The UN at 75: Dialogue and Understanding in a Changing World

UN 75-jara: Dialogo kaj interkompreniĝo en ŝanĝiĝanta mondo

WORLD FESTIVAL OF ESPERANTO
20 June – 20 September 2020

FINAL REPORT

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Introduction

The World Congress of Esperanto (Universala Kongreso de Esperanto) is held every year in a different city around the world. It is organized by the Universal Esperanto Association (UEA).

The Universal Esperanto Association has formal consultative relations with UNESCO and with the United Nations (both ECOSOC and UNDGC). It works actively within the Esperanto-speaking community to promote United Nations goals and ideals. This community, internationalist in spirit and conviction, is naturally inclined to support the UN’s ideals of understanding, international co-operation, sustainable development, and multilateralism. The Association has representatives and working groups of volunteers in four UN locations: New York, Geneva, Vienna, and Paris – plus an office in United Nations Plaza, near the UN headquarters in New York.

The World Congress normally lasts for one week, and serves as an opportunity for business meetings, lectures, dramatic and musical presentations, and a host of other events. All proceedings take place in the International Language Esperanto. The Congress generally brings together around one thousand or two thousand Esperanto speakers from fifty or so countries, depending on location. This is a small fraction of the worldwide community of Esperanto speakers, though it tends to include many of the most active UEA members.

The 105th annual World Congress was to have taken place from August 1 to August 8, 2000, in Montreal, Canada. Because of the COVID pandemic, UEA was forced to cancel the Congress in its intended form. Instead, the Association launched a three-months-long virtual World Festival of Esperanto, the so-called MondaFest’, which began on June 20 and ended on September 20, 2020. Embedded within it was a one-week period (August 1-8) of virtual events similar to those traditionally associated with the annual congress.

While much was lost as a result of the cancellation, much was gained. Participation in at least some of the events of the Festival rose well into the thousands, some 97 countries were represented, and the business of the Congress was pursued in greater depth and detail than ever before. In all, the Festival included over 500 hours of programming. Programmes were scheduled on what was virtually a 24-hour basis to accommodate the various time zones, and many events were watched after the fact. We have no figures on total viewing and participation, but certainly those numbers ran into four, and maybe five, figures.

The main theme of the Montreal Congress was to have been “The UN at 75: Dialogue and Understanding in a Changing World.” This theme was now transferred to the Festival. Given that the Festival extended over several months, the change allowed for an extended and detailed debate on the situation of the United Nations, its history and future, its
commitment to peace, human rights and sustainable development, and the challenges facing the UN.

The authors of this report formed a planning committee on the festival theme, which organized events, monitored their progress, and set up reporting mechanisms. The following report is an outcome of the work of this committee.
UN-Related Programmes: Observations, Recommendations and Conclusions

The three-month virtual World Festival of Esperanto extended from mid-June to mid-September 2020. An inaugural session in June launched the festival topic, “The UN at 75: Dialogue and Understanding in a Changing World.” Among those greeting the attendees was a representative of the United Nations, Mr. Fabrizio Hochschild-Drummond, Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on the Commemoration of the United Nations 75th Anniversary, who had planned to attend the World Congress of Esperanto in Montreal, Canada, cancelled for 2020 because of the COVID pandemic. His message is posted on YouTube. Several thousand people have viewed it.

In addition to the thousands of people who attended festival sessions live, thousands more viewed them on the web. All sessions were conducted in the International Language Esperanto.

An abundance of events, in the form of lectures, seminars, discussions, and information sessions, dealt with the UN, grouped around the UN’s three “pillars”: peace, human rights, and development.

On human rights the principal contributor was the Italian jurist Giuliano Turone, who paid particular attention to the importance of language rights and the removal of unfair discrimination on the basis of the language a person speaks.

On peace and the United Nations the principal speaker was the former ambassador of Germany to Russia, Amb. Ulrich Brandenburg. His speech and the subsequent discussion also drew attention to the 75th anniversary of the dropping of the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki and the need to eliminate nuclear weapons. Additional events relating to this anniversary included a presentation by an Esperanto-speaking Japanese guide from Hiroshima on the fate of a Korean family caught in the Hiroshima disaster. Her goal was to emphasize the fact that the problem of nuclear arms touches us all. The Festival sent a message to the United Nations to mark this day.

The topic of development was addressed by Professor Mark Fettes (Canada), former president of UEA. In connection with the Festival, seventeen Esperanto-speaking experts assembled seventeen essays on each of the Sustainable Development Goals. The guide was published in book form and also on the Web at: http://esperantoporum.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Gvidilo-al-la-17-celoj-por-dauripova-evoluiigo-de-UN.pdf. It is intended both to inform the Esperanto-speaking public about the 17 Goals and also to offer suggestions about action that they can take, both as private
citizens and in co-operation with other Esperantists and the public in general. Of particular importance: What role can Esperanto play in the promotion of sustainability in general and the 17 Goals in particular?

The International Day of the World’s Indigenous Peoples, August 9, coincided with the Festival and was the subject of special programming. A message marking the day was sent to the United Nations.

Throughout the three months of the Festival, seminars and discussion groups were organized by members of the team (i.e. the editors of this report), in various settings and at various hours to accommodate participants from all parts of the world. Additional chat rooms allowed for further spontaneous discussion. The ideas expressed and conclusions reached at these events were collected and passed on to the team. The following is a brief summary of the views expressed. We wish to emphasize that these views were contributed by people from all parts of the world – from Brazil and Mexico as well as Italy and Poland, from Burundi and Benin as well as China and the Philippines, all of them aided by the direct communication made possible by common use of the International Language Esperanto.

Observations:

- Strong support for the aims and ideals of the United Nations among Esperantists.
- Alarm at the weakening of multilateral approaches to problems, particularly to problems that are fully international, indeed worldwide, such as climate change, inequality, displacement of populations.
- Discontent at the low level of financial support for the UN by the various states.
• Awareness that, despite its recent efforts, the UN remains too linked to the major world languages: if it really wants to listen to the voices of the people in the various countries, it must do so through their languages, and not assume that the peoples of the world will communicate with the UN through the UN’s languages.
• Favourable awareness of the fact that the UN has begun to turn to the Esperantists in the Esperantists’ language, using Esperanto, among other languages, for its survey on the UN’s next twenty-five years.
• Expression of the willingness of the Esperanto movement to continue to cooperate with the UN through Esperanto and its unique extension to all corners of the world.

