



Athens 12/01/2016

**Stop the mockery against conscientious objectors!  
We demand full respect for our human rights!**

Each new government usually spends some minimum time during the first year of its term to settle some minimum issues relating to compulsory military service and the issue of conscientious objectors. We have experienced this repeatedly.

Our conclusion is that each government will openly ignore the criticisms and recommendations of national and international organizations. Already the new left-led government, refuses to give clear answers to questions of its own MPs (see questions of Karagiannidis [29/07/2015](#), [03/11/2015](#), [09/11/2015](#), [07/12/2015](#)) on issues relating to the flagrant violation of the rights of conscientious objectors.

From our side, and especially after the developments of recent years at the level of the European Court of Human Rights (see Bayatyan v. Armenia in 2011 which recognized the right to conscientious objection) and at UN level (see recommendations of the UN Human Rights Committee on Greece in 2015<sup>1</sup>), we will claim our rights appealing for specific individual cases to the European Court of Human Rights or the UN Human Rights Committee, institutions which have already begun to award compensations for human rights violations in cases of conscientious objectors from other countries.

The key issue, however, is one and unique. The abolition of compulsory military service. What has passed in the minds of young people to be an obligation, it is only an obsession in the minds of persons like the current Minister of Defence Mr P. Kammenos.

Instead of shrinking and abolishing the compulsory military service as in most European countries, Mr. Kammenos flirts with the paranoia by proposing the voluntary recruitment of women.

As for the draft law which is under discussion and that is supposed to regulate the issues, we have submitted a detailed memorandum (<http://www.antirrisies.gr/node/1151>) with our firm demands, and how most of them are documented under international law, international standards and recommendations of international and Greek organizations protecting human rights.

**In brief our basic demands until the abolition of the compulsory military service, without the detailed documentation here, are the following:**

- 1) Repeal all convictions to prison terms and all fines imposed so far on conscientious objectors (including total objectors) in violation of international law, return the money and provide the necessary compensations.
- 2) Alternative service of equal length to military service.

- 3) Abolition of the process of examination of applications by the special committee (also known as conscience control committee) and automatic application of the provisions on alternative service for all those who apply for it and all those who were rejected so far, if their cases are still pending.
- 4) Abolition of the "irrefutable evidence" of paragraph 3 of Article 59 of Law 3421/2005 (as amended by Article 78 of Law 3883/2010).
- 5) Right to recognition as a conscientious objector at any time, both before and after enlistment in the Armed Forces.
- 6) Abolition of the possibility of deduction of the right to conscientious objection.
- 7) End the discrimination against conscientious objectors over 35 years regarding the buying off the rest of their obligations.
- 8) Obligation of the administration to process the application of conscientious objector within two months.
- 9) Real coverage of the financial needs of conscientious objectors and end of the discrimination against them on financial level.
- 10) End the discrimination against conscientious objectors in relation to transpositions.
- 11) Submission of the institution of alternative service under civilian supervisory authority.
- 12) Possibility to perform the alternative service in NGOs and humanitarian missions abroad.
- 13) Validity of the right to conscientious objection and alternative service even in times of war or emergency.
- 14) Right to recognition as a conscientious objector for professional soldiers as well.
- 15) Reduction of the age limit for military duty from 45 years, which is currently in force, by at least a decade.
- 16) Decriminalization of total objection to military service (full decriminalization and initially lifting at least the criminal and administrative sanctions that violate fundamental rights).

Not even a single hour in the army!  
Association of Conscientious Objectors

[www.antirrisies.gr](http://www.antirrisies.gr)

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<sup>i</sup> UN Human Rights Committee, Concluding observations on the second periodic report of Greece  
[CCPR/C/GRC/CO/2](http://www.unhcr.org/refugees/refugees/CCPR/C/GRC/CO/2)