

Newsletter for January 2017

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Universal Esperanto Association issues declaration on Human Rights Day

10 December 2016. On the occasion of this year's Human Rights Day, the Universal Esperanto Association has published a Declaration on the importance of human rights generally, and specifically in the work of the Association. The Declaration, conveyed today to the United Nations, reads as follows:

On December 10, 2016, we celebrate the 68th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the most fundamental and far-reaching international understanding on individual rights and fundamental freedoms ever achieved. We also celebrate the 50th jubilee of two agreements arising from the Universal Declaration: the International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). The Universal Esperanto Association is proud to have been associated with the Universal Declaration since the beginning: incorporated into our constitution, even before the Declaration's final ratification, was a clause supporting human rights, which we regard as an essential precondition of our work to promote international understanding. That work includes using the International Language Esperanto to inform our members across the world about the importance of human rights and to encourage them to pass that message on in their own communities.

Coming in the aftermath of one of the largest conflicts in human history, the Universal Declaration marked a rare moment of unanimity in the international community – a unanimity that we are determined to preserve, safeguard and restore at this present time of international uncertainty and tension, when the capabilities of building a better world are so great and the obstacles to its achievement so daunting. We salute the United Nations as a beacon of hope in a troubled world, and we renew our commitment to assist in the promotion of international understanding in a spirit of equality, open debate, and practical help to those in need.

An important addition to your Esperanto library: Fundamento de la homaj rajtoj

16 December 2016. Celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of two major human rights documents, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Universal Esperanto Association today published a pocket-sized booklet *Fundamento de la homaj rajtoj* (Foundation of Human Rights). An Esperanto translation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights has long been available on the United Nations website (<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/UDHR/Pages/Language.aspx?LangID=1115>) but the translation of the two Covenants is new. Former UEA president Humphrey Tonkin, who now represents the Association at the UN, did the translation, which was reviewed by Brian Moon, a professional translator with the European Commission. The three documents are brought together in the new publication, which contains a foreword by current UEA president Dr. Mark Fettes, and an introduction by Dr. M. Rafaela Urueña, professor emerita of international law at the University of Valladolid, Spain. "This publication pays homage to the long historical association of Esperanto and worldwide human rights," explains Dr. Fettes. "By publishing this three-part foundation of human rights, we hope to remind Esperanto speakers of the importance of these documents and make a further modest contribution to their dissemination and realization."

New Esperanto-language websites feature the United Nations

17 December 2016. Thanks to the work of Robin Hill, member of the Association's New York working group on the UN, we have completely redesigned our website www.esperantoporun.org, which provides information to the Esperanto-speaking community in our work at the UN. Among the contents of the news website are:

- a list of the Esperanto volunteers involved in cooperation with the UN in New York, Geneva, Vienna and Paris
- our goals and activities
- position papers presenting our views on issues currently on the UN agenda
- a description of the structure of the UN and aspects of its work
- an account of the history of official languages at the UN
- Esperanto-language translations of UN documents
- Universal Esperanto Association documents addressed to the UN
- an archive of the past newsletters of our UN office, both the Esperanto and English series
- an Esperanto-English English-Esperanto list of common UN terms to assist in translation
- an invitation to volunteer collaborators

We invite you to visit the website.

UN esperante (<https://unesperante.wordpress.com>) is a new Esperanto-language blog edited by Brazilian Esperanto speaker Rafael Lima with the assistance of Andrei A. Pechenkin, giving news and commentary on recent developments at the United Nations. A new report on some aspect of the UN's work appears almost daily. Rafael has joined our team of volunteers.

Esperanto youth organization TEJO takes leadership of the coordinating structure on world youth

7 November 2016. The UN Climate Change Conference held recently in Marrakech (UNFCCC COP22) was the occasion for the annual meeting of the International Coordination Meeting of Youth Organizations (ICMYO). ICMYO links continental youth platforms with the largest international youth organizations worldwide.

