

# Newsletter for November 2019

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## UEA mourns the passing of Louis Zaleski-Zamenhof

Sole surviving grandson of the creator of Esperanto, Louis-Christophe (Ludoviko Kristoforo) ZALESKI-ZAMENHOF (born 23 January 1925 in Warsaw, died 9 October 2019 in Paris) was a doctor of civil and marine engineering with a specialty in prestressed concrete. He was the grandson of L. L. Zamenhof, and the son of Adam Zamenhof and Wanda Zamenhof, née Frenkiel; he received his given name in honor of his grandfather Ludoviko Zamenhof, creator of Esperanto. He was an Honorary Member of the Universal Esperanto Association and a familiar and well-known presence at World Congresses of Esperanto.

He studied at the Warsaw Polytechnic 1946-49, graduating in civil engineering, and subsequently receiving a doctorate in the technology of prestressed concrete. In 1959 he moved to Paris and continued his professional career in France and beyond, designing buildings on both sea and land. His other professional contribution was as a teacher in the Architectural School in Paris and in the Milan Polytechnic. He published numerous articles and books in his field. After retirement in 1993 he continued work as a consultant, attended scientific conferences, and also participated in Esperanto congresses. He had two daughters, Hanna (1953) and Margaret (1958), and two grandchildren, Klementina Zamenhof-Zaruski and Pierre-Louis-Antoine Lebard.

In Paris he lived with his wife Juliette, née Sekrecka. He spoke French, English and Esperanto, but used Polish in the home. He held French and Polish citizenship and was an honorary citizen of Białystok.

In 1934 Ludoviko expressed a desire to participate in the World Congress of Esperanto in Stockholm. His parents declared that to attend an Esperanto congress without knowing the language would miss the point. Helped by his aunts Zofia Zamenhof and Lidia Zamenhof he embarked enthusiastically on learning and mastering the international language. He became an object of interest for congress participants: in Stockholm – 1934, Rome – 1935, Vienna – 1936, and Warsaw – 1937, where he addressed the congress on behalf of the Zamenhof family. In September 1939, German planes bombed Warsaw. The house at Królewska Street 41, where the family lived, was completely destroyed. Ludoviko was 14 years old at the time.

In 1987 Warsaw, as the “cradle of Esperanto,” was the right place to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the international language. The 72nd World Esperanto Congress in that year in the Polish capital proved the largest in the history of the Esperanto movement. It attracted six thousand participants, in addition to around one thousand visitors who came from the Soviet Union and other so-called socialist countries without formally registering as congress participants. The executive director of the Universal Esperanto Association, Simo Milojević, succeeded in finding seven members of the Zamenhof family, from various countries, who came as honored guests, among them Louis Christophe Zaleski-Zamenhof and his wife Juliette. As grandson of the creator of Esperanto, as a Warsaw native, and as a world renowned builder of “artificial islands”, he proved particularly attractive both to journalists and to congress participants.

Louis C. Zaleski-Zamenhof, reappearing in the movement after a twenty-year absence, remained firmly attached to it. He helped popularize the international language and its ideals through his interviews in the mass media. He also met frequently with Esperantists, as was reflected in the film “Śladami Dziadka” (A Grandfather’s Footsteps) on Polish Television. The film shows him in various locations associated with his grandfather Ludoviko Zamenhof.

Białystok was a frequent goal of his visits to Poland. In the year 2000 he accepted a symbolic diploma attesting to the fact that his grandfather Ludoviko Zamenhof received first place in a ballot for “The Citizen of Białystok in the Twentieth Century”. In 2007 he was named an honorary citizen, along with fourteen others, among them Józef Piłsudski and Lech Wałęsa. He several times visited Białystok as a member of the Zamenhof Foundation in connection with construction of the Zamenhof Centre.

## Message of the Universal Esperanto Association on United Nations Day, 24 October 2019

On the occasion of United Nations Day 2019, the world faces growing challenges – from the climate crisis to the constant and intensifying hostilities in many parts of the world. And the United Nations itself is threatened by a financial crisis resulting from the resistance of many Member States to paying their share of its costs in full and on time.

