



European Bureau for Conscientious Objection

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P R E S S R E L E A S E

EBCO sends observer at the Military Court of Nicosia in support of Turkish-Cypriot conscientious objector Halil Karapaşaoğlu

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Turkish-Cypriot conscientious objector Halil Karapaşaoğlu is at imminent risk of imprisonment because the right to conscientious objection to military service is still not recognised in the northern part of Cyprus, in violation of the European and international law and human rights standards. Up until today there are four open court cases against Halil Karapaşaoğlu and the Military Court of Nicosia (Lefkosa Askeri Ceza Mahkemesi) is expected to announce its decision tomorrow, 3 January 2019.

"Conscientious objection is a right, not a crime. EBCO supports Halil Karapaşaoğlu and all conscientious objectors whose rights are violated. We are following the cases of Halil Karapaşaoğlu since the beginning and we are sending Derek Brett, EBCO's Special Representative to the United Nations, as an observer at the court hearing at the Military Court of Nicosia on 3 January 2019", EBCO's President Friedhelm Schneider stated today.

"EBCO demands that all the charges against Halil Karapaşaoğlu are dropped, and that the right to conscientious objection to military service is recognised without further delay, in line with the European and international law and human rights standards", EBCO's Special Representative to the United Nations Derek Brett added.

EBCO supports the solidarity campaign of the Initiative for Conscientious Objection in Cyprus, including the call for tomorrow (<https://www.facebook.com/events/283814665816425/>).

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. It enjoys participatory status with the Council of Europe since 1998 and is a member of its Conference of International Non-Governmental Organisations since 2005. It provides expertise and legal opinions on behalf of the Directorate General of Human Rights and Legal Affairs of the Council of Europe. It is involved in drawing up 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. It is a full member of the European Youth Forum since 1995.