The Esperanto youth organization TEJO was confirmed as a member of the executive board and assumed a leadership role in this body. Other organizations in the executive board are the European Youth Forum (YFJ), the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA), the International Federation of Medical Students Associations (IFMSA), the International Falcon Movement (IFM-SEI) and International Young

“We are already at work at addressing several important topics at the UN, such as the active engagement of youth in planning and carrying out the Sustainable Development Goals,” remarked TEJO’s Francesco Maurelli. “In the coming days I will send a letter to Mr. Frederick Shava, ECOSOC president, proposing cooperation in connection with the UN Youth Forum to take place in New York in January.

“I am proud of TEJO’s outreach work,” added Michael Boris Mandirola, president of TEJO and in charge of its Commission on External Relations. “This achievement shows the serious consideration given to TEJO worldwide. We must work with the world’s youth to build a more just world.”

New York lecture series dedicated to Tivadar Soros continues in 2017

16 December, 2016. Esther Schor (Princeton University) was the first speaker in a lecture series in memory of Tivadar Soros, whose two books written in Esperanto, *Crusoes in Siberia* and *Masquerade* describe the experiences of the author in the First and Second World Wars respectively. The lecture series, delivered in English, features the work of several New York area scholars currently at work on Esperanto and planned language.

Professor Schor presented her new book *Bridge of Words: Esperanto and the Dream of a Universal Language* (Metropolitan Books, 2016). Introducing the lecture series, Humphrey Tonkin (University of Hartford) outlined Soros’s life and his role in the Esperanto movement, pointing also to the fact that Tivadar Soros was the father of the well-known financier and philanthropist George Soros. The Soros family, which is providing support for the lectures, was represented by Daisy Soros, widow of Paul Soros, the elder brother of George.

The lecture series, organized by the Esperantic Studies Foundation is taking place under the auspices of the Program in Linguistics at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York (CUNY), 365 Fifth Avenue (at 34th Street). The second lecture, to be given by Michael D. Gordin, professor of history at Princeton University, will take place on Friday, February 10, at 4:00 p.m., in room 9205 at the Graduate Center. The topic will be “The Einstein Language: Finding and Losing Gloro.” The lecture will examine the contribution of Max Talmey, founder of the New York Esperanto Society, to the movement for a planned language. Professor Gordin is the author of *Scientific Babel: How Science Was Done before and after Global English* (University of Chicago Press, 2015).

The third lecture in the series, given by Brigid O’Keeffe professor of history at CUNY’s Brooklyn College, on Friday, March 10, at the same hour and location, will address “Conversations in the Socialist Future: Esperantist Delegations to the Early Soviet Union.”

Further information: www.soroslectures.org.

A new website on the Prague Manifesto

15 December 2016. On the occasion of the anniversary of the birth of the creator of Esperanto, L.L. Zamenhof, the Slovakian organization E@I has launched a new Esperanto-language website featuring the Prague Manifesto, launched in that city twenty years ago, in 1996. The manifesto is a declaration of the aims and ideals of the Esperanto movement, particularly the Universal Esperanto Association. It has lost none of its value and relevance. The co-ordinator of E@I, Peter Baláž, explains: “The Prague Manifesto was for me one of the first documents that I read when I entered the Esperanto movement. In my opinion, it describes, accurately and succinctly, the principal message of the Esperanto movement, addressing linguistic democracy, diversity, and human emancipation – topics that remain important and current. “

The Manifesto describes itself as a declaration by “members of the worldwide movement for the promotion of Esperanto” and is addressed “to all governments, international organizations and people of good will.” It reconfirms the traditional goals of the Esperanto movement and details these goals in the form of seven principles “essential for a just and effective language order.” Baláž adds: “The Prague Manifesto is an interesting and thought-provoking document that has an important place in the Esperanto movement. That is why we designed this website, which aims to present the Manifesto to a multilingual public in an attractive and attention-getting way.”

The site, <http://manifesto.ikso.net>, was designed by an Italian volunteer, Edoardo Nannotti, working with E@I under the auspices of the European Volunteer Service. (Source: *Ondo de Esperanto*, januaro 2017).

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