

Leader of Humanity Award Given to Mariam Lambert, CEO and Co-Founder of the Emile Foundation

Delivers Remarks to Italian Parliament: "Whenever a child is taken...humanity itself is diminished"

ROME, ITALY, December 15, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- On the occasion of International Human Rights Day, [Mariam Lambert](#), CEO and Co-Founder of the [Emile Foundation](#), was awarded the Leader of Humanity Award, recognising her exceptional leadership, courage and sustained commitment to the protection and repatriation of children affected by armed conflict.

Mariam Lambert also delivered a landmark keynote address at the Italian Parliament during the Human Economic Forum, held under the patronage of the Vatican. The event brought together Members of Parliament, ministers, diplomats, faith leaders and representatives of international organisations to reflect on human dignity, responsibility and peace.

Speaking on the anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Mariam Lambert placed the protection of children at the centre of peace, security and global governance. She warned that modern conflicts are no longer defined only by territorial disputes or military objectives, but increasingly by the systematic destruction of childhood.

"Whenever a child is taken, separated or silenced by war, humanity itself is diminished," Mariam Lambert said, calling on leaders to judge policies not by political convenience, but by their impact on the most vulnerable.

Drawing on her direct humanitarian experience, Mariam Lambert described war as a lived reality rather than an abstract concept. She spoke of evacuating children under drone and missile fire, witnessing trauma at close range, and listening to mothers waiting for children who have not come home. These experiences, she said, leave no room for neutrality or indifference.

A central focus of her address was the situation of Ukrainian children deported during the war.



Mariam Lambert receiving the Leader of Humanity Award



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Mariam Lambert

Mariam Lambert described the forced transfers, identity changes and denial of family contact as grave violations of the Geneva Conventions. She revealed that her team has identified forty Ukrainian children currently inside the Russian Federation, with their names known, families located and legal documentation completed, yet with no response to formal return requests.

While Ukraine was a focal point, Mariam Lambert emphasised that the destruction of childhood is a global human rights failure. She referenced children affected by conflict in Gaza, Israel, South Sudan, Afghanistan, Yemen and Syria, warning that the international community risks normalising the suffering of children if decisive action is not taken.

In her address, Lambert highlighted emerging peace initiatives led by the United States, urging governments to support any serious peace framework that prioritises children. She stressed that peace cannot be measured solely by ceasefires, borders or diplomatic agreements, but by whether children are returned to their families, schools and hospitals are protected, and safe corridors are created for mothers and babies.

“Any credible peace plan must begin and end with the child,” Mariam Lambert stated. “A roadmap that brings children home carries a moral authority that no veto can erase.”

Addressing Italy’s role, Mariam Lambert called on the country to use its moral authority, parliamentary leadership and international relationships to help transform peace proposals into tangible outcomes. She noted Italy’s historic position as a bridge between diplomacy, civil society and faith-based leadership.

Speaking as CEO and Co-Founder of the Emile Foundation, Mariam Lambert reaffirmed the organisation’s independent humanitarian mission. “We serve no government. We serve only the child,” she said, underscoring the Foundation’s work in child protection, reunification and long-term healing.

She concluded her address by calling for four concrete international commitments: making children’s rights non-negotiable in every conflict; establishing a global, verifiable mechanism for the immediate return of separated and deported children; guaranteeing long-term rehabilitation and reintegration for children affected by war; and forming a global coalition of states, faith leaders and civil society united in defence of childhood.

The Human Economic Forum, held at the Italian Parliament under the patronage of the Vatican, seeks to re-examine political and economic systems through the lens of human dignity, ethics and responsibility. Lambert’s address stood out as a defining call to renew the global moral compass around peace, human rights and the protection of children.

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