



## P R E S S   R E L E A S E

### One year later: Stop the war NOW, give peace a chance! Premiere of the "Make Art, Not War!" film

Brussels, 24 February 2023

"On the occasion of the **one-year anniversary of the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine** on February 24<sup>th</sup> 2022, EBCO repeats its **call for peace** and urges both sides to **end the war with an immediate ceasefire, leaving space for negotiation and diplomacy**", EBCO's President Alexia Tsouni stated today.

EBCO strongly condemns the Russian invasion, and calls on all soldiers not to participate in hostilities and on all recruits to refuse military service. "We call for support of the international **#ObjectWarCampaign (Russia, Belarus, Ukraine: Protection and asylum for deserters and conscientious objectors to military service)**, jointly launched by the **European Bureau for Conscientious Objection** (EBCO), the **International Fellowship of Reconciliation** (IFOR), **War Resisters' International** (WRI), and **Connection e.V.** (Germany)", EBCO's Vice-President Sam Biesemans stated today.

EBCO **denounces all the cases of forced and even violent recruitment to the armies of both sides, as well as all the cases of persecution of conscientious objectors, deserters and non-violent anti-war protestors.** "We are extremely concerned about the case of 46-year-old Christian conscientious objector **Vitaly Alekseenko** who was recently **convicted to one-year imprisonment sentence** for refusing call up to the military on conscientious grounds, and is under immediate risk of imprisonment. **We urge the Ukrainian authorities to drop all charges against him immediately**", EBCO's Vice-President Merve Arkun stated today.

**EBCO invites you to the premiere of the "[Make Art, Not War!](#)" film**, which will be available for free for 3 days from 24 to 26 February 2023 online here: <https://youtu.be/j8eEkIgeJtg>

The film was created together with **conscientious objectors and pacifists from Ukraine, Russia, Belarus and Finland** during the Russian war in Ukraine in 2022 (in Ukrainian/Russian/Belarusian with subtitles in several languages), and includes excerpts from the works:

- Belarusian poem by **Yanka Kupala**, 1914, "Abandoned fields and villages / Songs of War"
- Ukrainian poem by **Taras Shevchenko**, 1844, "Dream"
- Russian drama by **Leo Tolstoy**, 1890, "The light that shines in darkness"



Cover photo: Friedhelm Schneider

Playing (appearance order): Elena Popova, Olga Karatch, Ruslan Kotsaba  
 Kateryna Lanko, Yurii Sheliazenko, Jessica Calonius, Serhii Ustimenko, Alexander Belik  
Direction, Photography and Editing: Alexia Tsouni  
Assistant Direction: Georgia Tsouni and Alexander Belik  
Color Grading and Sound Design: Evangelos Vlachakis  
Music: "Ethereal Odyssey", "Cello in the Fjords" and "Uplifting Small String Ensemble" by RealMcCoys  
 "Cinematic Ambient Piano and Cello" by Max-Music  
Production: FemArtAct, 2023



Special Thanks:

Russian Movement of Conscientious Objectors to Military Service (Движение сознательных отказчиков от военной службы)

Ukrainian Pacifist Movement (Український Рух Пацифістів)

Belarusian Nash Dom (Наш Дом)

Finnish Union of Conscientious Objectors (Aseistakieltyjäliitto AKL)

European Bureau for Conscientious Objection (EBCO)



**More info to Vitaly Alekseenko:** [UKRAINE: Conscientious objector told "to be ready to be taken to prison" - Forum 18, 15/02/2023](#)

Photo: Vitaly Alekseenko, Copyright: Vitaly Alekseenko

**#ObjectWarCampaign:** [Russia, Belarus, Ukraine: Protection and asylum for deserters and conscientious objectors to military service](#)



## #OBJECT WAR CAMPAIGN

Solidarity with conscientious objectors and deserters from Russia, Belarus and Ukraine **Sign now!**

#ОткажиВойне  
#ВідмовВійні

**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 on behalf of the Directorate General of Human Rights and Legal Affairs of the Council of Europe. EBCO 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 & Bindt Resolution" of 1994. EBCO is a full member of the European Youth Forum since 1995.