



January 15, 2018

Fethullah Gülen’s Message for Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day

The United States celebrates a national holiday today in memory of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., one of the foremost leaders of the civil rights movement. On this day, we celebrate the civil rights movement and its leaders who fought for equality for all without resorting to violence.

God Almighty expresses in the Quran that He created every human being with dignity, regardless of their religion or nationality. (17:70). Recognizing every human being as valuable and holding them with dignity is the most important message that our Prophet, peace be upon him, left for humanity through his sayings and his life's example. Contrasting the community at the time when he received the revelation and the community that he left behind, one can clearly observe the struggle he went through for the sake of equality for all, and the progress achieved by those who accepted him as a guide.

Dr. King and his fellow civil rights activists continued on their path despite the challenges they faced. Their sacrifices influenced public opinion in significant ways and helped pave the way for legal reforms.

Throughout his life, Dr. King spoke out against oppression, and he expressed discontent with people who remained silent. Indifference has led to the demise of many communities throughout history. Every believer’s attitude should be: No matter where injustice and oppression occurs, it concerns me and I have a responsibility to do something about it.

We must not forget the lessons learned through the suffering of the civil rights struggle. Charlottesville has shown us that racism and hatred can rise again at any time and besiege communities.

Permanent solutions to social ills can only be attained through long-term education programs and socio-cultural measures alongside legal reforms. Although significant progress has been achieved in many countries, including the United States, more work remains to be done.

The contributions of Dr. King, who was a preacher, and of other devout Americans are a great example of how religious leaders and individuals can play positive roles in improving society.

On this occasion, I commemorate Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., along with others who have contributed to the civil rights movement. I also pray to God Almighty to lead us to the days in which every individual is valued and people embrace each other all around the world.

About Fethullah Gülen

Fethullah Gülen is an Islamic scholar, preacher and social advocate, whose decades-long commitment to education, interfaith dialogue and altruism has inspired millions in Turkey and around the world. Gülen is the honorary chairman of the Rumi Forum, Washington, DC and the Intercultural Dialogue Platform, Brussels, Belgium.

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.

Media contact

media@afsv.org

212-682-4278