



**European
Bureau for
Conscientious
Objection**



J O I N T P R E S S R E L E A S E

Third (!) imprisonment of Turkish-Cypriot reservist conscientious objector Halil Karapaşaoğlu totally unacceptable

5 June 2024

The [European Bureau for Conscientious Objection](#) (EBCO), [War Resisters' International](#) (WRI), the [International Fellowship of Reconciliation](#) (IFOR), and [Connection e.V.](#) **strongly condemn the third (!) imprisonment of Turkish-Cypriot reservist conscientious objector Halil Karapaşaoğlu, and call on the authorities in the "TRNC" to urgently amend the Military Service Act so as to recognise the right of conscientious objection to military service, and to implement the Murat Kanatlı v Türkiye judgement of the European Court of Human Rights.**

On 30 May 2024, Halil Karapaşaoğlu was sentenced by the Security Forces Court of Nicosia (Military Court of Nicosia in the northern part of Cyprus) to a fine of 1000 Turkish liras (29 euros) for refusing to serve his reservist military service on grounds of conscientious objection. Halil Karapaşaoğlu refused to pay the fine, so it was converted to 3 days' imprisonment, and he was immediately arrested and transferred to the prison, even in handcuffs. The Initiative for Conscientious Objection in Cyprus ([Kıbrıs'ta vicdani ret](#)) organised solidarity actions in front of the court and in front of the prison the same day. Halil Karapaşaoğlu was released the next morning, 31 May 2024.

EBCO President Alexia Tsouni and WRI Council Member and human rights lawyer Hülya Üçpınar were present at the trial of Halil Karapaşaoğlu as international observers, gave press statements, and met with deputy parliament speaker Fazilet Özdenefe, parliamentary law committee members Urun Solyalı and Aysegül Baybars at the "TRNC Parliament" together with conscientious objectors Murat Kanatlı and Alp Bürge from the Initiative for Conscientious Objection in Cyprus on 30 May 2024.

The four organisations express our full solidarity with Halil Karapaşaoğlu and the Initiative for Conscientious Objection.

Read our relevant recent joint press release "**Landmark judgment by the European Court of Human Rights in the case of reservist conscientious objector Murat Kanatlı v Türkiye**": <https://ebco-beoc.org/node/619>

For a detailed report on the situation of conscientious objectors in Cyprus, see EBCO's recently published **Annual Report "Conscientious Objection to Military Service in Europe 2023/24"**, which is available on the EBCO website: www.ebco-beoc.org.

Watch the videos from the **solidarity actions** organised by the Initiative for Conscientious Objection in Cyprus:

- in front of the court: <https://youtu.be/1pBnOzTj-7w>
- in front of the prison: <https://youtu.be/IARKx6yA9-s>

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND INTERVIEWS please contact:

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The [European Bureau for Conscientious Objection \(EBCO\)](#) was founded in Brussels in 1979 as an umbrella structure for national associations of conscientious objectors in the European countries to promote the right to conscientious objection to preparations for, and participation in, war and any other type of military activity as a fundamental human right. EBCO enjoys participatory status with the Council of Europe since 1998 and is a member of its Conference of International Non-Governmental Organisations since 2005. EBCO is entitled to lodge collective complaints concerning the European Social Charter of the Council of Europe since 2021. EBCO provides expertise and legal opinions to European and international institutions. EBCO publishes its annual report "Conscientious Objection to Military Service in Europe" which is also EBCO's contribution to the annual report of the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs of the European Parliament on the application by the Member States of its resolutions on conscientious objection and civilian service, as determined in the "Bandrés Molet & Bindi Resolution" of 1994. EBCO is a full member of the European Youth Forum since 1995.

[War Resisters' International \(WRI\)](#) was founded in London in 1921 as a global network of grassroots organisations, groups and individuals working together for a world without war. WRI remains committed to its founding declaration that 'War is a crime against humanity. I am therefore determined not to support any kind of war, and to strive for the removal of all causes of war'. Today WRI is a global pacifist and antimilitarist network with over 90 affiliated groups in 40 countries. WRI facilitates mutual support, by linking people together through publications, events and actions, initiating nonviolent campaigns that actively involve local groups and individuals, supporting those who oppose war and who challenge its causes, and promoting and educating people about pacifism and nonviolence. WRI runs three programmes of work that are important to the network: The Right to Refuse to Kill Programme, the Nonviolence Programme, and Countering the Militarisation of Youth.

The [International Fellowship of Reconciliation \(IFOR\)](#) was founded in 1914 in response to the horrors of war in Europe, and has taken a consistent stance against war and its preparation throughout its history. Today IFOR has branches, groups, and affiliates in over 40 countries on all continents, while the International Secretariat is located in the Netherlands. IFOR's membership includes adherents of all the major spiritual traditions as well as those who have other spiritual sources for their commitment to nonviolence. IFOR has observer and consultative status to the United Nations ECOSOC and UNESCO organisations. IFOR maintains permanent representatives in Geneva, New York and Vienna and at the UNESCO in Paris who regularly participate in conferences and meetings of UN bodies, providing testimony and expertise from different regional perspectives, promoting non-violent alternatives in the fields of human rights, development, and disarmament.

[Connection e.V.](#) was founded in 1993 as an association advocating a comprehensive right to conscientious objection at an international level. The organisation is based in Offenbach, Germany, and collaborates with groups opposing war, conscription and the military in Europe and beyond, extending to Türkiye, Israel, the U.S., Latin America and Africa. Connection e.V. demands that conscientious objectors from war regions should get asylum, and offers counseling and information to refugees and support for their self-organisation.
