aydın was elected with 55 percent popular vote in 2014 municipal elections. Just after the election, co-mayors studiously worked to solve existing problems. In addition to introducing a strategic plan to end infrastructural problems, co-mayors substantially increased number of progressive social, cultural and educational activities funded by the municipality. However, Mr. Aydın was arrested on 17th of December, 2016 and a state commissioner was appointed to the municipality by the Turkish Ministry of Interior. Mr. Aydın has been in Sincan F Type Prison since then. He is married and father of three.



Ms. Mukaddes Kubilay

Co-Mayor of Ağrı

Province: Ağrı
Population: 542 K

*Has been in Sincan
Women's Prison since
December 2016*

Ms. Kubilay was born in 1955, in Doğubeyazıt. Following her marriage, she moved to İzmir in the 1970s and started to work as a blue-collar worker. As an activist and organizer, she met with leftist ideologies in parallel to her participation into working class struggle. Although the military junta in Turkey suppressed the left brutally after the military coup in 1980, Ms. Kubilay continued her political activities within social democrat political parties in the 1990s. She was also among founding members of legal Kurdish parties which were closed down by the Turkish government afterwards. Ms. Kubilay was elected as a mayor in 1999 in Doğubeyazıt and continued to serve as the mayor in next two terms as well, until 2009. She is one of rare figures who revolutionised the history of local democracy in Turkey and the Kurdish region as a woman. Mr. Kubilay has been a pioneering figure also because she came up with a series of novel practices that substantially increased participation of women in political, economic and cultural life. Policies towards gender equality and reduction of poverty implemented under her leadership constitute exemplary works in the Kurdish region. She was also provincial chair of Peace and Democracy Party (BDP) in İzmir during 2010-2013 before she was elected as co-mayor of Ağrı in 2014 with 51 percent popular vote. Ms. Kubilay was arrested in December 2016 and she has been imprisoned in Sincan Women's Prison since then. A state commissioner, governor of Ağrı, was appointed to mayor office following her imprisonment.



Mr. Celalettin Bartu

Co-Mayor of Çatak

Province: Van
Population: 22 K

*Has been in Van T Type
Prison since January 2017*

Mr. Bartu was born in 1968, in Çatak. When he was in high school, his family had to migrate from their village to Mersin city center due to armed conflicts and enforced evacuation of villages by Turkish security forces. Mr. Bartu could not continue his education due to the war and had to work because his family was subjected to total dispossession. However, he was arrested in 1985 due his political actives and spent 1,5 years in Diyarbakır Prison that was one of the most notorious prisons in that time due to the systematic torture and arbitrary killings within the prison. After five years of work in Mersin Municipality, Mr. Bartu dedicated himself to the struggle for justice, equality and democracy in Turkey thorough the 1990s and 2000s. As a victim of war and a devoted activist, Mr. Bartu worked for a peaceful resolution of Kurdish question and believed that improving mechanisms of local democracy plays a key role in settlement of protracted armed conflicts. From 2009 to 2014, Mr. Bartu was an elected member of municipal council in Çatak Municipality. He became co-mayor with 68 percent popular vote after municipal elections in 2014. Unfortunately, he was arrested on 4th of January, 2017 and he has been in Van T Type Prison since then.



Ms. Evin Keve

Co-Mayor of Çatak

Province: Van
Population of Çatak:
22 K

*Has been in Sincan
 Women's Prison since
 February 2017*

She was born in 1987, in Çatak. She completed her elementary and high school education in Çatak. While she was just a child, her uncle, Sadun Keve was murdered by unknown assailants, that refers to paramilitary forces of Turkish State in the 1990s. Although she went through a childhood full of challenges, she gave a serious struggle to complete her education. She was enrolled to 100. Yıl

