

**P R E S S R E L E A S E****Imprisonment of Turkish-Cypriot conscientious objector Halil Karapaşaoğlu:****A blatant human rights violation**

Brussels, 15 January 2019

"Turkish-Cypriot conscientious objector Halil Karapaşaoğlu is a prisoner of conscience, imprisoned solely for his peaceful convictions and his genuine opposition to the compulsory military service. EBCO denounces his imprisonment as a blatant human rights violation. EBCO demands his immediate and unconditional release, and the urgent recognition of the right to conscientious objection to military service in line with the European and international law and human rights standards", EBCO's President Friedhelm Schneider stated today, following Halil's arrest and transfer to prison in order to serve a 20-day sentence.

This is happening just days after a draft amendment law to recognise conscientious objection to military service has been submitted to the Parliament.

EBCO stands in solidarity with Halil Karapaşaoğlu and supports the solidarity campaign of the Initiative for Conscientious Objection in Cyprus, including the call for today's action outside the prison (<https://www.facebook.com/events/2326548874062347/>).



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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.



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