Problems:

• While Esperantists are among the most internationally inclined and internationally aware members of the public, their knowledge of the UN remains insufficient. This lack of knowledge points to a general problem among the public in the various countries.
• The experience of Esperanto speakers makes it clear that there are many misunderstandings among the public about the role and activities of the UN.
• The Esperanto movement needs a more formal and organized structure to provide information and education on the UN among Esperantists, and, by way of Esperantists, among the general public in every country.

Actions:

• It was decided to launch a new organization to provide information on the United Nations among Esperanto speakers, using as a model the national UN associations, and to mobilize Esperantists around the 17 Sustainable Development Goals.
• It was decided to look for further opportunities for partnership between Esperanto speakers and the UN, in the UN’s efforts to inform and mobilize civil society around the UN’s goals.
• It was decided to continue support for policies of multilingualism at the UN, particularly its efforts to reach out to the world as a whole, despite differences, including differences of language.

General Conclusions:

• UEA, in its role as a nongovernmental organization in consultative relations with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and the UN Department of Global Communications (UNDGC), as well as with UNESCO, once again pledges its support for co-operation for peace, human rights, and sustainable development.
In its role as a board member of the Conference of Nongovernmental Organizations in Consultative Relationship with the United Nations (CoNGO), UEA draws the UN's attention to the CoNGO Declaration on the 75th Anniversary of the United Nations, and its active support of CoNGO in carrying out its recommendations.

Links

Speech Under-Secretary-General and Special Adviser on Preparations for UN75
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KO2B1MJoq8

World Festival of Esperanto | Recordings Playlist
https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLfebd4xxn3COt6hUN9CyAOU2eHKEJE0BN

World Conference of Esperanto | Recordings Playlist
https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLfebd4xxn3CPpG9KAZP4JHr_PWWIZO9-
Opening Ceremony

At 12:00 UTC on June 20, UEA began live presentation of the Inauguration of the World Festival of Esperanto. The programme ran for two and a half hours and can be viewed on UEAviva, UEA’s YouTube channel: [https://youtu.be/SCMdxEIu128](https://youtu.be/SCMdxEIu128). In addition to speeches by Duncan Charters (UEA President), Margaret Zaleski-Zamenhof (member of the Zamenhof family), Humphrey Tonkin, Sara Spanò and Rakoen Maertens (members of the working group Esperanto por UN, a collaboration between UEA and the youth organization TEJO), Orlando Raola (UEA board member for culture and congresses), and Jérémie Sabiyumva (UEA board member for Africa), the programme also included a rich musical offering, with contributions by Fransoazo, Kriztoff, jOmO, Manno Montanna, Joel Muhire and Amira Chun, who, at the conclusion of the ceremony sang the Esperanto anthem “La Espero” (accompanied by the St. Petersburg Regional Symphony Orchestra, led by Igor Ponomarenko, in an arrangement by Esperantist Jo Haazen contributed to UEA in 2019). See: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PCapJ0l4NEo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PCapJ0l4NEo).

The live session took place across three platforms: the website MondaFest.net, the YouTube channel UEAviva, and UEA’s Facebook page. The Facebook broadcast reached 6000 people during these first two and a half hours, of whom 2000 actively engaged with the broadcast (liked, commented, contacted others, or simply viewed). On YouTube, there were 600 real time views, many of them with family members or with school groups. While it is not possible to come up with precise statistics, the probability is that some 2300 people viewed the inauguration in real time, and numerous others connected subsequently.

In the 24 hours following the Inauguration, over 1700 people had already viewed the Inauguration in UEAviva and the video of the Inauguration became the second most viewed film in the channel’s past five years, exceeded in views only by Alexandra Mendieta’s entry to the film competition “My Association, My City (“Mia Asocio, Mia urbo”). In those 24 hours, the number of UEAviva subscribers grew by 200. In Facebook the film had now reached almost 11,000 people, with 1300 views within the 24 hours. Soon, subscribers to the page exceeded 7600.
Introduction to the Festival Theme

Humphrey Tonkin

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gMMQClT5teY

The theme of the 105th World Congress of Esperanto in Montreal was to have been “The UN at 75: Dialogue and understanding in a changing world”. We chose that topic to stress the importance of the 75th anniversary, but primarily to give attention to the need for global action to create worldwide harmony not only among people everywhere, but also among the many species that make up our world. And we wanted to emphasize the importance of Esperanto as a means for discussion and fulfilment of that harmony.

This topic, and the present and future of the United Nations, became the principal theme of the World Festival of Esperanto.

Let’s begin with some history. When in the year 1945 the world began to think about the post-war agreement, the principal independent states met in San Francisco to develop a plan. This plan anticipated the creation of an international organisation uniting all peoples of the world in a single place of consultation that would enable the solution of international disputes and would regulate contacts among the states, while at the same time protecting individual human rights and developing those parts of the world that remained underdeveloped and lacked independence.

The first signatures were appended to the final document at the end of the San Francisco conference on June 25, 1945.

Out of this optimism and clarity of vision were born the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of the year 1948 and a whole series of other interstate pacts and agreements. The Universal Esperanto Association enthusiastically associated itself with the Universal Declaration. In fact, among the team which drafted the Declaration was a young Esperantist, the diplomat Ralph Harry. If later agreements were not universally observed, they at least reduced disputes and wars and replaced conflict with discussion. Already in 1947, the constitution of UEA included an allusion to human rights as essential for the work of the Association.

If June 25, 1945 marked the beginning of a process that led to the formal founding of the United Nations on October 25 of that year, it did not mark the end of the war. On August 6 occurred the largest single loss of life in the entire war when an atomic bomb destroyed the city of Hiroshima in Japan. And, a few months before that, on January 27, 1945, the Russian army liberated the Auschwitz extermination camp and thus opened to the eyes of the world
the horrors that had been occurring there for several years. On August 9, the Americans, the initiators of the process that led to the founding of the United Nations, dropped a second atomic bomb, on Nagasaki.

