

Statement: Solidarity with the Egyptian Conscientious Objector Mark Nabil Sanad

We, peace and human rights organizations, declare our support and solidarity with *No to Compulsory Military Service Movement* and with the Egyptian conscientious objector, Mark Nabil Sanad. We condemn the silence of Egypt's authorities over conscientious objectors' suffering. We call on the Egyptian authorities to restore his civil rights and to recognize his right to an exemption from the military service based on his conscientious beliefs.

Mark Nabil had informed the officers at Assiut Conscription Area on the 13th of May, 2014 of his Pacifist beliefs, and his refusal to the military service. He was interrogated by a Military Security Officer that day, then was interrogated again on the 15th of May, 2014, in the main headquarter of the Military Intelligence in Cairo. Since that date, the Egyptian military refrained from giving Mark Nabil any legal documentation stating that he had finished/was exempted from the military service. Without any such document, Mark Nabil lives deprived of his constitutional and legal rights— most important of which are the right to work, to travel and the right to education.

Mark submitted a complaint to the Army Chief of Staff on the 27th of July, 2014. He also filed a complaint against the Minister of Defense to the Attorney General on the 21st of September, 2014. On 21st of January, 2014 he sent formal requests to the Minister of Defense, the Prime Minister and the President, demanding an exemption from the military service. However, the Ministry of Defense insists on ignoring all of these complaints and letters.

In 10 Jan 2015, Mark Nabil had issued a statement explaining that his refusal to the military service is a rejection of the use of violence in conflict resolution, as well as refraining from joining an institution that has a bad history in using violence against peaceful protestors. He condemned the army's racist treatment of civilians based on sex, religion, social status or geographical origin. He also considered his refusal to the military service not only his right, but also a responsibility towards future generations who do not deserve to inherit the systematic slavery of conscription.

Since different national and international legislations guarantee freedom of belief, thought and conscience including: Article 18 in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which affirms that "Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion", Article 18 of the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights, which prohibits any kind of coercion that breaches the freedom of religion or belief, and the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights' report in July 2013 regarding the Right of Conscientious Objection to the military service. The Egyptian Constitution, in Article 64, also affirmed the freedom of belief. The Egyptian National and Military Service Law have established an alternative civic service in addition to the military one, and mandated the Minister of Defense to determine the due groups to be exempted from the military service.

Therefore, we call on Egypt's government to respect international standards and meet the obligations to which it has committed itself. This includes recognizing the right of Mark Nabil Sanad to conscientious objection to military service.

9 April 2015

Signatures in alphabetic order:

Agir pour la Paix, Belgium <http://agirpourelapaix.be>
Alternativa Antimilitarista - MOC de Canarias, Spain <http://canariasporelapaz.blogspot.com/>
Asamblea Antimilitarista de Madrid, Spain www.antimilitaristas.org
Association of Greek Conscientious Objectors, Greece www.antirrisies.gr
Bund für Soziale Verteidigung (BSV), Germany www.soziale-verteidigung.de
Cairo Liberal Forum, Egypt
Connection e.V., Germany www.connection-ev.de
Conscience: Taxes for Peace not War, United Kingdom www.conscienceonline.org.uk
Conscientious Objection Association, Turkey www.savaskarsitlari.org
European Bureau for Conscientious Objection (EBCO), Belgium www.ebco-beoc.org
Evangelische Kirche von Kurhessen-Waldeck, Germany www.ekkw.de
German Peace Society (DFG-VK), Germany www.dfg-vk.de
Grupo Antimilitarista de Carabanchel, Spain <http://www.nodo50.org/moc-carabanchel/>
Initiative of Conscientious Objection, Cyprus
International Fellowship of Reconciliation (IFOR), International www.ifor.org
Komitee für Grundrechte und Demokratie e.V., Germany www.grundrechtekomitee.de
Laboratorio de Paz, Venezuela <http://laboratoriosdepaz.org/>
Movimento Nonviolento, Italy <http://nonviolenti.org/cms/>
Ohne Rüstung Leben, Germany www.ohne-ruestung-leben.de
Periódico El Libertario, Venezuela <http://periodicoellibertario.blogspot.com/>
Programa Venezolano de Educación Acción en Derechos Humanos, Venezuela www.derechos.org.ve
Revolussia Asociación para el Estudio de la Noviolencia, Spain
The Fellowship of Reconciliation, Austria www.versoehnungsbund.at
Union Pacifiste De France, France www.unionpacifiste.org
Vredesbeweging PAIS, Netherlands www.vredesbeweging.nl
Vredesactie, Belgium www.vredesactie.be
War Resisters' International www.wri-irg.org
War Resisters' League, USA www.warresisters.org
Women Peacemakers Program (WPP), The Netherlands www.womenpeacemakersprogram.org
World Without War, South Korea www.withoutwar.org

You Can Help By Signing this Statement!

For organizations interested in signing this statement, please send an email to NoMilService@gmail.com .

For Individuals interested in signing this statement, please use this link:

https://secure.avaaz.org/en/petition/The_Egyptian_Government_Recognize_Mark_Nabil_as_a_Conscientious_Objector/?cuANoab