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## JOINT PRESS RELEASE

### Stop Prosecuting Turkish Cypriot Conscientious Objector Hasan Rahvancıođlu

*Joint press release by Connection e.V., the European Bureau for Conscientious Objection (EBCO), International Fellowship of Reconciliation (IFOR) and War Resisters' International (WRI)*

24 November 2025

[Connection e.V.](#), the [European Bureau for Conscientious Objection](#) (EBCO), [International Fellowship of Reconciliation](#) (IFOR) and [War Resisters' International](#) (WRI) strongly condemn the prosecution of conscientious objector **Hasan Rahvancıođlu**, whose trial is scheduled for **27 November 2025** before the **Security Forces Court in the self-declared state of Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC)**. This is a clear violation of the **fundamental human right to conscientious objection to military service**, and we call on the authorities in the "TRNC" to **immediately dismiss all charges**.

Hasan Rahvancıođlu has **peacefully and publicly declared his conscientious objection to military service**. He has stated that he will not pay any fines imposed by the court, meaning he faces **imprisonment simply for exercising his freedom of thought, conscience, and belief**.

This prosecution **blatantly contradicts international legal standards**. The human right to conscientious objection to military service, which is inherent in the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, is guaranteed under Article 18 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). In the **landmark case of Murat Kanatlı v. Türkiye<sup>1</sup>**, the **European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR)** has also affirmed that the right to conscientious objection is protected under **Article 9 of the European Convention on Human Rights**.

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<sup>1</sup> European Court of Human Rights, Murat Kanatlı v. Türkiye, Application no. 18382/15 Available at: HUDOC, <https://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng?i=001-184213>

On the domestic level, the **Constitutional Court and Military Court of Appeals in the “TRNC”** have also recognised this right. Yet, in the absence of legislative reform, **conscientious objectors continue to be criminalised.**

As international human rights and peace organisations, we are **deeply concerned** by the **ongoing prosecution of conscientious objectors in the “TRNC”**, despite **clear rulings from both domestic and international courts** affirming their rights. The case of Hasan Rahvancıoğlu highlights the **urgent need for legislative reform.**

We call on the authorities in the "TRNC" urgently to amend the Military Service Act so as to recognise the right of conscientious objection to military service, including with regard to reservist service, and to implement the Kanatlı judgement by forthwith ceasing prosecution of conscientious objectors. Until a law is passed recognising the right to conscientious objection, individuals like Hasan Rahvancıoğlu remain at risk of **unjust punishment and imprisonment.**

We will **closely monitor Hasan Rahvancıoğlu's trial** and continue to **stand in solidarity with him and all conscientious objectors from Cyprus.** Their struggle is a **peaceful call for dignity, freedom, and justice.**

Connection e.V.  
European Bureau for Conscientious Objection  
International Fellowship of Reconciliation  
War Resisters' International

**FOR MORE INFORMATION AND INTERVIEWS please contact:**

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*Since the Turkish army occupied the northern part of Cyprus in 1974, the occupied territories are ruled by a Turkish Cypriot administration. In 1983, it proclaimed 'The Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus' (TRNC). The entity has not been recognised by any country except Turkey.*

*TRNC has its own armed forces and conscription system, according to which all men between the ages of 19 and 30 are liable for military service. The length of military service is 15 months and the right to conscientious objection is not recognised.*