

# CORE VALUES OF THE HIZMET MOVEMENT

The Hizmet movement is a civil society movement committed to the ideals of living together in peace and serving humanity, and it works within the framework of social responsibility and philanthropy. The movement is centered on the concept of altruistic volunteerism and prioritizes education, dialogue and humanitarian aid in its activities. It is a peaceful movement that embraces religious, social and cultural diversity and is inspired by Islamic and universal humanitarian values.

"This work on values is commendable and has a promise for the future. I have the belief and hope that the activities of Hizmet volunteers devoted to these core values—on the trajectory of helping others live, with the high goal of God's pleasure—will contribute significantly to the formation of a more livable world of peace and tranquility. May God bless those who contributed to this work." – Fethullah Gulen

## **HIZMET'S VISION**

*Hizmet participants envision a society where:*

- Every human being is treated with dignity and accepted for who they are;
- Human rights are protected, and any form of diversity that does not contradict fundamental human rights is seen as richness;
- People are sensitive to the challenges of humanity;
- People of different religions, cultures, and worldviews enter dialogue and empathize with each other;
- Sharing and cooperation are cherished; and
- People live in peace and harmony.

*Hizmet participants collaborate with individuals and groups who share this vision.*

# CORE VALUES

## 01 RESPECT FOR HUMANS AND FUNDAMENTAL HUMAN RIGHTS

Hizmet participants believe that every human being has inherent value and everyone should be treated with dignity. Every person is equal as a human being and before the law, and no one person is superior to anyone else. Hizmet participants uphold all human rights and freedoms expressed in the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Social justice and equal opportunity are requirements for equality among people.

## 02 RESPECT FOR THE RULE OF LAW

Hizmet participants respect the rule of law. They do not see anyone as above the law, and they act within the framework of protection of human dignity, universal legal principles and the laws of their country of residence. They manage their organizations in a way to meet or exceed the transparency and accountability norms of their societies.

## 03 PEACEFUL AND POSITIVE ACTION

Hizmet is a peaceful movement. Hizmet participants reject using violence as a political tool. Hizmet participants prefer positive and constructive actions and reject hostility-driven and destructive actions.

## 04 EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN:

Hizmet participants are committed to the ideal that women are provided with equal opportunity and can contribute to all aspects of society without discrimination, and they strive to meet this ideal in all activities.

## 05 ETHICAL ACTION

Hizmet participants pay attention to both ethical norms and moral principles in their activities. They abide by fundamental ethical principles, including honesty, trustworthiness, harmlessness and fairness. They believe that legitimate and rightful goals should be obtained through legitimate and rightful means.

## 06 RESPECT FOR DIVERSITY AND PLURALISM

Hizmet participants see collective and individual diversity as richness as long as they do not contradict fundamental human rights. They adopt an attitude necessary to avoid conflicts that stem from differences in sacred beliefs.

## 07 VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION AND ALTRUISM:

For Hizmet volunteers, joining activities or leaving them is a person's individual choice. Hizmet participants contribute to projects that bring to life their values and benefit humanity through donations or volunteer work.

## 08 CONSULTATION AND SHARED WISDOM

Hizmet participants benefit from shared wisdom through discussions of different perspectives and opinions.

## 09 CIVIC NATURE, INDEPENDENCE

Hizmet is a civil society movement and acts independently. It is not an extension of a state or a political entity. Hizmet volunteers emphasize the internalization of democratic values, active citizenship and community participation, and they respect every individual's political choices. They stand against turning religion into a political ideology or making religion a tool of politics.

## 10 CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AND CONTRIBUTION TO SOCIETY

Hizmet participants consider it a social responsibility to contribute to society and to help solve societal problems. They see themselves as part of the human family. They are sensitive toward humanity's problems and aim to serve humanity.

## 11 PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT

Hizmet participants view the earth, including all its ecosystems, as a trust that must be preserved for future generations, and they contribute to protecting the environment.

## 12 HOLISTIC VIEW TOWARD HUMANITY (AND UNITY OF THE MIND AND THE HEART)

Human beings are both material and spiritual beings. Spiritual disciplines should be pursued along with reason and scientific research so that their material and spiritual needs are met, and they can flourish in both dimensions.