In all parts of the world, speakers of the International Language had died, either as soldiers or, directly or indirectly, as victims of the hatred that seemed to have swallowed the world, in Auschwitz and in Siberia, but also in Dresden and London – and in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Even earlier, in the years before the Second World War, idealist Esperantists had died on the battlefields of Spain. Those Esperantists, believers in peace, often people who fought to have peace or to protect themselves against annihilation, wanted to create a world of understanding, a world not necessarily of the same opinions, but a world in which it would be possible to solve disputes, to live in peace, to respect human rights. To them, the United Nations represented hope, humanity in the best sense.

The new organisation, the UN, had three principal “pillars”: preservation of peace, protection of human rights, and economic development. The states only selectively identified with these pillars. Soon, the great division emerged between capitalism and socialism – a division that lasted for four decades and a half, through years in which we Esperantists worked on both sides, and across both sides, to maintain direct communication and to hold aloft the flag of peace. At the same time the old empires fell apart: decolonisation doubled, even tripled, the number of members of the United Nations, and UN membership covered the world. And, in parallel with that expansion, Esperanto began to extend its influence throughout that world.

Just five years ago, the nations agreed on 17 Sustainable Development Goals, seventeen priorities for the reduction of inequality, the integration of world systems, and the struggle to overcome threats to the coexistence of all creatures on our planet. This massive agreement is already threatened by a falling away from the notion of worldwide collaboration. Those who suppose that the individual nations can solve their problems independently nourish a belief much less realistic than that of the highest idealists – for example those who believe in peace and even in an international language. We Esperantists work against linguistic discrimination and for linguistic equality and communication: we are aware that only by transnational and supranational collaboration the world can prosper. To achieve that, we need the United Nations – a UN that functions more smoothly, that cooperates in greater equality, and that shares its problems and its riches with greater dedication.

Can we say that the UN has succeeded? No one, under the best of circumstances, would say that it has succeeded completely. Has it been partly successful? The existence of international institutions has undoubtedly reduced the causes of conflict, undoubtedly made it possible for states at least to understand that they have not yet achieved the ideals
of the UN. The complicated, often clumsy, often opaque UN apparatus has nonetheless kept alive the spirit of multilateralism – the notion that world problems require world responses, that the collaboration of all humankind is necessary to solve the problems often created by that same humankind. We should not lose faith. We should not fall into pessimism. As Martin Luther King once said, “I have decided to stick to love. Hate is too great a burden to bear.”

Never have these words re-echoed more strongly than now, in the middle of a pandemic and a crisis of inequality which threaten the entire world and which are responsive only to multilateral cooperation at the level both of institutions and of ordinary people.

Stick to love. Put aside the burden of hatred. And do so in a practical, clear-eyed, and persistent way. The world will never be perfect. In fact the notion of hope in itself implies incompleteness: we are always striving for something better. That is the essence of Zamenhof’s Nova Sento, a new sense of hope in the world.

To counter the pessimism and to learn the opinions of ordinary people, the UN has launched this year, in its 75th anniversary, a worldwide survey. This survey asks: what do we expect from the UN in coming years? What kind of a UN do we want? If, in your judgement, the United Nations requires improvement (and who would deny that?), we should work together to express our opinions, to contribute to the dialogue, and also to inspire non-Esperanto-speakers to contribute. "We must come together," Secretary General Antonio Guterres said recently, "not only to talk but also to listen." Accept that invitation from the Secretary General: express your opinion.

The Universal Esperanto Association enthusiastically joins this campaign. As early as 1954, UEA began active collaboration with UNESCO and the United Nations. Twice, UNESCO has passed resolutions supportive of Esperanto, thanks to the work of Ivo Lapenna and Tibor Sekelj respectively. The Journal of UNESCO, the Courier, is published in Esperanto, and we also collaborate in a number of other areas.

Our World Festival therefore has as its topic “The UN at 75”. In the coming weeks and months we will commission lectures by specialists, organise discussion groups where all speakers of Esperanto can contribute in the International Language, and encourage Esperantists to complete the survey. And, above all, we will examine how the movement for the International Language Esperanto can contribute to the struggle that constitutes its very reason for existence, namely worldwide understanding.
Greetings!

My name is Rakoen Maertens, TEJO representative to the United Nations.

Humphrey Tonkin has explained the importance of UN-75. The UN is not only important for linking nations: it has also brought speakers of Esperanto together. Work for the UN and about the UN has proved one of the most successful areas of collaboration between TEJO and UEA. We have had success after success in our work in connection with UNESCO, the UN, human rights, and various NGO committees. Nor does the work end there: it is only the beginning of a long journey to numbers of future successes.

Now is the time to show the UN that Esperanto really can unite different people, different peoples, different ideologies. We can begin by filling out the official UN75 survey. It is now available in Esperanto. So, go to website UN75.online.

Please complete the survey and distribute it broadly. Let’s show the UN the great strength of the Esperanto community.

Enjoy MondaFest’. We’ll see one another again soon.
This brief presentation is intended to provide an introductory overview and to emphasize the connection between UEA’s external relations and the Festival Theme “The UN at 75: Dialogue and Understanding in a Changing World”.

In our opening remarks on this year’s Festival Theme, we often referred to the three “pillars” of the United Nations: peace, human rights, development. But how and why are they connected to the work of UEA at the UN?

These three fundamental topics are linked to the three UN centres where UEA has long been actively represented – by, respectively, Hans-Michael Maitzen, Stefano Keller and Humphrey Tonkin: UN Vienna (peace), UN Geneva (human rights), UN New York (development).

Furthermore, we should not forget where the history of UEA’s external relations began, namely UNESCO, whose headquarters are in Paris. Let me recommend that you attend the lecture by the second vice-president of UEA, Trezoro Huang Yingbao, on Esperanto at UNESCO, and follow the contributions of UEA’s chief representative to UNESCO, Francois Lo Jacomo, during the congress week.

