

AESI PROMOTED ACTIVE DIALOGUE AMONG STUDENTS ON SEVERAL TOPICS OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS IN THIS PANDEMIC PERIOD



Preparing young people for the diplomatic and international careers of today means facing the new international crises with an innovative and global vision that analyzes their real causes first and then provides adequate and effective responses over time. Furthermore, a greater synergy with international organizations such as the United Nations (UN) is needed. In this regard, the European Association of International Studies (AESI) usually organizes two missions in Geneva in coordination with the Italian Representation at the United Nations agencies.

Unfortunately, the health emergency has not allowed this tradition to continue this year, but the liaison with the Director-General of the UN Agencies in Geneva, Ms. Tatiana Valovaya, is still vigorous and the activities promoted by AESI for young university students are considered of great importance. Indeed, AESI is strongly convinced that only by investing in the new generations with innovative and global training, which envisage above all concrete contacts with international actors such as the UN and the European Union (EU), we can achieve a future of peace and promote a culture of solidarity. Furthermore, we believe that the interaction with young university students who are preparing for diplomatic and international careers can also enrich international organizations through a deeper understanding of young people's perspectives, enhancing also their creative solutions to crises. The Director-General of the United Nations Agencies in Geneva illustrated in her Message to AESI what the priorities of this health emergency are, but she also encouraged the UN to listen to the new generations. She invited students to send them messages and contributions. The Director-General also expressed her wish to meet with the young AESI members in Geneva when it will be possible. The University will play a great role in the future, not only with respect to the international relations dimension, but above all with the involvement of young people in the process of renewing peace promotion strategies in crisis situations. The United Nations has discovered this great added value and for this we also thank the United Nations Director-General of Geneva.



Unfortunately, the health emergency has not allowed this tradition to continue this year, but the liaison with the Director-General of the UN Agencies in Geneva, Ms. Tatiana Valovaya, is still vigorous and the activities promoted by AESI for young university students are considered of great importance. Indeed, AESI is strongly convinced that only by investing in the new generations with innovative and global training, which envisage above all concrete contacts with international actors such as the UN and the European Union (EU), we can achieve a future of peace and promote a culture of solidarity. Furthermore, we believe that the interaction with young university students who are preparing for diplomatic and international careers can also enrich international organizations through a deeper understanding of young people's perspectives, enhancing also their creative solutions to crises. The Director-General of the United Nations Agencies in Geneva illustrated in her Message to AESI what the priorities of this health emergency are, but she also encouraged the UN to listen to the new generations. She invited students to send them messages and contributions. The Director-General also expressed her wish to meet with the young AESI members in Geneva when it will be possible. The University will play a great role in the future, not only with respect to the international relations dimension, but above all with the involvement of young people in the process of renewing peace promotion strategies in crisis situations. The United Nations has discovered this great added value and for this we also thank the United Nations Director-General of Geneva.



Introduction of Cinzia Vanzo, Director of AESI and Silvia Siciliano, AESI Direction - Rome

As the epistemology of pandemic suggests, from Greek “pan” all and “demos” people, COVID-19 has posed a threat to everyone with no exceptions. Suddenly it has turned our lives upside down and in these hard times AESI has left no one behind. In these terms, the Association has stood out for its capability to cope with new and unknown challenges. Combating COVID-19 with resilience has been the cure to this pandemic. AESI has never stopped, and it has tried its best to accomplish its goals. Conferences, study seminars and international missions have been postponed in accordance with the Italian measures. If not properly addressed through global and shared policies, the social crisis caused by the pandemic may also increase inequality, discrimination and poverty in the short and long term. More than ever, AESI raised and spread awareness among its students with the main goal of cultivating young critical minds in a complex world. Human dignity, peace, cooperation among institutions and universities are absolute imperatives in creating a better place for future generations. In order to give continuity to the activities of its students, AESI has published different articles, research and messages on its website. With the following words, AESI students, national

staff and the Directorate would like to testify the great role played by the European Association of International Studies during this pandemic period.

