

**ITALIAN PERMANENT MISSION
TO UNITED NATIONS GENEVA
MARCH 2021**

**ITALIAN DELEGATION TO UN AND UNOG IN GENEVA
AESI MEETING/CONFERENCE
“The Role of the University Cooperation promoting
Peace and Dialogue” AESI STRATEGIES**

This Conference, organized by the Italian Permanent Mission to the United Nations in Geneva and the UNOG in collaboration with AESI, will focus on the University Cooperation for Peace as an important tool to help and promote reconciliation between young people divided by conflicts (such as in the Middle East and in the Balkans). This Cooperation will also be viewed as an essential means of contributing to intercultural and interfaith dialogue. The meeting will provide an opportunity to discuss respective experiences in this field. To this end, we will look at several initiatives promoted by AESI in collaboration with the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and United Nations with the Universities of the Middle East and the Balkans. We will focus in particular on Israel and the Palestinian Territories, on Lebanon and Bosnia and Herzegovina. The debate will also consider Italy’s commitment and UNOG to fostering reciprocal knowledge and respect, both on a national and on an international level.

During the Seminar we will therefore analyze the roles of education and Academic Institutions as crucial tools of public diplomacy in action for young people. Tools which, from each country’s domestic perspective, are also vehicles of integration for an effective management of cultural and religious diversity. The meeting, in a roundtable format, will include many distinguished representatives of the Italian Diplomats/Military and UNOG Representatives (the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Italian Development Cooperation, Ambassadors and General of Military Peace Forces etc.) as well as from Italian and the Middle East and East Europe Universities.





Prof. Massimo Maria Caneva, MD PhD

President AESI and Director of the Rome International Seminar

“One of the basic challenges of the 21st Century is assuring international peace and fostering development, in the light of the new World balance. Today, there are problems that can only be solved by action at the global level. New strategic thinking is required to approach global issues and advance “global public goods”. Consequently, international communities must become protagonists of a new strategy to intervene in crisis areas and to promote peace, human rights and development with a strategy based on realistic and effective foreign common policy. Such a strategy must include the collaborative efforts of diplomatic, economic and peace forces actions, while being rooted in the common goal of development of a strong cooperation culture of solidarity capable of understanding local needs and providing quick and efficient solutions that are at once professional and respectful of human dignity. Such a strategy must rely on cultural expertise and include expert knowledge of the theoretical elements of crisis and development management and the capability to understand the real comprehensive needs of the populations, and their historical and cultural roots in order to give effective answers to them, and to promote peace and development even in the first phases of the interventions.

The central position of the university doesn't mean a sort of elitist action even if it could seem like this. What we could like to point out is, on the contrary, that only the enlargement of human mind through the scientific research, enriched with the personal experience on the field, can foster a more careful analysis of the problems and broad-minded approach to the human being and his needs when is in the emergency situations. This university methodology is useful instrument to stimulate the co-operation between people and between individuals. It seems anyway to be the case of underling that when we speak of university co-operation in the field of humanitarian crises, we don't want to mean the only exchange of lectures and researchers which is usually done in the academic collaboration, even if also this kind of activity seems to be useful. University co-operation is in fact a more general approaching strategy which is made of analysis and action jointed together, of training and research on the field in co-operation between academic world and civil institutions, international organisations, volunteers, etc. in order to make possible prevention of crises and humanitarian assistance at the same time. That is to say it is not enough to be an expert of this specific field in order to work out such a Programme”



Ambassador Franco Mistretta

(AESI Scientific Committee) - Italian Ambassador – Former Ambassador in Lebanon and Director of the Diplomatic Institute Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation

AESI cooperation among universities, military and diplomacy, develops in two directions: in classroom and in the field. As Ambassador to Lebanon in the year 2002, I touched base with university programmes organized by Prof. Caneva for local and neighbouring countries students of both faith, Christian and Muslim, to promote social and learning interaction, through studying together regardless of their origin or faith. This was possible not only in Beirut, thanks to its custom to be crossroad of peaceful coexistence among different ethnic and religious groups; but also in Sarajevo in 1995 with local students, used to fight each other harshly for years until few months earlier, and now open to discuss on programmes to adopt at the university; and also in Paris and in Rome, with students from all Middle East countries, in spite of their habits and intricacies.