University in Van and studied Child Development. While she was a university student, her political activities mainly focused on increasing participation of women in politics as well as the gender equality. Just after she was graduated from university, she was elected by members of Democratic Regions Party (DBP) in Çatak as mayoral candidate before the municipal elections held in 2014. Then she was elected as co-mayor of Çatak with 67 percent popular vote. Çatak Municipality was under the control of Justice and Development Party (AKP) until 2014. Despite the town has a serious potential in terms of agricultural development, previous mayors did not focus on this potential. After Ms. Keve was elected a co-mayor, she mainly focused on two areas to run her projects. The first one aimed at brining new techniques of cultivation to achieve agricultural and local development. Second cluster of her projects concentrated on improving participation of women into economic and social life. She started a project called Women's Bazaar where only women could sell what they produce collectively. In addition to this, she initiated weekly informative seminars on women's health in villages of Çatak. Ms. Keve was arrested first on 2nd of January, 2016 due to an interview, conducted by JINHA News Agency in which she said: "We say that we stand with people's demand no matter if that would be autonomy or self-governance. We are elected by the people, not appointed". She was released on 29th of March, 2016 and started to serve as a mayor again. Nevertheless, Ms. Keve was re-arrested on 16th of February, 2017 and she has been incarcerated in Sincan Women's Prison since then. A state commissioner was appointed to Çatak Municipality so Ms. Keve was also officially dismissed from mayoral office.



Mr. Süleyman Tekin

Co-Mayor of Ömerli

Province: Mardin
Population of Ömerli:
14 K

*Has been in Mardin E Type
Prison since January 2017*

Mr. Tekin was born in 1957, in Ömerli. He was graduated from Mardin Education Institute and started work as a teacher in the late 1970s. While working for 25 years as a school teacher, Mr. Tekin had chance serve in various cities of Turkey as well as the Kurdish region. Although Peace and Democracy Party could not succeed well in Ömerli in previous local elections, Mr. Tekin and Ms. İpek Güneş

became quite successful in 2014 local elections. 36 percent of voters chose them mainly because they believed that co-mayors could make a true difference in Ömerli. In previous term, the municipality was governed by a mayor who was from the CHP, the main opposition party in Turkey. Although co-mayors had to deal with financial problems just after taking the office, they worked studiously to offer solutions to long standing infrastructural problems existing in the town. A car bomb targeted one of the military posts in Ömerli on June 2016. Surprisingly, 6 months after the incident, Mr. Tekin was arrested on 4th of January, 2017, over allegations of “membership to a terrorist organization”. Although there is no evidence that links the co-mayor with this case, prosecutors instrumentally used this incident to enable the Ministry of Interior to appoint a state commissioner to the municipality. Mr. Tekin has been in Mardin E Type Prison since January 2017. Mr. Tekin is married and father of five kids.



Mr. Zeynel Taş

Co-Mayor of Bozova

Province: Şanlıurfa
Population of Bozova:
55 K

*Has been in Şanlıurfa T
 Type Prison since January*

Mr. Taş was born in 1976, in Bozova. Family of Mr. Taş was socio-economically disadvantaged like many others in Bozova, that prevented him from continuing his education after the elementary school. Being born into a poor family, Mr. Taş dropped the school and became a construction worker that continued for decades. As a Kurdish worker who could find jobs mostly in the western parts of Turkey, he had to

struggle against ethnic discrimination throughout his life. One of the reasons that he became part of the struggle for peace and democracy was related with his ambition to foster tolerance and non-discrimination. Mr. Taş was elected as co-mayor of Bozova with 49 percent popular vote in 2014 municipal elections. Following his inauguration, Mr. Taş faced a pressing matter that was a large number Syrian refugees fleeing ISIS and coming to the Kurdish region of Turkey. Co-mayors of Bozova worked devotedly to meet urgent needs of refugees. Bozova is one of the towns geographically close to Syria as well as to areas where harsh clashes between the ISIS and Syrian Democratic Forces took place for years. Most of those refugees turned back to Syria after ISIS attacks were repelled. Mr. Taş was arrested on 6th of January, 2017, and a state commissioner was appointed to Bozova Municipality. Thus he was officially dismissed by the Ministry of Interior from mayoral office. Mr. Taş has been incarcerated in Şanlıurfa T Type Prison since then.



Mr. Emrullah Cin

Co-Mayor of Viranşehir

Province: Şanlıurfa
Population of Viranşehir:
184 K

*Has been in Şanlıurfa T
Type Prison since January*

Emrullah Cin was born in 1961, in Viranşehir. Mr. Cin is one of the mayors who has had a lot experience in local governance. He was elected as mayor of Viranşehir first in 1999 as well as for next two terms. Locals largely appreciated policies he initiated and his success in elections proved that clearly. Mr. Cin was elected as co-mayor with Ms. Filiz Yılmaz with 48 percent popular support in 2014 municipal elections.

