

## *Ukraine, Russia, and Italy, united for peace*

War is the greatest crime against humanity.

There is no just war. Every war is sacrilegious.

That is why we are conscientious objectors to military service and why we condemn weapons and armies, all things that make wars possible.

We insist that the conflict between Russia and Ukraine can and should be resolved by peaceful means, and this could save many lives. We are aware that the ongoing Russian invasion of Ukraine violates international law and Ukraine has a right to self-defense from armed aggression. But we can't accept that as justification for war because nonviolent action is the best form of self-defense. Also, we can't accept Russian and Ukrainian narratives portraying each other as existential enemy needed to be stopped by military force. Victims of this conflict, civilians of different nationalities, are dying and suffering because of the military actions of all combatants. That's why weapons and voices of hatred must be silenced to give way for truth and reconciliation. We are part of War Resisters' International (WRI) and the European Bureau for Conscientious Objectors (EBCO), and we work together in one big movement for peace. We call on our governments (Ukrainian, Russian, and Italian) to immediately activate every possible diplomatic path for a ceasefire at the negotiating table.

Our people are against the war. They have already suffered the Second World War's immense drama, know totalitarianism, and now demand a peaceful future for new generations.

We are for disarmament. We are against military spending. We want our governments to use people's money to fight poverty and finance welfare, instead of buying new weapons. An unnecessary war effort should not distract us from resolution of pressing socio-economic and ecological problems. We can't allow politicians to inflate their popularity and military contractors to profit from the indefinite continuation of the bloodshed.

We know about the effectiveness of nonviolence as a way of life and force more powerful than injustice, violence, and war. We are working both for nonviolent resistance to war and for social transformations developing a culture of peace that will turn soldiers back into civilians and trash all weapons. We believe in freedom, democracy, and human rights, and we work for our countries to respect each other.

Individual conscience is an important safeguard from warmongering and the involvement of civilians in war. Therefore, we will make all efforts to protect human rights to conscientious objection to military service in our countries.

We feel like we are brothers and sisters, and we stand in solidarity with those whom today are suffering due to this war and every other war in the world.

*Yurii Sheliashenko, Ukrainian Peace movement*

*Elena Popova, Russian conscientious objectors movement*

*Mao Valpiana, Italian Nonviolent Movement*