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**Notice:** Trying to access array offset on value of type null in /home/hrwfe90/domains/hrwf.eu/public\_html/wp-content/plugins/pdf-print/pdf-print.php on line 1214

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## **TAJIKISTAN: Two years in prison for a conscientious objector**

– HRWF (04.04.2020) – On 1 April, a Tajik military court sentenced 20-year old Jovidon Bobojonov, a Jehovah's Witness objecting to military service. He had been in pretrial detention for six months. During his detention, military unit personnel had beaten him multiple times to intimidate him into serving in the military.

The UN Human Rights Committee has addressed the matter of conscientious objection to military service in Tajikistan on three occasions. In 2005, 2013, and 2019, the Committee strongly recommended that Tajikistan recognize the right to conscientious objection.

Most recently, on 22 August 2019, the Committee released its Concluding Observations on Tajikistan and strengthened its

earlier findings by stating:

§46. "The State party should step up its efforts to adopt the legislation necessary to recognize the right to conscientious objection to military service without discrimination as to the nature of the beliefs (religious or non-religious beliefs grounded in conscience) justifying the objection, and to ensure that alternative service is not punitive or discriminatory in nature or duration by comparison with military service." (link to original CCPR report)

The ICCPR protects the right of conscientious objectors to refuse to perform military service.

### ***Additional Background***

On 4 October 2019, military officers in the city of Khujand abducted Jovidon Bobojonov from his home and took him to an enlistment office, where he was placed into custody.

He was subsequently transferred to military unit No. 45075, where he was pressured to take the military oath of allegiance. On one occasion, when he refused to put on the military uniform, six military unit members assaulted him. They twisted his arms behind his back and forced him to the ground. Jovidon's head was pressed with an army boot to the floor, his neck was clamped with their knees. When he tried to resist, they beat him in the kidneys. The men tried to take off his pants and put on the military uniform pants. The more he resisted, the more they pressed on his neck with his knee. Then he passed out. When he woke up, he was bound. He was seated on a chair but could not keep his balance, so someone held him in the chair so that he would not fall off.

As of March, he had been in custody at the KGB temporary detention facility in Dushanbe.

Jovidon's parents, who are also Jehovah's Witnesses, have filed complaints with numerous Tajik officials, including the Presidential Administration and the Ombudsman Office. The Tajik authorities claim that since a law on alternative service has not been adopted, Bobojonov's actions constitute a crime and therefore his abduction was lawful.

Address of hearing: Military Court of Military Post of Dushanbe, 1 Negmat Karabayev av. (Таджикистан, Душанбе, просп. Негмата Карабаева 1, Военный суд Душанбинского гарнизона)

Source: Headquarters of Jehovah's Witnesses

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