In addition to this, is there a possibility that in the future a further point will be added to this four-pointed “external star” of UEA (UN Vienna, UN Geneva, UN New York, UNESCO)? At UN Nairobi, whose major focus consists of environmental protection and urban development, various preliminary contacts have taken place about which there will be further information following future planned interventions.

A common perception of the topic “External Relations” is often that it is distant, boring, elitist – something neither important nor interesting for Esperanto speakers. Is that really so?

It is not. The values of Esperanto are aligned with the aims and pillars of the UN and UNESCO, our natural allies, and, as the activities of our organizations show, we have something of importance to say in support of the work of these international institutions. But, we should add, nothing can truly be achieved without dialogue and understanding, which are more and more urgently needed in the face of today’s worldwide challenges. And that inevitably touches on the language problem in international communication, an essential problem that people are generally unaware of. Esperanto, a neutral language for egalitarian international communication and its accompanying values, is part of the solution to this problem, and the external activities of our organizations among these international institutions raises awareness – awareness to which every Esperanto speaker can make an important contribution. Everyone’s voice matters.
We are not here simply to commemorate an important anniversary. We are here to accept a challenge, to put ourselves back in the discussion, to reconsider ourselves, our values and our identities as Esperantists, and to assess our activities and our lack of activity. We should not wait for simple solutions to complex problems. We should not expect comfort but challenges: more things to be done, more work on various levels. Shaping the future together is no easy task; but it is essential that we Esperantists leave our comfortable (and sometimes rather judgmental) nest, to build together a more just and peaceful world, based on dialogue and understanding.

The Festival Theme will run through the current congress week. Let me remind you of the three major contributions today and tomorrow and the discussion sessions linked to them, explicitly indicated by the label “The UN at 75”. Be sure not to miss the programme on the exercise of human rights during the Day of Learning; the programme taking place on the memorial day dedicated to Hiroshima and Nagasaki on Thursday; the concluding discussion on the Sustainable Development Goals on Friday. And not only these. In the Science Café there will be contributions particularly related to the Congress Theme (Burghela, John Huang, Striganova). A final recommendation: Muzaiko’s programme on “The Spread of Esperanto through Cool Music”...

Let the music begin!
Dear listeners: greetings and welcome to today's discussion!

My name is Ulrich Brandenburg. I am a former ambassador of Germany. During my professional career I for many years was concerned with security and defence policy. The planned Universal Congress in Montreal and the current Virtual Congress are dedicated to the 75th anniversary of the United Nations. Our coordinator Humphrey Tonkin has asked me to provide an introduction to one of the three “pillars” of the United Nations, on peace (remember that the other two pillars are human rights and economic and social development). I recorded this introduction in mid-July 2020.

Victory in the Second World War was the origin of the United Nations. After a terrible war, which caused sixty million deaths, countries destroyed and many millions of refugees, the world longed for peace more than anything else. This feeling is conveyed by the United Nations Charter in its preamble. The hour of victory was a moment of at least superficial clarity. It was clear who had won, who had lost and who was responsible (in fact, a particular formula in the Charter, directed at the guilty parties Germany and Japan, facilitated intervention in case of a returning military risk). To the founders of the UN and the authors of the Charter it was also relatively clear what factors had led to the war or at least facilitated it: the madness of nationalism and the weakness of contemporary international institutions. They wanted to create something more solid. And also the victors pre-emptively ensured that the United Nations would not be able to act against its own interests. The Security Council would have five permanent members and those five would have a right of veto.

What was the Security Council? In addition to the five permanent members, it has 10 non-permanent members elected for two years. The Charter gives to the Council the primary responsibility for the protection of peace and security in the world. Resolutions of the Council are recognised in international law as sources of legitimacy, either for the UN itself or for other parties. Particularly important are resolutions adopted under Chapter 7 of the Charter: they permit the use of compulsory methods such as sanctions and military interventions. The United Nations, other organisations and governments have extensive experience in working on the basis of such resolutions. Everyone who has ever been involved with the Kosovo conflict knows resolution 1244 from the year 1999. For Afghanistan particularly important are resolutions 1378 and 1386 from 2001. Many resolutions are regularly extended, not always without problems: a current example is
resolution 2533 from 2020, which allows, but reduces, the means of delivering humanitarian aid in the Idlib region of Syria.

The role of the United Nations in the protection of peace is not limited to the resolutions of the Security Council. The United Nations has many years of experience in peacekeeping operations: currently 13 such operations are operating on three continents. Interestingly: the peacekeeping operations of the UN cost only half a percent of worldwide expenditures for military purposes. These operations in many cases help to “freeze” conflicts as part of wider political compromises. Virtually never are they successful in actually solving conflicts. A few days ago we were reminded of a particularly unhappy anniversary: the war crimes in Srebrenica in 1995, which again demonstrated the helplessness of the international community. In this instance, it was UNPROFOR that had neither the mandate nor sufficient strength to prevent this massacre. Incidentally, in the same year, the Security Council, under chapter 7, adopted resolution 1031, which gave a mandate to an international force organised by NATO (at that time even with the participation of Russia) to intervene, separate the combatants, collect and destroy armaments, and attend to order and security. It was, then, an operation to enforce peace. This resolution was confirmed by the Dayton and Paris Accord of November 1995, which aimed to end the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The resolution (as with 1244 for Kosovo and 1368 for Afghanistan) was one example of a decision to allocate responsibilities among several actors, of which the military part was assumed not by the UN but by another organisation. Similar examples can be seen in other conflict regions, where local or other organisations (like the African Union, the European Union, or, once again, NATO) fulfil that role.

After the end of the Cold War (in which there was sharp hostility but also a balance of fear) there was little time for celebration. At the same time and immediately afterwards, “regional conflicts” exploded: once again people were dying or had to take flight. And this trend has continued down to today. The number of local wars across the world has tripled between 2010 and 2020. More than 20 million people have fled from their countries and a further 41 million have been displaced within their own boundaries. Almost a hundred million rely on humanitarian help, and this number is constantly growing. Instead of world order – as the founders of the United Nations aspired to – it seems that world disorder prevails. Our “multipolar world” has still not found its balance. People suffer, and the reputation of the United Nations suffers, along with other organisations, to which we tribute a “crisis of international institutions.”

