

## **Message of the Universal Esperanto Association on the occasion of the International Day for Tolerance, 16 November 2019**

At a time when the world faces challenges as never before, and such issues as climate change and nuclear war present existential threats not only to the human race but to the planet itself, tolerance is today more important than it ever was. Only by bridging our differences can we confront the problems that surround us. And yet, sadly, there is no country in the world that is not experiencing intolerance in one form or another – over race, religion, gender and the numerous other differences that should make us strong through diversity but all too often serve to weaken our resolve and distract us from the essential challenges that surround us. In many countries political extremism is on the rise and hatred is replacing understanding. Never has international cooperation been more important than it is today.

Fundamental to many of these differences is difference of language. If we cannot understand one another, we cannot work together – and if we cannot understand one another, we tend to think the worst of those who are different from us. On this International Day for Tolerance, the Universal Esperanto Association calls on international organizations such as the United Nations, on governments across the world, and on all people of goodwill to work to seek meaningful dialogue, to set differences aside, and to cooperate in a spirit of tolerance in confronting the challenges that already confront us all.

We pledge our collaboration in this effort.

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