Another aspect of this cooperation is common training (on law's fundamentals, preventive and emergency medicine, tender for contracts, maintenance services and others) for military and civilian personnel assigned to humanitarian missions to get them close to the international activity, to better cope and to perform with their duties during their missions.

As Director of Diplomatic Institute, I organized these specific courses with AESI giving said personnel capabilities and adaptability to field requirements. A fruitful synergy on the field among university, military and diplomacy, is a pivotal instrument in the immediate post belligerency process, to heal distressed people and redevelop the environment towards a stable peace. Single governments and UN should run appropriate training courses to provide their personnel with the right knowledge to better perform in their missions abroad.



Ambassador Adriano Benedetti

(AESI Scientific Committee) - Italian Ambassador – Former Ambassador in Venezuela and Director General for DG Migrations Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation

We are heading towards a new period in contemporary history which will be characterized, much more than in the past, by an increased interaction among states while the present world order is under stress, multilateralism is being challenged and the selfish and unilateral view of national interest seems to have the upper hand. No doubt that at least the next decade will be filled, in a tumultuous context, with confrontation and risks for international peace and stability.

If these are the prospects, international relations and, within each country, foreign policies will be of paramount importance. Equally decisive appear to be the preparation and formation of a new

generation of politicians and public servants devoted to those activities. Deep knowledge of the pertinent technicalities, procedures and problems will be required: but technical aspects will not be enough. There is the need to infuse the spirit of a moral approach into that knowledge, where human rights, the incommensurate value of the human being, the criteria of justice and respect for all represent the underlying foundation of any type of theoretical construction of international relations.

Over the almost thirty years of existence, AESI has struggled to provide this “supplément d’âme” to hundreds of students involved in its multifaceted activities. It intends to continue along this path, convinced that it may thus contribute, although on a very modest scale, to a better and more peaceful world. AESI has a tradition of cooperating with the international organizations in order to give its students a first-hand perception of their workings and role in the world arena. One of the most successful visits was the one organized few years ago to Geneva, where AESI students were confronted with the issues, in particular, of human rights and economic development in the emerging nations being daily tackled by the competent branches and institutions of the United Nations.

It is AESI’s firm intention to renew with this tradition, conscious as it is of the essential relevance of multilateral organizations and, above all, of the United Nations as the irreplaceable underpin of a new world structure presently in the throes of a perilous transition.



Gen. Vincenzo Camporini

(AESI Scientific Committee) – Former Chief of Staff Italian Defence and President of CASD (High Centre of Defence Studies) Italian Ministry of Defence

In this historical period, armed forces have enlarged their role from the classical one of using military force to foster national interests to the becoming an instrument of stabilization in areas where governance is at stake and where hostilities erupt inside states on the verge of failing. Since the end of the cold war a fruitful dialogue has therefore started between the military planet and other components of civil society, so to maximize the achievable results.

In line with this concept since outburst of hostilities in the Western Balkans, the Italian Ministry of Defense has begun to cooperate with Rome university to foster understanding between the fighting factions, facilitating the initiatives taken, in particular by AESI, to open communication channels between the different ethnic groups. Similar activities were started and still are in place for other crisis theaters, such as Lebanon and the Middle East in general.

AESI and the Italian General Defense Staff have now a long standing record of achievements and have established permanent ties, which will enable future initiatives to improve mutual understanding between communities and reduce tensions which could lead to violent results, thus fostering peace.

REPRESENTATIVES OF UNITED NATIONS, AMBASSADORS, MILITARY PEACE FORCE AND PRESIDENT AESI



Mr. David Chikvaдзе Chief of the Cabinet Director General of the United Nations - Geneva

VIDEO First Part <https://youtu.be/Y-kVG2CJLRI> Second Part <https://youtu.be/EzUyjMtWoPA>



Amb. Giorgio Marrapodi – General Director DG Cooperation for Development MAECI

VIDEO <https://youtu.be/2G5A0AR3LFs>



Prof. Massimo Maria Caneva – President AESI and Director of Rome International Seminar

<https://youtu.be/hPXGkZc7Nno>



Gen. Kristin Lund UNTSO Head Mission Force Commander in Jerusalem

VIDEO <https://youtu.be/ROP7y8fsVkk>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tRK72mckSVU&feature=youtu.be>



Major Gen. Franco Federici

(AESI Scientific Committee) KFOR Commander, Former UNIFIL Sector West Commander in Lebanon

VIDEO <https://youtu.be/U3L-r1jiH0w>