

**PRESS RELEASE**

**Crimes Ukraine: Ukrainian and international academics and lawyers launch task forces**

**A project coordinated by the Universities Network for Children in Armed Conflict**

**to protect civilians and minors**

**Rome / Kyiv, April 19,** 2022 - Following the perpetration of severe violations of humanitarian law in Ukraine, the legal and academic world is launching a task force that, from Italy to Ukraine, from Europe to the United States, will analyze the rules, the Ukrainian and international procedural mechanisms and will study the "dialogue" between the different investigation mechanisms. The goal is to ensure the protection of civilians and justice for the crimes committed.

A work involving Ukrainian and international professors, researchers, judges and jurists: the project is promoted by the Universities Network for Children in Armed Conflict\_ UNETCHAC, the first Network of universities and research institutes working worldwide to protect children in situations of armed conflict.

"Each of the crimes committed by Russian military forces in the territory of Ukraine, especially crimes against civilians, must be prosecuted all over the world, in national and international criminal courts," said **prof. Oksana Holovko-Havrysheva,** Associate Professor at the Department of European Law of the Ivan Franko National University in Lviv.

Among the members, researchers from the universities of Kyiv and Lviv, coordinated by UNETCHAC who will be in constant contact with university colleagues from Italy (John Cabot University; University of Perugia; University of Genoa; Federico II University and University L ' Orientale di Napoli; University of Trento; Sant'Anna University of Pisa; Luigi Vanvitelli University of Campania); Germany (University of Regensburg); Austria (University of Innsbruck); Kosovo (University of Pristina); the United States (University of Cincinnati and University of Salem in Virginia); South Africa (University of Johannesburg).

The Italian judges Giulio Adilardi, President of the Court of Rovereto and Stefan Tapeiner, President of the Criminal Section of the Court of Bolzano will also be actively involved. The research team is also making contact with professors from Odessa.

Specifically, the task force will develop a comparative analysis of the criminal law of the Member States of the European Union (EU) by conducting: an examination of the internal adaptation of the criminal laws of individual states to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC) and the international crimes referred to therein; a comparative examination of the regulatory systems and practices of the EU Member States put in place after the granting of temporary protection to persons fleeing Ukraine based on EU Directive 2001/55 / EC to guarantee, in particular, the reception of minors.

“Unfortunately, wars are not new and the tragedies that civilians, especially children, experience due to wars are not new. However, we must say that we Europeans, for a long time, believed that we were immune to war and disease. Now we understand that we are not exempt from any of this. As it is committed to other war situations, the Network is committed to the war in Ukraine which undoubtedly has human and juridical implications important for the system of international relations ", declared **prof. Laura Guercio**, member of the UNETCHAC Coordination Committee and scientific coordinator of the task force. “The universities of the Network - she continues - will work together to strengthen measures contrasting and judging serious violations of human rights, particularly against children, to help stop the chain of violence and crimes in Ukraine. The professors and professionals will work to elaborate a report on legal systems and the practical measures to be adopted for the ascertainment and justice of crimes, wherever they are committed in the Ukrainian territory, and for the improvement of the systems aimed at giving protection to minors. The work will last two months, at the end of which recommendations for concrete actions will be proposed to national and international institutions. We hope with this work to contribute to the essential work already carried out by the Ukrainian national authorities and international institutions”.

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