



August 17, 2017

Alliance for Shared Values Statement on recent events in Charlottesville

We are deeply saddened by the outpouring of hate that led to violence and claimed three innocent lives and injured nearly 20 others during the protests and counter-protests in Charlottesville, Virginia, on August 12. We join the chorus of leaders, individuals, organizations and businesses that condemn the groups that provoked such tragedy.

Demonstrators involved in the Charlottesville events included those promoting white nationalism, racism and neo-Nazism. We unequivocally condemn these reprehensible groups and beliefs, which glorify bigotry and valuing one race, religion or ethnicity over another. Society must celebrate diversity, expand its tolerance and bring people together through interfaith and intercultural dialogue. Such dialogue is even more critical now to engage disparate populations who hold these racist beliefs.

Instead of exercising the right to free speech through peaceful dialogue and debate, participants took to the streets with weapons. We denounce any efforts to elevate verbal altercations to physical fights.

It is our hope that society will come together to heal, learn and move forward from these tragic events. We pray for the family of Heather Heyer, the families of H. Jay Cullen and Berke M.M. Bates, the two police officers who perished in a helicopter accident as they monitored the demonstrations from above, and the city of Charlottesville.

About Alliance for Shared Values

The Alliance for Shared Values (AFSV) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that serves as a voice for cultural organizations affiliated with Hizmet, a civil society movement inspired by prominent preacher and peace advocate Fethullah Gülen. The Alliance strives to promote peace and social harmony by helping reduce misinformation and false stereotypes about any or all ethnic, cultural and religious communities. To learn more about the Alliance, please visit www.afsv.org.

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