



ASSOCIAZIONE COMUNITÀ PAPA GIOVANNI XXIII

Human Rights Council- 20th Regular Session

Oral Statement proposed by Associazione Comunità Papa Giovanni XXIII

Under ITEM 5 - AC reports and studies

“Right to Peace and Conscientious Objection”

Thank You, Madame President/Mr.or Ms Vice-President!.

The Associazione Comunità Papa Giovanni XXIII thanks the Advisory Committee for its work on the Right to Peace and the delivery of its report.

APG23 joins the network of civil society that supports the process of the draft declaration on the Right to Peace, being from many years active in promoting positive peace through peace education, peace keeping and peace building in the reconciliation process.

Since 1973, APG23 is committed to promote conscientious objection and welcomes the service of Conscientious Objectors in its family-homes, shelters for the homeless, cooperatives and other realities caring for the most vulnerable in society. APG23 launched even the Campaign “White Helmets” (Conscientious Objectors at the service of Peace in the world) in 1994. The White Helmets are young volunteers who operate in situations of structural violence and injustice in order to monitor human rights and express solidarity to the populations in the respect of local culture.

Every individual should have the right to conscientious objection to military service as part of the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion.

The Human Rights Committee has a long-standing position on this issue and the European Court of Human Rights affirmed in 2011 the right to conscientious Objection to military service.

In this regard, APG23 takes note with appreciation, among others, of art. 5 of the draft declaration prepared by the Advisory Committee but supports the

amendment proposed by the NGOs network to change the title of the article in "right to civil disobedience and conscientious objection to military service".

APG23 appreciates also the initiative of Costa Rica, Croazia and Poland to present a Human Rights Council resolution on the right of conscientious objection to military service since it would be a further step to recognise the important role of civilians in building and maintaining peace among peoples and nations.

Thank You.