# HOW HIZMET VALUES ARE PUT INTO PRACTICE?

## 01 EDUCATION

Hizmet volunteers view education as a means to achieve societal development, peace, equality of opportunities and social justice. Toward these goals, participants establish schools, universities, tutoring centers, student housing, courses, seminars, weekend schools and after-school programs, among other education-focused initiatives. Educational programs are shaped according to the education curriculum standards of the country of their residence and include diverse fields such as science and social sciences, humanities, arts, sports and language instruction. They actively promote the participation of people from all segments of their society in their educational activities.

## 02 SPIRITUAL NOURISHMENT AND GROWTH

Hizmet volunteers organize and support religious/spiritual, social and cultural activities such as spiritual gatherings, seminars, panels and mentorship programs that help them develop spiritually and fulfill their spiritual needs.

## 03 DIALOGUE AND PEACE IN SOCIETY

Hizmet volunteers organize dialogue and civic engagement activities among people of different religions, races, traditions, cultures and worldviews. The aim of these activities is to establish societal peace, promote mutual knowledge and improve empathy and the willingness to accept everyone as they are.

These activities include academic events such as symposia, panels and seminars; cultural events such as festivals, trips and family meetings; spiritual events such as joint prayers and iftar programs; and social responsibility projects such as humanitarian relief activities.

# 04

## **HUMANITARIAN AID AND CONTRIBUTION TO THE WELFARE OF SOCIETY**

Hizmet volunteers view service to humanity as both a social responsibility and a spiritual practice. Through humanitarian aid campaigns, they provide food and shelter services to people who experience natural disasters, wars or poverty. They provide health services to those in need through networks that healthcare professional volunteers have established. They plan their humanitarian aid and social responsibility projects in a self-sustaining way. They organize and support sustainable development projects.

# 05

## **CULTURE AND ART**

As a universal language, art and cultural activities contribute to communication, peace and harmony both within and between communities. They also contribute to the development and expression of personal talents and abilities. Therefore, Hizmet participants organize and support activities such as art education, art performances and language and culture festivals.

# 06

## **PUBLICATIONS**

As a means of non-formal education, Hizmet participants publish journals, magazines, and books for the promotion and dissemination of universal human values such as societal peace, heart-mind integrity and environmental awareness.

# THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE HIZMET MOVEMENT

During the 1960s, Turkish society suffered from social ills such as poverty, lack of equal opportunity, and political polarization that often turned into armed conflict. Against this backdrop, Muslim scholar and intellectual Fethullah Gülen, together with a group of friends, started educational initiatives aimed at protecting youth from violence and self-destructive addictions, empowering them with quality education for career opportunities and providing an environment for them to learn and live their faith fully in the modern world by embracing science, democracy and the diversity of their society. What later became the Hizmet movement started out as a group of volunteer participants who shared the vision of these educational activities, including establishing student housing, scholarships, dormitories, and college preparatory courses.

Over time, this initial community turned into a social movement shaped by concepts such as respecting the dignity of every human, accepting everyone as they are, serving humanity, and finding long-term solutions to social problems through education – concepts rooted in Islamic tradition and universal human values.

While the movement initially focused on education initially, participants soon organized dialogue and intellectual meetings as well as social responsibility projects aimed at reducing tension and prejudice among segments of society with different religious or ethnic identities, political views, or ideologies, and at nurturing a culture of living together in peace.

Beginning in the 2000s, humanitarian relief projects came to the forefront, and movement participants rushed to help victims of many natural disasters in Turkey and around the world. In some places, participants did not stop with disaster relief and began permanent projects such as medical clinics, schools, water wells, and courses for training qualified personnel.

Through education projects, the movement expanded beyond Turkey's borders. The movement's inclusive attitude allowed for the participation of people with different ethnic, religious and cultural backgrounds, leading to a more diverse population of participants.

At the same time, Hizmet participants have interacted culturally with the people and countries where they were active. This naturally led to the formation of local expressions of the movement with different cultural textures, values, attitudes, and working methods. Movement participants view this differentiation as richness within the framework of their core values.

Hizmet volunteers pursue their goals both through the formal activities of foundations, institutions, and organizations they established and through informal organizations such as spiritual gatherings and social activities.

It is essential that the formal organizations and institutions are run by their boards according to the laws of the country of residence, within the transparency and accountability norms of their society, consistent with the core values of the Hizmet movement and in harmony with the broader movement.

Frequent communication, discussion, and the sharing of best practices help maintain this consistency.

# ORGANIZATIONS THAT CONTRIBUTED TO THE PREPARATION OF THIS DOCUMENT

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