Co-mayors had to respond to a humanitarian crisis just after the election. Viranşehir, as one of the Kurdish towns close to Syria, hosted ten thousands of refugees who fled from ISIS attacks in 2014-15. Mr. Cin and Ms. Yılmaz mobilised people and resources in local level in order help victims of ISIS attacks in corporation with local people. Co-mayors were quite successful in creating solidarity mechanisms and coordination with local and national NGOs to offer shelter and food for the refugees came from Syria. Most of those refugees turned back to Syria after ISIS attacks were repelled at the end of 2015. Mr. Cin was detained on 13th of December, 2016, and arrested on 6th of January, 2017 over allegations of “membership to a terrorist organization”. He has been incarcerated in Şanlıurfa T Type Prison since then. He is married and father of two.



Mr. Mehmet Ali Tunç

Co-Mayor of Muradiye

Province: Van
Population of Muradiye:
51 K

*Has been in Van T Type
 Prison since January 2017*

Mehmet Ali Tunç was born in 1973, in Ağrı. After completing the high school, Mr. Tunç was enrolled at Faculty of Medicine at Erzurum University. He worked as a doctor in various parts of Turkey and the Kurdish region for many years before becoming a co-mayor. During these years, Mr. Tunç had chance to see how the health care system in the Kurdish region was not able to respond to needs of people. One of the reasons that Mr. Tunç wanted to be a mayor was creating

holistic mechanisms that would encounter needs of impoverished people while the central government remained ineffective. Mr. Tunç and Ms. Safure Güneş won 2014 municipal elections in Muradiye with 51 percent popular vote. Following their inauguration, Mr. Tunç initiated a new project that would provide free primary care health service for the poor. Personally, M. Ali Tunç also served as a doctor in this project voluntarily for two days per week and the project reached out about 100 patients every week. That was widely appreciated by the local people and also promoted participation of more volunteering doctors. While implementing novel policies on local scale which were favoring disadvantaged groups, Mr. Tunç was arrested on 26th of January, 2017, and he has been incarcerated in Van T Type Prison since then. The district governor was appointed as the state commissioner to Muradiye Municipality after Mr. Tunç was officially dismissed from mayoral office.



Ms. Sara Kaya

Co-Mayor of Nusaybin

Province: Mardin
Population: 116 K

Recently, Ms. Kaya has been imprisoned twice. Now, she's at Van E Type Prison since January 2017

Sara Kaya was born in 1970, in Nusaybin. After completing high school in this city, she went to Diyarbakır for her university education. She studied at the Department of Construction Engineering at Dicle University. Ms. Kaya was born into an environment of armed conflict and witnessed gross human rights violations which took place in the 1990s in Nusaybin as well as across the Kurdish region of Turkey. While seeking a peaceful resolution for the Kurdish question was a crucial dynamic that drove her to activism, her will to

fight for gender equality in a patriarchal society, that was constantly reproduced with the support of state institutions, was the other driving force. After graduation from university, Ms. Kaya continued her activism and also started a professional career by working at Nusaybin Municipality. She was representative of Nusaybin branch of All Municipal Employees' Trade Union (TÜMBEL-SEN) for many years. She was elected as co-mayor of Nusaybin with 78 percent popular vote. After the AKP government ended the Kurdish peace process, Nusaybin became one of cities that was extremely affected from the urban armed conflicts. 70 percent of the city was completely destroyed at the end of military operations conducted by the Turkish army with conventional weaponry. Co-mayors of the city struggled for preventing the escalation but failed and mainly helped to victims of ten thousands of people forcibly migrated. Just after the clashes ended, Ms. Kaya was arrested and released after spending months in prison. Ms. Kaya was arrested for the second time on 21st of January, 2017, and taken to Van E Type Prison. A state commissioner was appointed to mayoral office by the Ministry of Interior after Ms. Kaya was officially dismissed. Sara Kaya is married and mother of four.



