



September 15, 2023

AFSV Message for International Day of Democracy

The Alliance for Shared Values (AfSV) joins the United Nations (UN) and the international community in celebrating the International Day of Democracy, using the opportunity to highlight the need to protect democracy in countries where there is a growing democratic deficit. We must look no further than Turkey for an example of how precarious democracy truly is.

With his thumb firmly on the scale and his other hand gripping the levers of power, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan was re-elected this year to a third consecutive term as president of Turkey despite an international outcry that the contest was far from fair. In addition to subjugating the mass media for pro-ruling party coverage and silencing the civil society through a politicized judiciary, the Erdoğan regime has allegedly engaged in many tactics to inflate pro-Erdogan votes and discard pro-opposition ones. One scholar at the American Enterprise Institute [argued](#) that Erdoğan granted passports to some 300,000 refugees and fought opposition support by [falsely accusing citizens of voting twice and using intimidation practices](#). By shutting down one news agency that used to publish ballot box results and silencing another, Erdogan made sure that nobody would be able to verify the integrity of the vote counts.

This kind of assault on democracy is wrong. Hizmet participants value democratic culture and firmly believe in fighting for protecting human rights and freedoms. The removal of votes and the blocking of civil discourse violate fundamental human rights of free speech and self-determination, two cornerstones of democracy.

Today, in celebrating democracy, the international community also must recognize the democratic deficit in countries like Turkey that claim to be democracies but clearly and repeatedly show that they are not.

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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