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Item 3

Oral Statement by Friends World Committee for Consultation (Quakers), an international NGO in General Consultative Status with ECOSOC

Delivered by Rachel Brett, Quaker UN Office, Geneva, on Tuesday 22 September 2009

### **Conscientious Objection to Military Service**

Friends World Committee for Consultation (Quakers) welcomes the adoption on 1 September 2009 of the Minute on the right of conscientious objection to military service by the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches (WCC).

The Minute reiterates and reaffirms WCC support for the human right of conscientious objection; and calls on WCC member churches to:

- uphold this right;
- encourage their members to do so; and
- address their governments and military organisations to recognise and honour conscientious objection to military service.

The WCC Study which serves as background to the Minute is a succinct survey not only of the right to conscientious objection to military service under international law, but also of the engagement of churches with the issue.

We commend these documents to States, and encourage their wide distribution and implementation of all aspects of the Minute.

We call on all States that have not already done so, to recognise the right of conscientious objection to military service, and to stop prosecuting and imprisoning those seeking to exercise this right.