Mr. Cengiz Kök

Co-Mayor of Nusaybin

Province: Mardin
Population of Nusaybin:
116 K (Before the armed conflict)

Has been in Van F Type Prison since January 2017

Ms. Kök was born in 1973, in Nusaybin. After completing high school, he studied Public Administration at Anadolu University, in Eskişehir. Cengiz Kök came back to his hometown after graduation and started to work as a certified public accountant. Spending entire of his life in Nusaybin enabled him to have extensive knowledge about local problems as well as the sufferings of people in Nusaybin due to gross human rights violation committed by the Turkish security forces in the 1990s. As a well known local peace activists, Mr. Kök was elected as co-mayor of Nusaybin with 78 percent popular vote in 2014 municipal elections. Following inauguration, Mr. Kök organized a solidarity project that enabled thousand of Kurdish Syrian refugees fleeing ISIS attacks to be hosted by families in Nusaybin for months. After the AKP government ended the Kurdish peace process in 2015, Nusaybin became one of cities that was extremely affected from the urban armed conflicts emerged thereafter. 70 percent of buildings in the city center were completely destroyed at the end of military operations conducted by the Turkish army with conventional weaponry. Co-mayors of the city struggled for preventing the escalation but failed and could only help to the victims, ten thousands of people forcibly migrated. Mr. Kök was arrested on 26th of January, 2017 with Ms. Sara Kaya and sent to Van F Type Prison. A state commissioner was appointed to mayoral office by the Ministry of Interior after Mr. Cengiz Kök was officially dismissed.



Mr. Afullah Kar

Co-Mayor of Kocaköy

Province: Diyarbakır
Population: 16 K

*Has been in Diyarbakır D
Type Prison since
February 2017*

Afullah Kar was born in 1968, in Kocaköy. After completing primary school, Mr. Kar started to have religious/Islamic education at madrasah in Diyarbakır. Coming from a conservative Kurdish family, he realized that both his religious and ethnic identities were being repressed systematically during the 1990s due to state-led policies. His politicisation process was mainly a response to injustices continuing in the

Turkey and more boldly in the Kurdish region. After completing his madrasah education, he started to work as an imam in Kocaköy. Working within the community and having close ties with local people enabled him to have extensive knowledge about local problems in Kocaköy. In 2014 municipal elections, Mr. Kar was elected as a co-mayor with 55 percent popular vote. In addition to other tasks, he worked studiously as a mediator to solve longstanding social conflicts within the community after his inauguration and became quite successful in this. Mr. Kar was arrested on 3rd of February, 2017, over allegations of “membership to a terrorist organization” and sent to Diyarbakır D Type Prison. A state commissioner was appointed to mayoral office by the Ministry of Interior after Mr. Afullah Kar was officially dismissed.



Mr. Murat Rohat Özbay

Co-Mayor of Doğubeyazıt

Province: Ağrı
Population: 120 K

*Has been in Ağrı M Type
Prison since February
2017*

Rohat Özbay was born in 1979, in Doğubeyazıt. After finishing high school, Mr. Özbay studied law at Dicle University in Diyarbakır. He was grown up in a political environment in the 1990s when gross human rights violations were taking place in the Kurdish region of Turkey. His pursuit of being lawyer was mainly motivated with the idea of struggling against injustices through peaceful mechanisms and

rule of law. Following his graduation from university, Mr. Özbay started to work as a lawyer in Doğubeyazıt and provided pro bono assistance in lawsuits in order to help people who had been victims of human rights violations. These efforts were extensively appreciated by people in Doğubeyazıt and pressured him to join into drive for increasing level of local democracy in the city. Mr. Özbay was elected with 62 percent popular vote in 2014 municipal elections. One of the progressive policies put forth by Mr. Özbay was participatory administration in provision of municipal services. In every Monday and Thursday, local people had direct access to co-mayors and could reach their problems of the city face-to-face. That enabled fastening resolution of problems and created an exemplary public administration model in the Kurdish region. Nevertheless, Mr. Özbay was arrested on 5th of February, 2017, and sent to Ağrı M Type Prison. A state commissioner was appointed to mayoral office by the Ministry of Interior after Mr. Rohat Özbay was officially dismissed.



