



War Resisters' International  
5 Caledonian Rd, London N1 9DX, Britain

London, 28 April 2009

## It is not counselling conscientious objectors that is criminal, but rather not recognising the right to conscientious objection

On 26 April 2009, five members of WRI's Israeli affiliate New Profile were detained by Israeli police, their homes raided, and their computers, and also computers of partners, seized. Among those detailed was also Sergeiy Sandler, a member of the WRI Council and Executive Committee. All those detained were interrogated at Ramat Hachiyal police station in the Yarkon Region of the police. After the interrogation, all five were released, but only after agreeing to bail conditions which do not allow them to contact each other in the coming thirty days. The computers of partners were returned, but not the computers of those detained. Other Israeli activists have been summoned to report to the same police station today (27 April 2009).

The reason given by the police is an investigation against the website of New Profile (<http://www.newprofile.org>) and Target 21 (<http://www.target-21.h1.ru/>), a Russian language website for violations to article 109 of the Israeli criminal law, incitement to draft evasion. The investigation had been opened in September 2008, following an order of Israel's Attorney General Menachem Mazuz. This followed the declaration of a "war on draft evasion" by Defense Minister Ehud Barak and IDF Chief of Staff Gabi Ashkenazi in summer 2008.

New Profile is an Israeli feminist organisation for the civil-ization of Israeli society, established ten years ago. The movement has been warning for years of the exaggerated and destructive influence of Israeli militarism on civilian life, and provides legal aid and social support to young people desiring not to do military service, both for political and personal reasons. New Profile provides information about different options, enabling young men and women to make a conscious choice, but does not advocate any specific course of action.

While New Profile is now the target of a criminal investigation, aimed at shutting down the organisation and its website for incitement to draft evasion, it has to be pointed out that not New Profile, but the state of Israel is violating international law by not providing for the right to conscientious objection (Article 18 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights). This has been repeatedly stated by several United Nations bodies<sup>1</sup>.

If the Israeli government is concerned at the extent of rejection of military service by Israeli youth, then it should not harass those who offer good counsel but rather recognise the growing revulsion at the role the Israeli Defence Forces play – using criminal methods to maintain an occupation that is itself illegal.

War Resisters' International strongly condemns the present investigation against its affiliate New Profile, and the detention of New Profile activist. It strongly condemns the bail conditions that were imposed on their release, which are aimed at disrupting the important work of New Profile.

War Resisters' International demands an end to the investigation against New Profile and its activists, and the immediate lifting of bail conditions, and the return of all properties seized.

War Resisters' International asks concerned citizens wherever they may be to write a protest letter to

1 I.e. Human Rights Committee: Concluding observations of the Human Rights Committee: Israel. 21/08/2003. CCPR/CO/78/ISR. (Concluding Observations/Comments), [http://www.unhchr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/\(Symbol\)/CCPR.CO.78.ISR.En?Opendocument](http://www.unhchr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/(Symbol)/CCPR.CO.78.ISR.En?Opendocument); Working Group on Arbitrary Detention: OPINION No. 24/2003 (ISRAEL), 28 November 2003, <http://wri-irg.org/node/6481>

*"War is a crime against humanity. I am therefore determined not to support any kind of war, and to strive for the removal of all causes of war."*  
**WRI declaration**

War Resisters' International is an international network with 83 affiliated organisations in 42 countries. It aims to:

- ▶ connect and support war resisters around the world
- ▶ promote nonviolent action to remove the causes of war

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(A protest email can be sent at <http://wri-irg.org/node/7449>)

The War Resisters' International Executive Committee, 28 April 2009