



**European
Bureau for
Conscientious
Objection**



ASEISTAKIELTÄYTYJÄLIITTO

I N V I T A T I O N

Invitation to press conference on conscientious objectors and deserters from Russia's war of aggression

Helsinki, 5 September 2022

In the press conference on Monday 5 September in Helsinki Central Library Oodi, the European Bureau for Conscientious Objection (EBCO) and the Union of Conscientious Objectors (AKL) will give the floor to conscientious objectors from the war of aggression launched by Russia against Ukraine, and call on European governments to provide human rights protection and asylum to all of them. Is there war resistance in Russia?

Alexander Belik, exiled activist and lawyer from the Russian Movement of Conscientious Objectors (MCO), will be present in the event to explain the situation of conscientious objectors, deserters, war resisters and civil society in Russia, as well as the Russian opposition abroad. What happens in Ukraine after the declaration of martial law? Yuri Sheliashenko, Executive Secretary of the Ukrainian Pacifist Movement (UPM), will speak online from Kiev to explain the impact of the travel ban for all men, and the suspension of the human right to conscientious objection due to lack of provisions for alternative non-military service during military mobilization. What is the position of the EU so far?

The peace organisations reminded that European Council President Charles Michel has also [urged](#) EU countries to find ways to offer asylum to Russian deserters who refuse to go to war. What are the peace organisations calling for? A [joint appeal](#) is addressed to the European Parliament and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) calling on European governments to provide human rights protection to Russian conscientious objectors and deserters who refuse to fight in Russia's war of aggression, not forgetting Belarusian and Ukrainian conscientious objectors.

The appeal is supported by around 60 other peace, human rights and refugee organisations from all over Europe.

WHERE: Helsinki Central Library Oodi, The Aura room, 2nd floor, Töölönlahdenkatu 4 and as a stream at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCmSX7uBsAdr3VqRhCY1uE5Q>

WHEN: Monday September 5 2022, 10-11am. You can read the full press invitation and details here: <https://www.ebco-beoc.org/node/541> All speakers will also be available for meetings and interviews after the event. The language of the event will be English.

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