

# Newsletter for November-December 2020

## **Newsletter of the Universal Esperanto Association's Office of Liaison with the United Nations**

*Number 49, November-December 2020*

### **Statement of the Universal Esperanto Association on the occasion of the International Day of Non-Violence 2020, 2 October**

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, a century and a half ago, the great pioneer of the philosophy and strategy of non-violence, Mahatma Gandhi, was born.

Recently, on July 17, 2020, one of the great leaders of the non-violent movement in the United States, John Lewis, died. Shortly after his passing, his final message was published. It should continue to inspire us. In this message he stated: "Though I may not be here with you, I urge you to answer the highest calling of your heart and stand up for what you truly believe. In my life I have done all I can to demonstrate that the way of peace, the way of love and nonviolence is the more excellent way. Now it is your turn to let freedom ring."

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, despite the often heroic efforts of interpreters and translators. And, all too often, when people cease to understand they begin to fight.

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.

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, John Lewis, and the other pioneers of non-violence.

And, as John Lewis emphasized, now it is our turn...

## **The Kung Fu Rabbit environmentally conscious – in Esperanto**

The film star Kung Fu Rabbit and his friends are engaged in a peaceful battle in Esperanto to save the environment! A new fully international project plans to film a series of animated episodes which will both entertain and teach children across the world. Accompanying it will be a series of books, each in two languages, namely Esperanto and the language of the region concerned; and further adaptations in further languages will follow. The first sponsorships for the project are from China, the producer and director are Spanish, and the first episode will be made in Rome, with support from the Italian Esperanto Federation. Now being planned is an episode in which a snail and a gazelle speak in Esperanto, to the delight of all the other animals. The project leaders argue that, more and more, children grow up in cities and do not experience nature: to save it, we must understand it.

See: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rwlx46xYLwM&feature=youtu.be>

## **A thought on the occasion of Indigenous Peoples Day of the Americas, 12 October**

According to Miguel Trancozo Trevino, in an article in BBC Future, "English and a handful of other languages dominate the internet, but this is leaving indigenous cultures without a voice online. Now they are fighting to get their own languages on the web."

"Imagine your favourite social media platform does not let you post in English. Now think of a keyboard that won't allow you to type in your own words. You would have two options: either switch to another language or remain digitally silent."

"There are nearly 7,000 languages and dialects in the world," the author writes, "yet only 7% are reflected in published online material, according to Whose knowledge?, a campaign that aims to make visible the knowledge of marginalised communities online."

"While Facebook supports up to 111 languages, making it the most multilingual online social media platform, a survey published by Unesco in 2008 found that 98% of the internet's web pages are published in just 12 languages, and more than half of them are in English. This reduces linguistic diversity online to a handful of tongues, making it harder for those that speak one of the excluded languages of the internet."

<https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20200414-the-many-languages-still-missing-from-the-internet?fbclid=IwAR0M6LNQMudEHAJcwTg0lhPLHrdvVYRjT1mUPCt8nfDtpjI8E1GiUI5oJt4>

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