Ms. Delal Tekdemir

Co-Mayor of Doğubeyazıt

Province: Ağrı
Population of
Doğubeyazıt: 120 K

*Has been in Ağrı M Type
Prison since February
2017*

Delal Tekdemir was born in 1957, in Doğubeyazıt. She studied social sciences at Anadolu University. Ms. Tekdemir worked as personnel manager for many years after she was graduated from university. During this period, she actively worked within trade unions to protect rights of workers as well as worked as a peace activist in parties advocating collective rights of the Kurds. Ms. Tekdemir was elected with 62 percent popular vote in 2014 municipal elections. One of the

progressive policies put forth by Ms. Tekdemir was relying on participatory administration in provision of municipal services. In every Monday and Thursday, local people had direct access to co-mayors and could reach their problems of the city face-to-face. That enabled fastening resolution of problems and created an exemplary public administration model in the Kurdish region. Nevertheless, Ms. Tekdemir was arrested on 5th of February, 2017, and sent to Ağrı M Type Prison. A state commissioner was appointed to mayoral office by the Ministry of Interior after Ms. Delal Tekdemir was officially dismissed.



Mr. Abdullah Çalışkan

Co-Mayor of Saray

Province: Van
Population of Saray: 22K

*Has been in Van F Type
Prison since March 2017*

Abdullah Çalışkan was born in 1967, in Saray. He was raised in a village and had to struggle a lot to access education during his childhood years. Despite all obstacles, he could complete the high school and started his professional career as a teacher but forced to change his occupation many times afterwards. Due to his political views, he was constantly subjected to banishment as a state employee. Throughout his 13-year career, he was banished for 29 times. During this period, he actively worked within trade unions to protect rights of workers as well as worked as a peace activist in legal political parties advocating collective rights of the Kurds. Mr. Çalışkan was elected as a co-mayor with 66 percent popular vote in 2014 municipal elections. In previous term, the municipality was governed by a mayor who was from the CHP, the main opposition party in Turkey. Although co-mayors had to deal with financial problems just after taking the office, they worked studiously to offer solutions to long standing infrastructural problems existing in the town. However, Mr. Çalışkan was arrested on 25th of March, 2017, and sent to Van F Type Prison. A state commissioner was appointed to mayoral office by the Ministry of Interior after Mr. Abdullah Çalışkan was officially dismissed.



Ms. Belkiza Beştaş Epözdemir

Co-Mayor of Siirt

Province: Siirt
Population of Siirt: 320K

*Has been in Siirt E Type
Prison since May 2017*

Belkiza Beştaş was born in 1977, in Siirt. After completing high school, she started to work in legal political parties advocating collective rights of the Kurds. She was grown up in the political environment of the 1990s when gross human rights violations were taking place in the Kurdish region of Turkey. When she was young, Ms. Beştaş was mainly motivated with the idea of struggling against injustices through peaceful mechanisms. On this vein, she worked at

Human Rights Association in Siirt as a secretary. She was elected as a city councillor of Siirt in 2009 municipal election. During this period, she worked hard in order to bring local problems into the agenda of city council and pressure the mayor with pressing matters. Nevertheless, she was arrested in 2010 and spent a year in prison due to the KCK operations (2011-13), during which thousands of party members were arrested over allegations of “membership to a terrorist organization”. Like others, Ms. Beştaş was released when governments’ suppression on the Kurdish politicians decreased. Ms. Beştaş was elected as co-mayor of Siirt with 49 percent popular vote in 2014 municipal elections. However, she was arrested on 5th of May, 2017, over allegations of membership to a terrorist organizations. Since then, she has been incarcerated in Siirt E Type Prison. Ms. Beştaş is married and mother of three.



Ms. Sadiye Süer Baran

Co-Mayor of Kulp

Province: Diyarbakır
Population of Kulp: 37K

*Has been in Şanlıurfa T
Type Prison since January
2017*

Ms. Baran was born in 1968, in Kızıltepe. She was elected as city councillor of Bismil, in 2004 local elections. She continued to work at Peace and Democracy Party after she completed the term in 2009. Throughout her life, Ms. Baran struggled for gender equality and a peaceful resolution of Kurdish question in Turkey. She was elected as co-mayor of Kulp with 62 percent popular vote. After inauguration, Ms.

