



October 21, 2024

In Remembrance of Mr. Fethullah Gülen: A Towering Figure of Faith and Leadership

With sorrowful hearts and humble acceptance of God’s will, we announce the departure of our beloved Fethullah Gülen “Hocaefendi” from this temporal world.

We are deeply saddened by the departure of Mr. Gülen, a towering figure of faith, wisdom, intellectual and spiritual leadership for Hizmet participants and countless others around the world. After a period of struggle, Mr. Gülen passed away on October 20, 2024, near the retreat center in the Pocono Mountains of Pennsylvania where he spent the last years of his life. His teachings, rooted in compassion, education, and dialogue, will continue to guide and inspire those committed to serving humanity.

This is a solemn time of mourning, reflection, and prayer for the Hizmet community. Mr. Gülen’s legacy transcends the circumstances of his life. He stands as a remarkable religious and intellectual thinker whose impact will be felt for generations. As he once said, “Our values are not dependent upon any person. Their existence does not depend on the existence of any individual. These values are sufficient to keep people together without fragmenting tomorrow. As long as the spirit of serving people for the sake of God continues, God will not allow the movement to fracture. We trust Him and rely on Him alone.”

Spiritual guidance for Hizmet now will be carried forward by a group of his close friends who have provided wisdom and inspiration for decades. Though Mr. Gülen had not played an active role in recent years, he consistently encouraged consultation and collective decision-making, a practice that will ensure the movement's ongoing work in education, dialogue, and humanitarian relief.

It is important to note that Hizmet is thriving in democracies and will continue to grow. There will not be a “replacement” for Mr. Gülen, as he held no official position within the movement. Yet, his legacy remains a powerful source of inspiration. Hizmet participants will continue to look to his words and deeds for guidance as they carry on their mission of serving people to serve God.

Let us honor his life by continuing the work he dedicated himself to: fostering education, dialogue, mutual understanding, respect, and peace around the world.

We share our deepest condolences with his relatives and loved ones. Please join us in prayer for his peace and tranquility, as we ask God for His mercy and forgiveness for his soul.

With deepest respect,
Alliance for Shared Values

Who Was Fethullah Gülen?

Fethullah Gülen was a Muslim scholar, preacher and social advocate, whose decades-long commitment to education, altruistic community service, and interfaith harmony has inspired millions in Turkey and around the world. Described as one of the world's most influential Muslim intellectuals, Mr. Gülen has dedicated his life to interfaith and intercultural dialogue, community service, and providing access to quality education.

Mr. Gülen rejuvenated the spirit of interfaith dialogue in his home country, Turkey, and strongly advocated for pro-democracy, equal opportunity, pro-science, and non-violent stances. His lifelong work on interfaith cooperation has earned him recognition from faith leaders worldwide and a personal audience with the late Pope John Paul II in 1998.

During his last years Gülen became a target of the autocratic Turkish president, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, who falsely blamed Mr. Gülen for a horrific coup attempt in 2016. Mr. Gülen's earlier support for Erdogan was predicated on Erdogan's stated commitment to pushing Turkey toward the European Union as a democratic candidate country. As Erdogan made a U-turn from his earlier promises and moved instead toward autocracy, Mr. Gülen withdrew his support and Erdogan began a campaign of repression and persecution that continues against Hizmet supporters to this day.

He was among the first Muslim leaders to publicly condemn the 9/11 attacks and condemned ISIS in 2014 via public ads in major US newspapers.

His efforts have been praised by other global leaders who recognize his vital role in fostering mutual understanding and peace as well as his leadership in humanitarian initiatives.

He is the recipient of New York-based *East West Institute's* 2011 peace award.

In 2013, Mr. Gülen was named one of *TIME Magazine's* 100 most influential people and received Korea's 2013 *Manhae Peace Prize*.

The Martin Luther King International Chapel at Morehouse College in Atlanta, Georgia, honored Gülen's lifetime contributions to peace with the 2015 *Gandhi King Ikeda Peace Award*.

Gülen was listed among the top [100 Most Spiritually Influential Living People](#) by the UK-based *Mind, Body and Spirit Magazine* in 2018, 2019, and 2020.

Gülen was listed in the Preachers and Spiritual Guides of *the Muslim 500*, published by The Royal Islamic Strategic Studies Centre in Jordan, in 2018, 2022, and 2023.

Gülen was nominated multiple times for the Nobel peace prize by social scientists who studied his life and works.

For further information about Gülen please visit <https://afsv.org/about-us/fethullah-gulen/>
For further information about the Hizmet movement please visit <https://afsv.org/>.

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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