



Alliance  
for  
Shared Values

**August 30, 2023**

## **AFSV Statement on International Day of the Victims of Enforced Disappearances**

The Alliance for Shared Values (AfSV) joins the United Nations (UN) and the international community to recognize the International Day of the Victims of Enforced Disappearances. Enforced disappearances are a common strategy used by authoritarian regimes to oppress and silence minorities and opposition groups in clear violation of human rights.

Since Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan took power in 2016, enforced disappearances have risen in Turkey. The [2022 U.S. State Department report](#) on Turkey's human rights practices found at least 40 individuals who have been subject to enforced disappearances since 2020. The report also found at least three cases of successful abductions within the first 11 months of 2022, with no further investigation given by the Turkish government into the missing persons cases. Additionally, [Freedom House](#) has reported that between 2014 and 2020, Erdogan's regime has pursued over 58 renditions from over 17 countries — more than any other nation.

The undemocratic practice of enforced disappearance is used to spread fear throughout society and silence defenders of human rights; we strongly condemn Erdogan's use of these practices. Victims of enforced disappearances are subject to psychological and physical torture, while victims' families are left vulnerable to economic insecurity and are without closure or legal recourse. Along with forced disappearances, renditions, or the capturing of individuals from other states without due process, are used to silence religious freedom and brand democratic participation as terrorism. These practices silence communities with the fear of losing their loved ones, damaging their economic security, and worry of being taken themselves for speaking freely and participating in civic life.

The Hizmet movement works to promote dialogue and peace within a society, fundamental human rights, and civic engagement, which Erdogan directly attacks through enforced disappearances. Democratic values cannot be practiced when individuals fear for their safety and that of their loved ones and their community.

The Alliance for Shared Values joins others in the Hizmet movement for a call for ourselves and for everybody who believes in human dignity to continue to expose the horrendous acts of enforced disappearances around the world and to do our part in protecting all human rights and freedoms expressed in the UN's Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

**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](http://www.afsv.org).

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