



Statement of the Alliance for Shared Values on the Principles of the Hizmet Movement

November 27, 2018

Hizmet is a movement of volunteers who have gathered around universal humanitarian values. For the past 50 years, Hizmet movement participants have been committed to building friendship and peace, first in Turkey and then around the world including the United States. Today, they continue to work toward the same ideals without compromising their principles no matter where they live. It is of utmost importance to pass down to future generations the values and principles that have shaped the Hizmet movement while also continuing the struggle against oppression and suffering through legal means.

The text below is a summary of a broader document that is the outcome of a process that began in 2015 and involved the participation of a large number of movement participants around the United States in regions where AFSV's local partner organizations serve. The principles mentioned here span topics such as legal compliance, ethical legitimacy, transparency, accountability, balancing localization versus globalization, representation and pluralistic participation. It does not assume to encompass all Hizmet principles.

Principles:

1. All Hizmet activities must comply with legal and ethical standards, and this cannot be compromised. The standards of the society in which we live are essential with regard to transparency and accountability. Participants should avoid activities that would discredit the movement in the country in which they live. It also is essential for non-institutional activities to be ethical, accountable and comply with legal standards.
2. Every social or spiritual group may have both institutional and non-institutional aspects. In relations between the individuals who have an institutional role and those who do not, the group must comply with the aforementioned principles of legal compliance, ethical legitimacy, transparency, and accountability.
3. In order to hold relationships with other institutions or the grassroots in a transparent way, institutions can establish platforms of communication, discussion, and consultation that are based on formal agreements and whose participants are selected to ensure pluralistic representation.

4. Those who have executive decision-making roles must take responsibility, be transparent and be held accountable. If individuals cannot fulfill these conditions due to personal reasons, they must not assume any decision-making roles. Not only do the administration and intelligentsia of the country we live in expect this, but so do the grassroots and youth of the movement who will play vital roles in its future.
5. The domination of the executive director, the board of directors or the stakeholders over any institution is ethically unacceptable. People serving in each of these positions must play their own role within the boundaries of their country's legal and ethical norms and must not act beyond those limits. All decision-making roles must have term limits.
6. It is important for the administration of non-governmental or civil society institutions (a.k.a NGOs or CSOs) to have representation from different backgrounds while maintaining principles of qualification and pluralism. In this regard, financial donors, professionals, academicians, old immigrants, new immigrants and especially women and youth should be provided with opportunities to take positions in the administration of institutions.
7. Each formal organization that Hizmet participants establish is not only local but also has a representative role and a relationship with the movement grassroots beyond the local community. In the formation of governing boards and the planning of activities, organizations should seek a balance between these two factors.
8. The identification and development of human resources and matching them with institutions seeking such resources should be done through objective and rational methods that satisfy the transparency norms of the society.
9. It is crucial for the stability and sustainability of institutions that their financial resources are diversified and that these resources are managed through a collective decision-making process by committees that include the organization's representatives.
10. In order to ensure adherence to the principles mentioned above, education and supervision/monitoring plans should be developed by stakeholders, lay leaders, the boards of directors, executive directors and candidates for such roles.
11. We emphasize once again that it is essential for any activity of the Hizmet movement participants to be carried out in accordance with universal ethical principles, their country's laws and regulations, the organization's bylaws and Hizmet principles that are expressed in public resources.

We respectfully offer for your consideration.