This crisis is real, but the institutions have only as much power as the states are willing to give them. Even if the “tribal conflicts” (as Zamenhof described them in his message to the diplomats of 1915) of the present time often take place within countries and lead to the undermining and disintegration of states, in most cases, however, these same states maintain final authority. They generally defend their national sovereignty and are inclined to
resist “interference in internal affairs.” Willingness to surrender authority, rights, money or even soldiers to international organisations is very limited. Between the states and the United Nations today there does exist another level: that of regional organisations. A few of them I have already mentioned; the Charter deals with regional organisations in chapter 8. To come back to Zamenhof’s message of 1915: he at that time called for “a United States of Europe.” Then, it was a matter of a largely European conflict. A European Union was successful only after a terrible war. It remains imperfect down to our own day. However, it does show that, if states work more closely together and surrender rights to a supranational organisation, that sacrifice can contribute to stability and prosperity. Yes, war came back to Europe even after 1945 but not between the former opponents.

Seventy-five years after the founding of the United Nations we can say that, at least up to now, we have succeeded in escaping a third world war. The United Nations has contributed to this stability, but the stability is also a result of that spirit of international collaboration and a stronger texture of institutions that the authors of the Charter aimed for. Perhaps the sense of international responsibility has also grown because of the reality that nuclear arms could destroy human civilisation in a few hours. We live today in a much more interdependent world. Information (true or not) circulates in seconds. Thus, globalisation can help to understand the world situation better, but also creates new risks.

When the world emerged from the ruins of the Second World War, the tasks seemed clear, and to carry them out we created the UN. Today not so many things seem clear; cause and effect are more complicated. In many countries people flee from nationalism or pursue populist movements because they fear the challenges of globalisation and long for a simpler world. It will not come. On the contrary, to retreat into parochialism and nationalism will only multiply the causes of conflict. The founders of the United Nations had the courage to act so that history would not repeat itself. Keeping peace today requires no less energy, decisiveness and clarity. The Esperantists (at least I hope that it is so) belong to the realistic part of humanity. To learn the language and to work for peace and understanding are part of the same logic. The greatest risk is human stupidity.
In your professional life (and perhaps also in your Esperantist life), you have often had to confront the question of human rights. What does the idea of human rights mean to you and where and how have you applied it?

In my professional life, both as a judge and as a prosecutor, I have often had to deal with even very significant violations of human rights. Those who serve as judges constantly run into, along the way, significant and less significant failures to observe human rights, constituting crimes and requiring prosecution as such. My most intense experience in the area of human rights violations was the two years that I spent working as a prosecutor at the Hague Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia. A terrible experience. It’s important to add that those who are in positions of power, and therefore also judges and prosecutors, must pay attention every day to following the rules and must practice their profession exclusively in the service of justice and of the country in question, so that they do not fall into failures to observe human rights themselves.

The document to which we as Esperantists constantly return is the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, of 1948. Why is that document important? What are its limitations?

The importance of this document is enormous and evident to all. The Declaration is humankind’s response to the moral decay, to the terrible exterminations and atrocities, perpetrated by the regimes of the Nazis and Fascists in the most destructive world war of all times. Its limits lie in the fact that human rights have been violated in various parts of the world (sometimes even in countries with progressive democracy) through all 72 years from 1948 to today. It would be total hypocrisy not to recognise that fact.

The Universal Declaration is limited to individual rights. What about collective rights? Is there a basis for such rights? What can we do when collective rights collide with individual rights?

I would say that included among the fundamental rights of the human person are these same fundamental collective rights. For example, one of the worst failures to observe human rights is genocide. And I would say that the tragic spread of femicide is also an endemic breach of a collective human right: the right of women not only to gender equality, but also to respect and protection, primarily their physical integrity.
Evidently the concept of human rights is not only legal but also political. In fact frequently those two concepts, the legal and the political, are in conflict. What can we do about the fact that the question of human rights is often applied selectively, for example by one government against another, or by one political party against another? And is there a similar selectivity in public opinion?

I would reply to that question in fairly drastic terms. Regarding human rights, political circles are divided into two categories. There are those political circles that are seriously and sincerely interested in the defence of human rights (for example, yes to the rescue of boat people faced with drowning and at least in part with the right to asylum), and on the other hand there are political circles that don’t want to know, or at least only pretend to care. The same is true of public opinion.

What international mechanisms exist to apply and enforce human rights effectively? What role does the United Nations play?

The United Nations is often blocked by the right to veto. The international mechanisms are indeed the UN, the European Union and other similar international bodies. But within them there is no homogeneity. I really don’t see any effective mechanisms.

How important are these mechanisms in the UN? What can we do to strengthen them?

I repeat: these are important mechanisms but, if they did not exist, the situation would simply be even worse. But there exists no unifying goal, and it doesn’t seem to me that there is a common desire to strengthen these mechanisms.

In the United Nations, human rights constitute one of three “pillars” of that organisation (the others are Peace and Development). What should the UN (and the international community in general, including organisations like UEA) do in the next 25 years to improve and strengthen their activities in this field?

The future of the three “pillars” is dependent on the political will of the member states of the United Nations, particularly the major powers. So I don’t know how to reply.

What can we as individuals do to strengthen the concept and application of basic human rights? What action should we take, locally, nationally, internationally?

We can only act as effectively as possible to spread awareness and sensitivity on the matter.
1. Development and its connection with the founding of the UN

*Development* appears in the United Nations Charter under that document's Chapter IX, “International Economic and Social Collaboration.” The first article in that chapter presents the primary goals of the UN in that field:

a. higher standards of living, full employment, and conditions of economic and social progress and development;

b. solutions of international economic, social, health, and related problems; and international cultural and educational cooperation; and

c. universal respect for, and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion.
In the chapter immediately following, Chapter X, the Charter establishes the Economic and Social Council of the UN, the coordinating body on these broad fields of social activity. I should add that ECOSOC, as it is customarily known, is the primary branch of the UN with which UEA and the Esperanto movement have official relations. However, even at the time of the founding of the UN it was understood that it would be necessary to create various “specialised agencies” with a clearer focus on particular aspects of “economic and social progress and development.” And so it turned out – which is why it is difficult to summarise in a few words the complicated 75 year history of the UN’s development efforts. Compared with the fields of peace and security and that of human rights – both fairly diverse, but relatively coherent in their conceptual structure – the pillar relating to development is more like a spreading tree, growing in all kinds of directions and carrying a large assortment of fruit over which no team of gardeners has complete authority.

