



UN Human Rights Council, 57th Session
Geneva, October 8th 2024

**Item 10: Interactive dialogue on the High Commissioner's oral update
on the situation of human rights in Ukraine**

Oral statement delivered by War Resisters International, in collaboration with Connection e.V.

Mr. President, Mr. High Commissioner,

War Resisters' International (WRI) thanks the High Commissioner for the update.

We stand in solidarity with the people of Ukraine suffering from Russian aggression¹, conscription and mandatory military registration in the occupied territories. There, officials summoned priest Feognost Pushkov to be included in the military register, whose refusal leads to the threat of five years in prison².

The human right to conscientious objection to military service is de facto currently not recognized in Ukraine. In 43 cases, objectors have been sentenced to real or suspended prison terms. For instance, prosecution insists on incarceration for the objector Vitalii Alexeienko. The Adventist Dmytro Zelinsky is serving 3-years prison term for his conscientious objection. It has been reported that according to the Supreme Court conscientious objectors could do non-combatant duties in the army. In reality this is not the case: a Baptist who tried to do so was charged for disobedience and detained.³

Andrii Vyshnevetsky, a Christian pacifist objector, has been denied in discharge [and even to see his family] and was given the order to serve in artillery unit which he can't obey because of his conscience.

WRI and its partner Connection e.V. are deeply concerned about the prosecution of the human rights defender Yurii Sheliashenko, for his peace activism.⁴

We urge Russia to withdraw its troops from Ukraine, detentions for refusal to fight⁵ and military indoctrination in schools, [contrary to international humanitarian law]⁶.

We call on Ukraine to fully implement the human right to conscientious objection to military service [in line with international standards], stop the persecution of conscientious objectors and human rights defenders who support them⁷.

Thank you.

¹ <https://www.ohchr.org/en/statements-and-speeches/2024/09/update-chair-independent-international-commission-inquiry-ukraine>

² https://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2924

³ <https://undocs.org/en/A/HRC/57/NGO/308>

⁴ <https://www.amnesty.org/en/location/europe-and-central-asia/eastern-europe-and-central-asia/ukraine/report-ukraine/>

⁵ <https://astra.press/english/2024/08/16/4078/>

⁶ <https://wri-irg.org/en/story/2024/oral-statement-given-interactive-dialogue-situation-ukraine-un-human-rights-council-56th>

⁷ [https://ebco-beoc.org/sites/ebco-beoc.org/files/2024-05-15-EBCO Annual Report 2023-24.pdf](https://ebco-beoc.org/sites/ebco-beoc.org/files/2024-05-15-EBCO%20Annual%20Report%2023-24.pdf)