If there was ever a time for the peoples of the whole world to step up and express their support, that time is today.

From the very beginning of the United Nations, our Association, the Universal Esperanto Association, has always supported the UN’s aims and ideals. Beginning as early as 1954, some 65 years ago, our Association has enjoyed consultative relations with UNESCO; already in 1950 we began a dialogue with the United Nations that led to formal relations with the Economic and Social Council. We work tirelessly among our members, and our members work tirelessly among the public in over one hundred countries, to disseminate information about the United Nations and find areas where we can work together. The effort to keep the United Nations System alive and operating is based on the same ideas as our efforts to disseminate Esperanto, namely the creation of harmonious, peaceful and equitable relations among all people, of all social backgrounds, aimed at true and complete understanding.

We pledge to remain fully dedicated to the United Nations and to continue to work actively to increase awareness of the importance of tolerance, diversity and solidarity as ways of maintaining peace and contributing to a truly free and emancipated society, where friendship and respect are maintained among all individuals and peoples.

We consider it essential for the United Nations to maintain relations with the institutions of civil society since these institutions can relate directly with people to spread the values of the UN. We are aware that the UN cannot achieve its high goals nor carry out its specific programmes without the active cooperation of everyone in a spirit of equality and reciprocal respect.

In the year 2020, our World Congress of Esperanto (Montreal, Canada, 1-8 August) will be specially dedicated to celebrating the 75th anniversary of the United Nations. We call on our membership and on all Esperanto associations to join us in further expanding our publicity on the UN and its importance for world peace, and to co-operate in its programmes and initiatives whenever and wherever possible, for example through national United Nations Associations. We call on our members to gather in Montreal to celebrate together

the achievements of the UN, and to convey this message now through their own media and among the public.

## **A Call for Linguistic Diversity at the UN's Civil Society Conference**

"Is English enough? Listening to the world's many voices" was the subject of a workshop selected for presentation at the United Nations Civil Society Conference in Salt Lake City from 26 to 28 August. The workshop was led by the newly elected president of the Universal Esperanto Association (UEA) Duncan Charters, and included as panelists ESF board member Anna Bennett, representatives of TEJO (the Esperanto youth organization) Hans Becklin and Marcus Griep, and UEA's representative at UNESCO in Paris, Renée Triolle.

Fundamental to the discussion was the fact that too much international communication advantages speakers of English and disadvantages speakers of other languages. Panelists urged greater awareness of the need for two-way communication without linguistic discrimination – a particularly urgent matter in the partnership of the UN and civil society in the effort to achieve the UN's seventeen Sustainable Development Goals. Panelists also noted that 2019 is the International Year of Indigenous Languages – a reminder that the voices of all should be heard and understood by the linguistic elite.

UEA has official consultative relations with the United Nations and UNESCO. Although the workshop competed with twenty other simultaneous workshops, attendance was good: some 25 people participated, most of whom asked questions or stayed afterwards to talk with the speakers.

The sole language of the conference was English, despite the fact that large numbers of conference participants had only limited English competence – a point brought out in the discussion that followed the speakers' presentations. If the UN really wants to eliminate discrimination, one participant suggested, perhaps it needs to work harder to reduce unfair discrimination on the basis of language.

Ms. Triolle, a native French speaker, delivered her remarks in Esperanto – a language, as she pointed out, designed to put everyone on the same linguistic level and to guarantee two-way, democratic communication. Her remarks were interpreted into English by the chair, Dr. Charters.

Support for the session was provided by the Esperantic Studies Foundation.

## **Message to the Esperanto movement from the Universal Esperanto Association on the International Day of Peace, September 21, 2019**

The United Nations General Assembly has declared September 21 as a day dedicated to strengthening the ideals of peace in and between all nations and peoples.

The Member-States of the UN accepted the 17 Sustainable Development Goals in 2015 because they understood that it will be impossible to build a peaceful world if steps are not taken to achieve the economic and social development of people everywhere and guarantee the protection of their rights. The 17 Goals touch on a wide range of questions, including poverty, hunger, health, education, climate, gender equality, water, hygiene, energy, the natural environment and social justice.

