



AMERICA/PERU - Children and women exploited in sweatshops in the Amazon

Lima (Agenzia Fides) - The military Forces of the Police and the Navy have found 28 drug factories in the area known as the Amazonian Trapezium, the part of Colombian territory that forms a trapezoidal corridor between the territories of Brazil and Peru. In the course of the raid 123 tons of banned chemicals and 10,500 tons of coca leaves were seized. Within the laboratories children who "worked" the drug were found. The little ones were paid \$ 80 a month to work in clandestine laboratories in the areas of Santa Rosa and Cabalococha, in the Loreto region. According to local sources, the minors were found working with deadly chemicals needed to process cocaine, that drug gangs then sent by air and river to Brazil and Colombia. We are mainly talking about children between 8 and 13 years of age originally from Ticuna Cushillo Cocha, who every day risk their lives by manipulating volatile or corrosive chemicals such as acetone, diethyl ether, gasoline, kerosene, potassium permanganate and sulfuric acid. The investigation also found that many native women, attracted by the money offered by the Mafia, have left the work in the fields to devote themselves to other better paid "activities". It is estimated that, in the Amazonian Trapezium, about 30 tons of drugs are produced each month. (AP) (Agenzia Fides 02/10/2013)