Furthermore, we should note that the UN as a whole is not the most influential international institution in the field of development, at least not if we think primarily of economic development. The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund were established at about the same time as the UN, and they have become the most important sources of finance for the poorer countries. Unlike the UN, the member states of the World Bank and the IMF vote in proportion to their budgetary contributions, so that both institutions are ruled by the wealthy countries of the northern hemisphere. Thus, the various branches of the UN often function as forums for promoting alternative concepts of development, more oriented to the actual social conditions of the so-called developing countries than the idea that all countries are on the same road leading to an industrial consumer society of the American variety.

2. Development through seven decades

It’s important to remember that in 1945 the world had far fewer independent states. 50 states participated in the founding conference of the UN in San Francisco; among them, only two African countries (Ethiopia and South Africa), two from Oceania (Australia and New Zealand), and two from East Asia (China and the Philippines). The colonial powers – primarily Britain, France, the Netherlands, Portugal – claimed to speak for their territories in all regions of the globe and still thought of development in this colonial framework. Little by little it became apparent that the colonial era was coming to a definitive end; through the fifties, sixties and seventies, almost all the former colonies became independent (sometimes relatively peacefully, sometimes only after a bloody struggle) and joined the UN, so that today the organisation has 193 member states.

As early as the 1960s, then, development was clearly becoming a matter of national policy: primarily, how to grow the economy and improve systems of health and education. But the newly independent countries were confronted with gigantic problems along the way,
problems which the UN could help to define and research, but not itself solve. The rich countries of the North, still influenced by the colonialist mindset, tended to assume that, through superior knowledge and technology, they could (either out of charity or to advance their own interests) raise the poorer countries to their own level. Playing a part in this belief was the growing influence of economics, a relatively young discipline which nonetheless aimed to discover universal laws of prosperity and economic management. Inevitably, these tendencies were expressed also in UN circles. Only little by little, in the 1970s and 1980s, the persistence of poverty, illiteracy, hunger, epidemic diseases and other problems revealed the inadequacy of such approaches. In the meantime it became increasingly clear that the path to development in industrial societies was causing serious damage to the natural world and could not be pursued for ever, nor generalised to the whole world.

For the past 40 years, then, development has been more and more addressed in UN circles as a complex, multifarious challenge for which there are no unified solutions. From UNESCO, for example, has come the concept of cultural development, namely the idea that the unique qualities of each country and people define the possible routes to social progress. From the Development Programme of the UN has come the concept of human development, along with the so-called Human Development Index, which measures three indicators of human well-being for each country: life expectancy, level of education, and income. And from the Brundtland Report and the UN conferences on natural protection has come the concept of sustainable development, which seeks a balance among economic, social and natural considerations. I should also add that various critics outside UN circles have expressed (and continue to express) doubts about the concept of development in general, arguing that it remains essentially colonialist despite these various adaptations.

In the year 2000, the member states of the UN accepted a joint 15 year programme of action under the title Millennium Development Goals. The programme had eight principal goals; among them, three had to do with quality-of-life (poverty and hunger, basic education, gender equality); three with health (focused on children, mothers, and infectious diseases, particularly AIDS); one with nature (with particular emphasis on drinkable water and the conditions of life in slums, so in fact for the most part about humans in nature); and one with international collaboration, or, more precisely, international solidarity, because the principal aim was to create more favourable financial, economic and technical conditions for the poorer countries. This list received quite a lot of criticism because it seemed somewhat arbitrary and poorly argued; on the other hand, at least had the merit of fixing common priorities and also at least partly revealing the multifarious must of the challenge. With the passing of time, the feeling grew that such a list of common goals had political and practical utility, and so in the year 2012 planning began to follow the Millennium Development Goals with a new, more carefully prepared programme of action.

3. The Sustainable Development Goals
in the years following 2000, an awareness spread of the urgency of the ecological crisis as a barrier to development - most strikingly, of course, in relation to climate change, but also more and more because of the loss of species and the collapse in the number of plants, insects and animals in the vast reaches of the earth and ocean. That explains the UN’s decision to link the new goals with the concept of sustainable development. Theorists of sustainability emphasise that sustainable societies must also be peaceful, stable and just societies, where everyone feels secure with respect to the necessities of life, like water, food and shelter, and also with respect to cultural identity. Accordingly, the new goals are more extensive than the earlier ones, with 17 major goals and 169 specific targets. In this short presentation I can only summarize the major goals. A cross-disciplinary team has suggested that they can be conceived as forming three groups, plus the final goal, which, as with the final Millennium Development Goal, calls for worldwide solidarity.

The first group consists of goals for a viable social base. They are closest to the Millennium Development Goals, which for the most part cover the same ground:

- Goal 1. No poverty.
- Goal 3. Good health and well-being for all.
- Goal 4. Quality education for all.
- Goal 5. Gender equality.
- Goal 10. Reduced social and international inequalities,
- Goal 16. Peace, justice and strong institutions for all.

The second group consists of goals for a viable material base, so social infrastructure in the broadest sense:

- Goal 2. End hunger.
- Goal 6. Clean water and sanitation.
- Goal 7. Affordable and clean energy.
- Goal 8. Decent work and economic growth.
- Goal 12. Responsible consumption and production.

The third group consists of three expansive goals for a sustainable natural base, namely conservation and re-establishment of natural systems damaged through human action.

- Goal 13. Combat climate change.
- Goal 14. Conserve and sustainably use the oceans.
- Goal 15. Conserve and sustainably use the land.