The 13th Sustainable Development Goal, concerned with climate action, calls for immediate action to reduce greenhouse gases, strengthen climate resilience, and improve education on climate change.

### **Accordingly, "Climate Action for Peace" is the theme of this year's International Day of Peace.**

This theme draws attention to the importance of resisting climate change in order to protect and disseminate peace throughout the world. Natural catastrophes displace three times as many people as are displaced by military conflict. The salination of water and crops endangers food security, and its negative effect on public health continues to increase. Growing tensions over natural resources resulting from the mass movement of people are evident in every country and every continent.

Peace is achievable only with concrete action to fight climate change. On September 23, the United Nations will call a Climate Action Summit with concrete and realistic plans for rapid action to fulfil the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

The Esperanto movement, with its worldwide communication network, can play a significant role in positive work for peace and climate. We call on Esperanto speakers everywhere in the world to dedicate their attention, on the occasion of the International Day of Peace, to this essential question. Send your ideas, and report on your activities, to #PeaceDay and #ClimateAction – and to [info@esperantoporun.org](mailto:info@esperantoporun.org).

## **Statement of the Universal Esperanto Association on the occasion of the International Day of Non-Violence 2019**

Each year the United Nations observes October 2 as the International Day of Non-Violence – a day on which we celebrate the power of peaceful ideas to move humankind toward the good. On this day in 1869, precisely 150 years ago, the great pioneer of the philosophy and strategy of non-violence, Mahatma Gandhi, was born.

Mahatma Gandhi called non-violence "the greatest force at the disposal of mankind." His words were echoed by Martin Luther King, who described non-violent resistance as "the courageous confrontation of evil by the power of love."

The Universal Esperanto Association gives special emphasis to the power of language as an instrument of non-violence. Through speech and writing, humankind can persuade, insist, reason – without recourse to violent confrontation. But this is possible only when both sides speak the same language. All too often, communication collapses because of language difference, or the inability of speakers of different languages to bridge those differences. And, all too often, when people cease to understand they begin to fight.

Mahatma Gandhi understood these truths. He called for the adoption of Esperanto as a means of inter-communication "for all peoples" and made common cause with one of the earliest presidents of the Universal Esperanto Association, the Swiss diplomat and scholar Edmond Privat.

The International Language Esperanto was created to bridge the differences of languages, constituting a foundation for non-violent communication and the furtherance of understanding. The Universal Esperanto Association's constitution states that "good international relations and respect for human rights, as these are defined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other internationally recognized instruments, are essential conditions for the work of UEA." On the basis of this requirement of our constitution, the Association unequivocally condemns all forms of violence.

"Gandhi constantly highlighted the gap between what we do, and what we are capable of doing," remarked United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres recently. "I urge each and every one of us to do everything in our power to bridge this divide as we strive to build a better future for all."

On the occasion of the International Day of Non-Violence the Universal Esperanto Association reaffirms its co-operation with the United Nations in creating a more peaceful and understanding world in the spirit of Mahatma Gandhi and the non-violence that he espoused.

## **World Congress of Esperanto, August 2020, to celebrate UN**

The 105th World Esperanto Congress will meet in Montreal from August 1 to 8, 2020, on the theme "The UN at 75: Dialogue and understanding in a changing world." It aims to highlight the contribution of the United Nations to peace and development since its foundation. The annual Esperantology Conference will take place as part of the Congress, and a Nitobe Symposium, organized by ESF, will meet immediately following the Congress.

UEA invites proposals for the 73rd session of the International Congress University (IKU) to be held as part of the 105th World Congress of Esperanto in Montreal. The Association invites professors, lecturers and individuals with similar qualifications to submit proposals for lectures to the IKU secretary (amri@huji.ac.il). The deadline for proposals is January 15, 2020. In connection with the IKU there will also be a study session of the International Academy of Sciences (AIS). Candidates for IKU lectures may at the same time propose an IKU course, consisting of the IKU lecture plus two further lectures. Candidates should indicate whether their IKU proposals should also be considered for the AIS session.

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