Baran focused on projects that favoured gender equality. One of them was Zozan Even Women's Center in which awareness trainings and seminars could be organized. Kulp Municipality also completed a medical civic action programme that focused on women's health. Moreover, Mr. Baran also initiated Education Support House that aimed at levelling the ground for children of poor families in competitive national examinations. Ms. Baran was arrested on 6th of January, 2017, and has been incarcerated in Şanlıurfa T Type Prison since then. A state commissioner was appointed to mayoral office by the Ministry of Interior after Mr. Baran was officially dismissed. Married and mother of 4. One of her sons has also been in prison.



Mr. Abdulkerim Erdem

Co-Mayor of Derik

Province: Mardin
Population of Derik: 37K

*Has been in Kırkkale F
Type Prison since
February 2017*

Mr. Erdem was born in Derik, in 1969. After completing elementary school, he started work as a farmer. Mr. Erdem witnessed closely the political environment of the 1990s when gross human rights violations were taking place in the Kurdish region of Turkey. That was one the main reasons why he became part of the struggle for peace. He was elected as city councillor of Derik in 2009 municipal elections. Mr. Erdem

chaired the city council during this period as a deputy since the first chair was arrested. Mr. Erdem was elected with 64 percent popular vote in 2014 municipal elections. Mr. Erdem focused on solving infrastructural problems of the city after the elections. However, Derik urban center was seriously affected from armed conflicts which started after the Turkish government ended peace talks with the Kurdish movement in 2015. At the end of clashes that continued for weeks, 56 shops and 172 houses as well as a mourning house and school buildings were damaged. After clashes started, Mr. Erdem had to focus on helping local people to ease their grievances. Mr. Erdem was arrested on 26th of February, 2017, and has been in Kırkkale F Type Prison since then. A state commissioner was appointed to mayoral office by the Ministry of Interior after Mr. Erdem was officially dismissed.



Ms. Leyla Salman

Co-Mayor of Kızıltepe

Province: Mardin
Population of Kızıltepe:
237K

*Has been in Şakran
Women's Prison since
December 2016*

Leyla Salman was born in Kızıltepe, in 1982. She had a tough childhood mainly because her family was forced to migrate from Derik in the 1990s. Such forced evictions, in total affected 3 million Kurds, was a measure taken by Turkish Security Forces in parallel to counter-insurgency campaigns. Ms. Salman's family migrated to İzmir, one of the cities located at the west of Turkey. Leyla Salman started to

work in a factory for years to economically support her family. Her family could go back to Kızıltepe in 2008 and Ms. Salman continued her activist work in there as well. She was elected as a city councillor in 2009 municipal elections and served as a deputy mayor until 2014. She was elected as co-mayor with 62 percent popular vote in 2014 municipal elections. She was first arrested on 30th of March, 2016, and spent 5 months in prison. Ms. Salman was released but arrested again on 2nd of December, 2016, and sent to Şakran Women's Prison. A state commissioner was also appointed to Kızıltepe Municipality by the Ministry of Interior.



Mr. İsmail Asi

Co-Mayor of Kızıltepe

Province: Mardin
Population of Kızıltepe:
237K

*Has been in Şakran
Women's Prison since
December 2016*

İsmail Asi was born in 1976, in Viranşehir. His family moved to Kızıltepe in 1989. Ms. Asi started his political career when he was 18 years old. He worked in youth wings of various political parties which advocated a peaceful resolution for the Kurdish question in Turkey. In 2004, Mr. Asi was arrested sent to prison since he participated to a civil disobedience campaign that aimed at stopping armed conflicts. He continued to work at the party as a volunteer after he was released, until he was imprisoned again in 2007. He was elected as a city councillor at Kızıltepe Municipality in 2009 local elections. After working for two years in that position, he was arrested again and sent to Tekirdağ F Type Prison. After he was released from prison, he was elected as co-mayor with 62 percent popular vote in 2014 municipal elections. Till 12th of February, 2017, he served as a co-mayor and appreciated by his constituencies thanks to infrastructural developments and municipal policies that offered accommodation and food for thousands of refugees came from Syria. After he was dismissed from mayoral office, a state commissioner was appointed to Kızıltepe Municipality by the Ministry of Interior.