And, finally, we come to Goal 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development.
Clearly each goal is not independent of all the others. On the contrary, many are closely connected, and often in tension with one another. For example, the systems that we have been using up to now to deliver energy to houses, to agriculture and to industry have caused the problem of climate change; our wasteful use of water and our abundant use of chemicals to produce food have damaged the Earth’s ecosystem; our patterns of consumption and production have caused serious health problems. So in fact we are dealing with a complex whole, and effective sustainable approaches to development have to consider not only the individual goals, but the reform of society to bring them together as the basis of policy and economy. In this light, we can say that all countries are developing countries or should see themselves that way – that no country can be content with its current situation.

4. Development and Esperantists

No one is surprised when we say that the Esperanto movement is a movement for peace, or a movement for human rights. The so-called “internal idea” of the language, that all people are brothers and sisters, can be easily linked to those “pillars” of UN activities. However, to say that the Esperanto movement is a movement for development, perhaps for sustainable development – that’s more of a stretch for many members of the movement. On the other hand, it is equally a stretch for the UN to see a link between language and development. Among the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, there is complete silence on the multilingual nature of the world, and the organisation lacks a systematic policy for the use of the language of its peoples in its work. Although declarations are occasionally published, for example, about the importance of education in the mother tongue, basic education in many poorer countries still takes place in the languages of power in the country in question, not infrequently even in the ex-colonial languages. And such contradictions appear in many places in the field of development, which is in reality, as always, a matter of money, power and social hierarchies.

However, as this brief introduction has, I hope, made clear, questions of sustainable development are inevitable in the world of today; they surround us all. And this, in my opinion, means that Esperantists must begin to raise their voices in this field as well. Zamenhof insisted, in his day, that Esperanto does not intend to touch “the domestic life of the peoples,” that its aim is precisely to protect that domestic life from invasion and destruction by larger and stronger cultures and languages. But the domestic life of all of us is now threatened by ecological catastrophe, by wars and famine that drive millions of people to desperate migration, by economic systems that exacerbate the differences between rich and poor, and so on. If we do not join the battle for a more sustainable world, we in effect leave the little boat called Esperanto to sail away on an ever more stormy sea to its inevitable destruction.
The beginning point for our discussions seems clear. What problems of development are apparent for each of us, in our own place and country of residence? And what problems are most important for our friends in other countries? Through our extensive networks of friendship and cooperation, what can be done to respond to these problems, to express moral and practical solidarity across borders? There are already many fine examples of such collaboration among speakers of Esperanto in various countries and continents: we should find out more about them, publicise these stories and models, build on them. And perhaps the Sustainable Development Goals can inspire new projects: we should exchange ideas, information, experiences, to create new forms of collaboration, new manifestations of the idealism of Ludwik Zamenhof and the practical genius of Hector Hodler, a century after their deaths.

The UN is not just an organisation of states, although that is its political reality. It is also the sum total of all of us, the peoples of the world, humankind. As practitioners of “an impartial language for all humanity,” we Esperantists owe the UN our good wishes, our thoughts, our actions. May MondaFest’ 2020 be an occasion for accepting, discussing and expanding our contributions to its development goals.
HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE GENERAL FESTIVAL PROGRAMME

Programme Table
https://revuoesperanto.org/images/programo_vk.pdf

All recordings available on
[1] https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLfebd4xxn3CPpG9KKAZP4JHr_PWWIZO9-
[2] https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLfebd4xxn3COt6hUN9CyAOU2eHKEJE0BN

World Festival of Esperanto (MondaFest’): Some Highlights

19 jun - Antaŭfestivala Malfermo de Kanada Virtuala Kinejo (Junideka Festo)
Pre-Festival opening of the Canadian Virtual Cinema

20 jun - MondaFest’ 2020: Somera Inaŭguro
“The Coming of Summer in the Northern Hemisphere and the Launching of MondaFest’”

21 jun - MondaFest’ 2020: Inaŭguro de Kanada Virtuala Kinejo (Nacia Tago de Indiĝenaj Popoloj)
Inauguration of the Canadian Virtual Cinema (National Day of Indigenous Peoples)

22 jun - MondaFest’ 2020: Festivala Lanĉo de Poŝtkarto de Espero
Launch of the Postcard of Hope

24 jun - MondaFest’ 2020: Kanada Virtuala Kinejo (Nacia Tago de Kebekio)
Canadian Virtual Cinema (Quebec National Day)

25 jun - MondaFest’ 2020: En Kontakto! Babilado inter aŭtoroj kaj redaktoro de la revuo Kontakto (Gasto: Raoni Sousa)
In Contact! Conversation between authors and editor of the journal Kontakto
26 jun - MondaFest' 2020: **Tago de Azio kaj Oceanio (TAO)**  
*Asia and Oceania Day*

27 jun - Literaturaj Momentoj: **Trevor Steele** (kunlabore kun E-Federacio de Nov-Sud-Kimrio)  
*Literary Moments: Trevor Steele (Esperanto Federation of New South Wales)*

27 jun - MondaFest' 2020: **65-a AMO-seminario: "Landaj Asocioj - Leviĝantaj Agantoj"**  
*65th AMO Training Seminar: “National Associations: Rising Activists”*

28 jun - MondaFest' 2020: **Lanĉo de Esperanto-kurso por hispanparolantoj**  
*Launch of Esperanto course for Spanish speakers*

29 jun-03 jul - **NASK 2020** 1-a parto  
*North American Summer Courses, part one*

1 jul - MondaFest' 2020: **Kanada Virtuala Kinejo** (Tago de Kanado)  
*Canadian Virtual Cinema (Canada Day)*

4 jul - MondaFest' 2020: **Mezorienta kaj Nordafrika Tago (MONAT’)**  
*Middle East and North Africa Day*

5 jul - MondaFest' 2020: **TEJO - Kia estonteco? Debato inter kandidatoj**  
*World Esperanto Youth Organization: The Future?*

6 jul-10 jul - **NASK 2020** 2-a parto  
*North American Summer Courses, part two*

06 jul - MondaFest' 2020: **Kunpens(igado - Esperanto kaj Universitatoj** (kunlabore kun IrEA)  
*Esperanto and Universities (in cooperation with the Iranian Esperanto Association)*

