**URGENT: AUTHORITIES MUST TAKE ALL THE NECESSARY STEPS FOR THE PROTECTION OF HIZMET PARTICIPANTS**

Dear Sir/Madam,

This is a letter intended first to create awareness on the situation of people linked with the Gulen Movement (also known as “Hizmet Movement,” meaning *service* in Turkish) and on the risks they might face on their territory. Even if they could reach out to safer territories, those people might still be at risk because of the long arm of the Turkish government. We also recommend extra security measures to be taken for the protection of supporters of the Movement, if necessary.

As it is known Turkish government has been taking strict measures to silence dissidents from various ideologies recently. Gulen Movement has been the main target of the government, which is a faith-based group of people engaging in different voluntary activities such as education, business and health. Alleged supporters of the Movement in Turkey have been dealing with arrest, imprisonment, torture, inhuman and degrading treatment, confiscation and passport seizure. Regrettably Turkish government’s actions against the Gulen Movement are not limited to Turkish borders but are also extraterritorial. There are many examples of abductions and physical violence incidents in several countries as well as threats by pro-government people referring to the supporters abroad. Individuals linked to the Movement cannot feel safe abroad either.

It is evident that the actions of the government have cross-border impacts putting even people abroad at risk. People that are perceived as linked to the Gulen Movement are justifiably right to be afraid of the possible incidents. Therefore, we as the Advocates of Silenced Turkey urge foreign governments to take all the necessary steps to ensure safety to these people before it is too late. Security officers must be aware of the potential risks. Officials working for the Turkish government abroad must be watched closely, they must be prevented if they are in preparation of any harm. Lastly, both individuals and organizations that are deemed to be Hizmet participants must be provided extra protection when there is an imminent risk targeting them.

Therefore, this letter aims to remind foreign security officers and relevant bodies of the foreign governments the risks Hizmet participants may face, and to request all necessary steps to be taken to provide sufficient protection ensuring human rights and fundamental freedoms.

For more detailed information about these risks, please look at the report prepared by the Advocates of Silenced Turkey on the current and possible threats supporters of the Gulen Movement face abroad titled *“I Cannot Say We Are Absolutely Safe Even Abroad.”*

Thank you for your time and concern.

Yours Sincerely