

Witness Biographies

Alp Aslandogan,
Executive Director, Alliance for Shared Values



Dr. Y. Alp Aslandogan is the Executive Director of the Alliance for Shared Values, a non-profit organization that promotes bringing together citizens of diverse backgrounds around shared values of humanity. The Alliance serves as an umbrella for foundations focusing on interfaith and intercultural dialogue in North America, bringing together citizens of Christian, Jewish, Muslim and other faith backgrounds around meaningful conversations and social responsibility projects.

Dr. Aslandogan also serves as the chair of the Integration Committee of the North America Civic Platform, an association of cultural, religious and humanitarian organizations established by Hizmet Movement participants in North America.

Prior to his current position Dr. Aslandogan served as the president of North American University, an adjunct faculty member of Prairie View A&M University, a faculty member of the University of Texas at Arlington, the board president of the Institute of Interfaith Dialog and a board member of the Gulen Institute in Houston, Texas.

Dr. Aslandogan is a co-editor of “Muslim Citizens of the Globalized World: Contributions of the Gulen Movement” published by the Institute of Interfaith Dialogue.

Dr. Aslandogan has served as an author and an editor of the Fountain magazine, and as a member of the board of practitioners and scholars of the Journal of Interreligious Dialogue. He published opinion columns on Newsweek, Huffington Post, CNN and Fox News.com. As the director of Alliance for Shared Values he was interviewed by PBS, CBS, and Voice of America.

Dr. Aslandogan holds a Ph.D. in Computer Science from the University of Illinois at Chicago. He also did graduate studies at Hartford International University in Islamic Studies and Christian-Muslim Relations.

**Enes Kanter Freedom,
Human Rights Activist, Former NBA Basketball Player**



Enes Kanter Freedom is a human rights activist, NBA star, and Nobel Peace Prize nominee who sacrificed his basketball career to speak out against China's human rights violations.

Born in Switzerland and raised in Turkey, Freedom bravely called out human rights abuses by President Recep Tayyip Erdogan in his home country. In response, Turkey canceled his passport, placed his name on an Interpol list, banned communication with his family, imprisoned and tortured his father, placed a \$500,000 bounty on his head. The Turkish government effectively issued an international arrest warrant for Freedom.

During a visit to Indonesia in 2017, Freedom narrowly escaped a government attempt to kidnap him and return him to Turkey. Later that year, he was detained and arrested at the Bucharest airport by the Romanian government. Over the course of 9 years, Freedom faced 12 arrest warrants and countless death threats for his activism.

After unveiling his "Anti-CCP" shoes during a 2021 NBA season opener, every Boston Celtics game was instantaneously banned at halftime in both China and Turkey. Through the use of his "Freedom Shoes," in NBA games he has advocated for the rights of Uyghurs, Tibetans, Hongkongers, Taiwanese, and others facing the Chinese Communist Party's oppression.

In 2022, five years after having his Turkish citizenship revoked, Enes Kanter became a proud U.S. citizen and changed his last name to Freedom. He has since become a prominent voice for the oppressed in various countries, including Turkey, China, Russia, Iran, and throughout the Middle East.

In spite of his advocacy, the NBA traded Freedom from the Boston Celtics to the Houston Rockets in February 2022, only to be released by the Rockets just 3 minutes later. The NBA has been hesitant to sign him due to his outspoken criticism of China, attempting to silence him in the process, and resulting in a financial loss of an estimated \$50 million. For Enes Kanter Freedom, the fight for freedom comes at a big cost, but his dedication to human rights around the world remains unwavering. "Freedom Is Not Free!"

Micheal Rubin, Senior Fellow, American Enterprise Institute



Michael Rubin is a senior fellow at the American Enterprise Institute, where he specializes in Iran, Turkey, and the broader Middle East.

A former Pentagon official, Dr. Rubin has lived in post-revolution Iran, Yemen, and both pre- and postwar Iraq. He also spent time with the Taliban before 9/11. For more than a decade, he taught classes at sea about the Horn of Africa and Middle East conflicts, culture, and terrorism, to deployed US Navy and Marine units.

Dr. Rubin is the author, coauthor, and coeditor of several books exploring diplomacy, Iranian history, Arab culture, Kurdish studies, and Shi'ite politics, including “Seven Pillars: What Really Causes Instability in the Middle East?” (AEI Press, 2019); “Kurdistan Rising” (AEI Press, 2016); “Dancing with the Devil: The Perils of Engaging Rogue Regimes” (Encounter Books, 2014); and “Eternal Iran: Continuity and Chaos” (Palgrave, 2005).

Dr. Rubin has a PhD and an MA in history from Yale University, where he also obtained a BS in biology.