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**PRESS RELEASE**

**"UNITED TO PROTECT THEM" IN THE MUSIC VIDEO OF ITALIAN STUDENTS:**

**UNIVERSITIES NETWORK FOR CHILDREN IN ARMED CONFLICT - UNETCHAC WITH**

**“IL CORO CHE NON C’É” OPENS THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE IN LUXEMBOURG ON THE PROTECTION OF MINORS IN ARMED CONFLICT**

The choir without place or time, composed of students of high schools and universities of Rome (Italy), gives voice to a cooperation project to raise awareness of the drama of children in armed conflict:

The *Universities Network for Children in Armed Conflict - UNETCHAC* joins "Il Coro che non C’è” (The Nowhere Choir)\* in a music video that entrusts young people with hope and dreams.

The student singers take turns in the open space of Villa Ada in Rome, their voices join in a poignant appeal: to protect the most vulnerable together.

The video collects the frames shot at different times of the same day by high school and university students under the guidance of **Ludovico (Dodo) Versino** and will open the International Conference **"Children in Armed Conflict: How can they be protected in a multilevel international framework?"**

The event, organized by **UNETCHAC** and the **UNESCO Chair for Human Rights of the University of Luxembourg** in collaboration with **L.A.W. International** and the **Institute for Political Studies "S. Pio V"**, under the patronage of the **Italian Embassy in Luxembourg**, will take place on **21 and 22 November** at the University of Luxembourg, in presence and in virtual mode, proposing a debate between representatives of international and national institutions, civil society organizations, researchers, academics and students.

«We wanted to support this event because it concerns a crucial and burning topical issue. Italy and Luxembourg are side by side in promoting the fundamental rights of the weakest, including through study and awareness-raising initiatives such as this important conference», underlined **Diego Brasioli, the Ambassador of Italy to Luxembourg**.

The Conference intends to facilitate an exchange of experiences to implement multilateral programs for the protection of the fundamental rights of children involved not only in the Russian-Ukrainian conflict but in all countries affected by armed conflicts.

Among the speakers: HRH the **Grand Duchess Maria Teresa of Luxembourg**, Goodwill Ambassador of UNESCO and Eminent Advocate of UNICEF; **Anne Goedert**, Ambassador at Large for Human Rights of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Luxembourg; **Pasquale Ferrara**, Director General for Political Affairs and Security of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation; **Virginia Gamba**, Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations for Children and Armed Conflict; **Eamon Gilmore**, EU Special Representative for Human Rights, and **Karim A. A. Khan KC**, Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC) .

«Children are constantly victims, direct or indirect, of the actions committed during armed conflicts» – declared **Laura Guercio**, Representative of the Coordination Committee of the UNETCHAC – «They are in Ukraine as in the Democratic Republic of Congo, as in Syria and in the Yemen. The international community must never let its guard down on the importance and need to offer and guarantee all the necessary means so that wars do not destroy their lives and our hope for the future».

In the face of the dramatic events that are taking place in the course of wars, near and far to us, UNETCHAC is also organizing the lectio magistralis on children in armed conflict given by the Special Representative **Virginia Gamba** which takes place on November 24 in Rome in the **Sala del Refettorio at the Italian Chamber of Deputies** and provides for interventions by deputies from various parliamentary groups.

The *Universities Network For Children in Armed Conflict* continues to work worldwide with over 50 universities and research institutes and with the support of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation in the development of research activities involving international academics and experts, in the promotion of training activities (academic weeks, cycles of conventions, conferences, advanced courses and seminars that also involved warzone students), in the organization of artistic and cultural events. To continue to raise awareness of the institutions and civil society by promoting concrete actions.

During the two days of the Luxembourg Conference, the photos of the Ivorian photographer Mohamed Keita will also be exhibited, who dedicate a visual story to children in armed conflict. A traveling exhibition was also hosted from 14 to 18 March 2022 in New York at the United Nations Headquarters on the margins of the 66th session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, and realized in collaboration with the Permanent Representation of Italy to the United Nations and supported by MAECI.

\*Il *Coro che non C'è* is a project born before the pandemic Covid-19 which, by means of new technologies, has become a *virtual choir* proving that music brings us closer by creating and rediscovering a spontaneous solidarity between the new generations: numerous successes it has achieved live and on the web like the *Queencubo* a capella video medley which in just a few months reached around half a million viewers.

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