



E B C O P R E S S R E L E A S E

EBCO sends international observer for the trial of conscientious objector Mustafa Hürben in the northern part of Cyprus

Brussels, 28 December 2023

The [European Bureau for Conscientious Objection \(EBCO\)](#) denounces the prosecution of conscientious objector **Mustafa Hürben** in the northern, Turkish-occupied, part of Cyprus (the self-styled "Turkish Republic of North Cyprus"). **EBCO Chief Editor Derek Brett will attend his upcoming trial as international observer in Nicosia on 18 January 2024.**

Mustafa Hürben is a genuine conscientious objector, prosecuted solely for his beliefs. EBCO calls for the dropping of all charges against him.

Mustafa Hürben was summoned to the Security Forces Court of Nicosia on 16 November 2023. He made a press statement in front of the court, read his conscientious objection statement, announced that **he would not participate in the reserve call** and the court case was postponed. There was a court hearing again on 14 December 2023. The judge is familiar with the subject, reminded the judgements of the Constitutional Court and the Security Forces Appeal Court, and asked about the law amendments. The lawyer of the [Initiative for Conscientious Objection in Cyprus](#) said that there was no development, that he is ready for the case and he would present the reasons. The case was postponed for January 18th 2024, and it is expected to be concluded with a single hearing.

In order to express its solidarity with the Cypriot conscientious objectors and organise its support, EBCO held its latest General Assembly in Cyprus on 28 October 2023 ¹ in the Home for Cooperation in the buffer zone in Nicosia, kindly hosted by the Initiative for Conscientious Objection in Cyprus.

EBCO underlines the fact that the following **three cases of conscientious objectors from the northern part of Cyprus are already pending against Türkiye before the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR)** ²:

1. **Halil Karapasaoglu v. Türkiye** (case number 40627/19). The case was accepted by the ECtHR on 10/01/2020. ³ On 05/07/2019 Halil Karapasaoglu submitted an application to the ECtHR against Türkiye for violations of articles 5, 6 and 9 of the European Convention of Human Rights: (Art. 5) Right to liberty and security, (Art. 6) Right to a fair trial, (Art. 9) Freedom of thought, conscience and religion.

¹ EBCO Press Release: EBCO General Assembly and parallel action in Nicosia, Cyprus. Available at: <https://www.ebco-beoc.org/node/604>

² EBCO Annual Report "Conscientious Objection to Military Service in Europe 2022/23". Available at: https://ebco-beoc.org/sites/ebco-beoc.org/files/attachments/2023-05-12-EBCO_Annual_Report_2022-23.pdf

³ Available at: https://in-cyprus.com/echr-accepts-application-from-turkish-cypriot-conscientious-objector/?fbclid=IwAR0ybcXl50TaU8aXuKnat0EmnN4qPOTxilvFspEQniqEj0bg_a7paL_u4c

2. **Haluk Selam Tufanli v. Türkiye** (case number 29367/15⁴). The application concerns the refusal of the applicant, a conscientious objector, to attend reservist service for military mobilisation training in 2011. On 02/06/2015 Haluk Selam Tufanli submitted an application to the ECtHR against Türkiye for violations of articles 5 §§ 1, 4 and 5, 9 and 13 of the European Convention of Human Rights: (Art. 5) Right to liberty and security, (Art. 9) Freedom of thought, conscience and religion, (Art. 13) Right to an effective remedy.
3. **Murat Kanatli v. Türkiye** (case number 18382/15⁵). The application concerns the refusal of the applicant, who is a conscientious objector and an activist, to attend reservist service when called to attend training for military mobilisation in 2009. On 06/04/2015 Murat Kanatli submitted an application to the ECtHR against Türkiye for violations of articles 5 §§ 1, 4 and 5, 6, 9, 13 and 14 of the European Convention of Human Rights: (Art. 5) Right to liberty and security, (Art. 6) Right to a fair trial, (Art. 9) Freedom of thought, conscience and religion, (Art. 13) Right to an effective remedy, (Art. 14) Prohibition of discrimination.

The right to conscientious objection to military service is inherent in the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, guaranteed under Article 18 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), which is **non-derogable even in a time of public emergency**, as stated in Article 4(2) of ICCPR.

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND INTERVIEWS please contact:

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The [European Bureau for Conscientious Objection \(EBCO\)](http://www.ebcocentre.org/) 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 & Bindi Resolution" of 1994. EBCO is a full member of the European Youth Forum since 1995.

⁴ Available at: <http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng?i=001-208228>

⁵ Available at: <http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng?i=001-184213>