**Forgotten Wars: The MAECI-UNETCHAC Project for the development of Data on Children in Armed Conflict starts.**

**From 4 Continents the First Virtual Map for Schools and Universities**

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From Myanmar to Republic Democratic of Congo, from Afghanistan to Mali and Sudan: The Universities Network for Children in Armed Conflict (UNETCHAC), with the support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation in Italy, will work on these and other conflict zones and post-conflict with the aim of developing sensitive data and analyzing abuse and violence against children. The subject of analysis will also be social reintegration processes in favor of these minors. This is the first research work on a global scale carried out by a specialized university network on children in armed conflict.

The "National Plans on the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 and the impact of conflicts on boys and girls" is the Project of the Universities Network for Children in Armed Conflict (UNETCHAC) carried out in collaboration with the Institute of Political Studies S. Pius V: academic researchers from Africa, Asia, South America, Eastern Europe will be the engines of this quantitative and qualitative analysis in which study becomes the weapon to make invisible wars visible, to analyze the legal and social conditions that contribute to the perpetration of violence against children also considering the objectives of the IV Italian Action Plan for the implementation of Resolution 1325 on "Women, Peace and Security".

“The research undertaken by the Universities Network for Children in Armed Conflict is of particular importance. It is envisioned to document not only the quantitative dimension of the serious violations to which boys and girls are exposed in armed conflicts in various areas of the world, but above all to highlight the critical issues of these violations from a qualitative point of view; its results aim to constitute an indispensable point of reference for the adoption of effective measures to resolve these critical issues in the framework of an international cooperation expected to be increasingly attentive and effective on an issue that directly affects the rights of future generations", underlines Fausto Pocar, President UNETCHAC and President of the Institute of International Humanitarian Law IIHL – Sanremo.

“Two aspects need to be highlighted on the research that the Network is conducting on 4 continents and on the research that is about to be completed in the Middle East and, in particular, in Syria, Yemen and Iraq. The first innovative aspect lies in the fact that it is research carried out by a Network of over 50 universities with the involvement of professors and researchers from different geographical realities and therefore an exchange of experiences - declares Laura Guercio, Secretary General of UNETCHAC. A second aspect of innovation lies in the fact that this analysis is carried out in relation to and in the context of the IV Italian National Plan on the UNSCR Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, regarding which Italy has always been at the forefront for promotion and implementation. We hope that this is just the beginning of a path of analysis and research that will last over the years".

"The research carried out by the Network unambiguously reveals the hard and tragic core often overlooked by mainstream communication and information: the shameful and differentiated phenomenon of violations to which girls and boys are subjected in the various war theaters ~~of war~~, themselves often forgotten and neglected by the attention of official observers more focused on other events that find a place in the first pages of the official agendas", comments Paolo De Nardis, Vice President of UNETCHAC, President of the Institute of Political Studies of S. Pio V.

From June to November 2023, with the work of regional research groups and the support of a Scientific Research Committee, empirical data will also be produced on serious violations of international humanitarian law in Ukraine and where violations against children persist.

The Project will also create the first Virtual Map dedicated to Children in Armed Conflicts, a digital tool that will be disseminated as an interactive educational heritage in Italian and international schools and universities.

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