



Convenzione dei diritti
nel Mediterraneo
Convention des droits
en Méditerranée
Convention of rights in
the Mediterranean Sea
اتفاقية الحقوق في
البحر الأبيض المتوسط

PRESENTATION OF THE YOUTH FOR PEACE DECLARATION AT THE UN

The "Youth Declaration for Peace in the Mediterranean" was presented yesterday in New York, as part of a collateral event to the 80th United Nations General Assembly, promoted by the Permanent Delegation of Malta and the Convention on the Rights of the Mediterranean, co-sponsored by the Italian mission and supported by the Saedegna Foundation and the Region of Sicily.

Cristina Chessa Colombino, a student from Sassari, illustrated the path that led over 250 young people between the ages of 16 and 28, from eleven Mediterranean countries, to collectively draft the "Declaration" during a participatory process that lasted over six months. Colombino highlighted how the different cultural backgrounds and experiences did not represent an obstacle to dialogue, reiterating the commitment of the participants to disseminate the document in schools and institutions to promote cultural change: "We are trying to change the way adults see and think about the world, because too often they choose weapons as the first solution".

Merve Şahin, a student at Ankara Yildirim Beyazit University, presented the contents of the Declaration, launching an urgent appeal for an "immediate and unconditional ceasefire" and analyzing the political, economic and cultural causes underlying conflicts in the region, including territorial occupations and resource disputes, lack of human rights and poverty. Şahin called on Mediterranean states not to limit themselves to temporary solutions, but to work on the deep and historical causes of crises, strengthening regional cooperation mechanisms. "Young people today are more open and overcome the gap between ethnic groups and nationalities. This openness represents a powerful opportunity to open new channels of communication." The two young women also denounced the spread of nationalistic cultures and the instrumentalization of ethnic and religious identities. The delegations present, including those of Malta, Jordan, Finland and Italy, reaffirmed their support for the implementation of the UN Resolution "Youth, Peace and Security", highlighting the need to ensure greater involvement of young people in decision-making processes and peace negotiations.

Felipe Paullier, Assistant Secretary-General for Youth Affairs of the United Nations, however, highlighted the difficulties encountered in the process of implementing resolution 2250 "Youth Peace Security" and the actual lack of young people in actively participating in peace processes, confirming the personal commitment of the Secretary General to strengthen their involvement.

Fabio Alberti, representative of the organization Un Ponte Per and spokesperson for the Convention on the Rights of the Mediterranean, concluded by asking that the Declaration be disseminated among all Member States of the United Nations and hoped for the resumption of the Barcelona Process. Alberti also proposed organizing a youth peace conference involving all Mediterranean countries, stating: "It is adults who decide wars, while it is young people who are forced to kill or die. We should not be surprised if they then desert en masse, because desertion remains their only means of saying no."