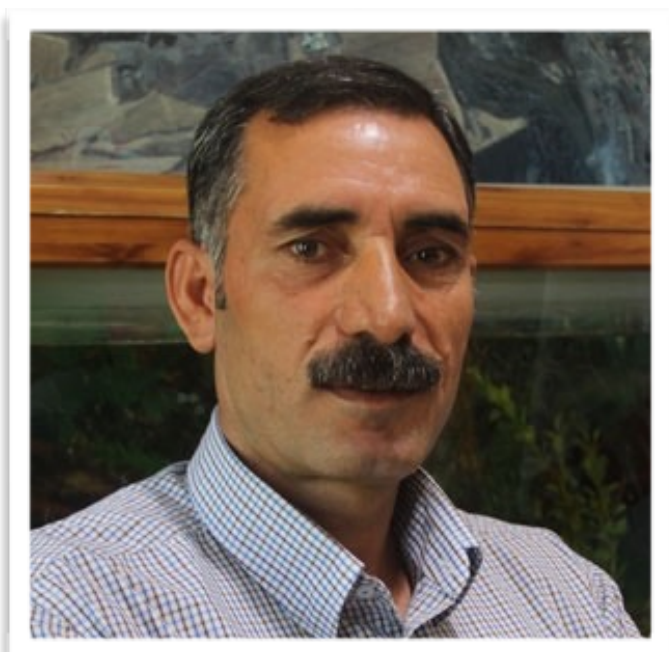
Ms. Memnune Söylemez

Co-Mayor of Malazgirt

Province: Muş
Population: 54 K

*Has been in Muş E Type
Prison since November
2016*

Meymune Söylemez was born in 1961, in Malazgirt. After completing high school, she started work as a teacher. She worked for 25 years in the public education center that offers free education for adults who could not complete primary education. Working in this job allowed Ms. Söylemez to have a constant connection with the people, listen to their problems and come up with solutions developed with the people. Reaching new ideas and practices to local administration was a major source of motivation for Ms. Söylemez when she decided to run for the office. Ms. Söylemez first became a city councillor at Malazgirt Municipality with 2009 local election. Then she was elected as co-mayor with 39 percent popular vote in 2014 municipal elections. She initiated various projects that specifically targeted women and youth. The municipality also completed a medical civic action programme that focused on women's health. A project to offer free courses for youth in competitive national examinations also started. However, Ms. Söylemez was arrested on 28th of November, 2016, over allegations of "membership to a terrorist organization" and sent to Muş E Type Prison. In following weeks, a state commissioner was appointed to Malazgirt Municipality by the Ministry of Interior.



Mr. Seyid Narin

Co-Mayor of Sur

Province: Diyarbakır
Population: 121 K

*Has been in Diyarbakır D
Type Prison since May
2016*

Seyid Narin was born in Hani province of Diyarbakir in 1968. He has been active in politics since the 1980s. While he was working at Bağlar Municipality of Diyarbakir city, he was a leading figure in trade union advocating rights of workers for many years. In local elections held in 2009, he was elected as mayor of Kuyular district in Hani province. Since he was quite successful as a mayor in Hani, he was elected by members of Democratic Regions Party (DBP) in Sur district as mayoral candidate before the municipal elections held in 2014. Then he had a clear electoral victory during 2014 Local Elections with % 55 popular vote in Sur district of Diyarbakir. Unfortunately, just after he became co-mayor of Sur, he was informed that he lost his son, Ali Narin (22) who was fighting in ranks of the People's Protection Units (YPG) against ISIS militants to protect people of Rojava (Syrian Kurdistan). Diyarbakir Fortress was recognised as the world heritage by the UNESCO in June 2015 and Mr. Narin has developed crucial projects to protect historicity of the region after he was elected. People Assembly in Sur organised a public statement to demand self-governance on the 15th of August, 2015. Seed Narin and Fatma Şık Barut were also present in there as co-mayors of Sur District. On that evening, both co-mayors were detained and sent to prison 4 days later. On the 26th of August, Seyid Narin was officially dismissed from his duty by Turkish Ministry of Interior. Mr. Narin was released after 6 months of imprisonment but arrested again on 4th of May, 2017. He has been in Diyarbakır D Type prison since then.