AESI and university cooperation for justice and human rights

“The pandemic period that we are all experiencing is hampering the cooperation between nations. In this critical context, AESI has strengthened its active dialogue with its students, willing to enhance justice and human rights. To do this, we need a greater involvement of international organizations, with the aim of promoting a rapid exchange of information, and closer cooperation among states to close the gap that the pandemic has shown within international cooperation.”

Giulia Covalea, AESI Website Director and Secretary of study seminars and Ms. Samantha Pisano, AESI student ROME



AESI and the EU promoting peace

"AESI always tries to promote cooperation among students. The aim is to share experiences and ideas as well as to have an exchange of views in order to achieve solidarity. Solidarity and cooperation are indeed the most used words by the EU institutions during the COVID-19 health crisis. We can overcome this emergency only together. This is why the key word should be cooperation, especially among the young new generations."
Giulia Sarti, AESI Staff - Florence

AESI and cooperation among academia, the diplomatic entities and the military peace forces

"The importance of cooperation between military peacekeepers, the diplomatic world and universities is an element to which AESI pays particular attention by acting as a mediator and providing a solid opportunity for dialogue and training. During this period of pandemic, the Association has continued to support dialogue between students and institutions with the ultimate aim of enhancing international relations."
Marco Gregori, AESI Publication and Thesis Coordinator and Francesca Romana Spinosa, AESI student SIENA

AESI and peace in the Mediterranean

"The Mediterranean unites and divides nations. There is no doubt that it is a frontier, but it is also a starting point, the 'opening door to new horizons'. Over the years, we have achieved international balance and repudiated war. Even in this pandemic, AESI has never stopped, putting in first place peace and social stability, justice and human rights, because it is only through interventions that a strategy for dialogue and reconciliation can be built. And remember, there is no Europe without the Mediterranean, and there is no Mediterranean without Europe."
Maria Lucia Gallo, AESI student MESSINA

AESI in the Middle East: strategic studies and crisis areas

"The Mediterranean area is a body with many scars, and still many open wounds. Over the years, AESI has operated in crisis areas, such as the Middle East. Even in this pandemic, AESI has continued with an effective digital strategy to overcome the distance through the desire for peace and dialogue on wars. These themes are unfortunately still vivid despite the lockdown period. The conflicts do not stop even during a pandemic and AESI with its online publications has continued its work to repudiate war and open debates."
Sophie Beatrice Morganti, AESI student and Matteo Farina, AESI Staff - Turin

AESI and NATO

"The relationship between AESI and NATO is solid and dates back in time. The Association is a regular guest at the Joint Force Command of Naples and was supposed to visit the NATO Headquarters in Brussels in June 2020. The COVID-19 pandemic has postponed this mission but indeed has not weakened this bond. Fruitful

discussions on the role of Italy within the Alliance, and on security in Southern and Eastern Europe are just on hold.”

Gabriele Pierini, Vice Director of AESI NATO BRUXELLES

AESI and diplomacy for university cooperation development

“One of AESI’s main goals has always been to develop and ensure a ‘University Cooperation for Peace’. The purpose is to educate a new generation of professionals willing to deal with humanitarian crises by implementing a joint-strategy approach. Even during the COVID-19 pandemic, AESI has successfully collaborated with diplomats from different countries and with the United Nations to promote practices and provide suggestions for a consolidation of a fruitful dialogue among universities.”

Francesco Napolitano, AESI Staff – Naples and Giacomo Antonio Lombardi, AESI student

AESI and university training for university cooperation for peace

“The AESI programmes have significantly improved our ability to read the global scenarios with confidence. We have come to understand that violence is not inescapable, we only need to understand why people behave this way and meet their needs. The philosophy behind the cooperation between AESI and the university cooperation for peace tells us that everyone is important and that all of us have something to contribute to make the world a better place to live in for the future generations.”

Vincenzo Scuotto, AESI Staff - Milan

AESI and the crises of diplomacy

“For us as students, AESI has had a crucial role during the world-wide crisis of the past months. In these hard times of quarantine, not one of us has been left behind in the deep need of understanding the global situation. The academic faculty provided us with inputs and suggestions, on behalf of their long-lived experience in the international relations field, and a conceptual framework crucial in addressing such an unprecedented global challenge.”

Giorgia Sorrentino, AESI Staff - Bologna