11 jul - MondaFest' 2020: **Lanĉo de "Omaĝe al Júlia Sigmond: 90"** (voĉlegas Sara Spanò)  
*Homage to Júlia Sigmond: 90*

11 jul-18 jul - **76-a Internacia Junulara Kongreso (UK)**  
*76th International Youth Congress*

12 jul - 18 jul - **68-a Landa Kongreso de Esperanto-USA**  
*68th National Congress of Esperanto-USA*

18 jul - 26 jul - **SES kaj SEP** - Somera Esperanto-Studado kaj Somera Esperanto-Programado
SES and SEP: Summer Esperanto Studies and Summer Esperanto Programming Camp (Slovakia)

20 jul - MondaFest' 2020: Kunpensigado - Esperanto kaj Universitatoj (kunlabore kun IrEA) Esperanto and Universities (in cooperation with the Iranian Esperanto Association)

25 jul - 31 jul - Virtuala Esperanto-Konferenco de ILEI (VEKI) Virtual Esperanto Conference of the International League of Esperanto-speaking Teachers

31 jul - "La Eta Princo": konversacio kun Francisko Lorrain, kunlabore kun Akademio Literatura de Esperanto “The Little Prince”: Esperanto Literary Academy

01 aŭg-08 aŭg - MondaFest' 2020: Virtuala Kongreso de Esperanto (VK) Virtual Congress of Esperanto

08 aŭg - Ĝenerala Kunveno de la Komitato de UEA: unua kunsido General Meeting of the Committee of the Universal Esperanto Association

09 aŭg - MondaFest' 2020: Internacia Tago de la Indiĝenaj Popoloj de la Mondo International Day of the World’s Indigenous Peoples

10 aŭg - MondaFest' 2020: Klerige: Fremdaj kaj geniaj objektoj el nia mondo - kun Sylvain Lelarge Educational programme with Sylvaine Lelarge

11 aŭg - MondaFest' 2020: Klerige: KER-ekzamenoj - kun Katalin KER examinations

12 aŭg-16 aŭg - 1- a Brazila Reta Esperantista Junulara Kongreso (BREJK) First Brazilian Youth Internet Esperanto Congress

15 aŭg - Ĝenerala Kunveno de la Komitato de UEA: dua kunsido General Meeting of the UEA Committee

15 aŭg - Paralela Universo (virtualaj aŭ surlokaj renkontiĝoj) Parallel Universe (virtual or local meetings)

16 aŭg - Ĝenerala Kunveno de la Komitato de UEA: tria kunsido General Meeting of the UEA Committee
17 aŭg - MondaFest' 2020: La Celoj por Daŭripova Evoluo: grupo 1 – la socia bazo
Sustainable Development Goals: The social basis

22 aŭg - MondaFest' 2020: Tago de Eŭropo
Europe Day

22 aŭg - MondaFest' 2020: La Celoj por Daŭripova Evoluo: grupo 2 – socia infrastrukturo
Sustainable Development Goals: Social infrastructure

23 aŭg - MondaFest' 2020: Tago de Afriko
Africa Day

23 aŭg - 29 aŭg - Gustumado de la Itala Kongreso
Preview of the Italian Esperanto Congress

30 aŭg - MondaFest' 2020: Tago de Ameriko
Americas Day

31 aŭg - MondaFest' 2020: La Celoj por Daŭripova Evoluo: grupo 3 – protekti la naturon
Sustainable Development Goals: Protecting Nature

05 sep - Ĝenerala Kunveno de la Komitato de UEA: tria kunsido (daŭrigo)
General Meeting of the UEA Committee

05 sep - MondaFest' 2020: “Lumas en paseo feliĉo perdita”: la dulingva eldono de la dramo “Baladina” kadre de la pola Nacia Legado
Bilingual edition of “Baladina”: Polish National Literacy Day

06 sep - MondaFest' 2020: Akcepto de Societo Zamenhof
Zamenhof Society Reception

06 sep - MondaFest' 2020: Premia Festo de la Belartaj Konkursoj de UEA
UEA Literary Competitions: Awards Day

12 sep - 8-a Eŭropa Festivalo de Esperantaj Kantoj
8th European Esperanto Song Festival

15 sep - Klerige: Literatura Forumo
Literary Forum

16 sep - Klerige: Heidi Goes pri lastatempa E-agado en Angolo
Recent Esperanto Activity in Angola

17 sep - Klerige: Thomas Bormann pri rifugintoj en Grekio
Refugees in Greece

19 sep - MondaFest' 2020: Tago de Veteranoj - Eduardo Vivancos - Centjariĝo de Esperanto-Legendo (Xavi Alcade)
Veterans' Day: Eduardo Vivancos – The Hundredth Birthday of an Esperanto Legend

20 sep - MondaFest' 2020: Tutmonda Arbo-plantado
Worldwide Tree Planting

20 sep - MondaFest' 2020: Printempa Inaŭguro
“Spring Inauguration: The Coming of Spring in the Southern Hemisphere and the Closing of Mondafest”
World Festival of Esperanto (MondaFest’): Some UN-Related Programmes

Saturday, 20 June 2020

Festival inauguration
Greetings from the United Nations by UN Under-Secretary-General Fabrizio Hochschild-Drummond
Presentations by members of the UN planning group (see above)

Saturday, 1 August 2020

The UN at 75: UEA’s relations with the United Nations and UNESCO in the context of the festival topic (Sara Spanò, Italy/Germany)
Sara Spanò is a former board member of UEA and the youth organization TEJO, and coordinates UEA’s representation at the UN.

The UN at 75: UEA and TEJO representation at the United Nations and UNESCO (Rakoen Maertens, Belgium/UK)
Rakoen Maertens has given public addresses on behalf of the NGO community and UEA at the UNESCO General Conference and the UN Youth Forum and has been active in TEJO/UN relations. He jointly edited the recent Esperanto-language guide to the 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

The UN at 75: Development as a pillar of the UN (Mark Fettes, Canada)
Mark Fettes, former President of UEA, gives the primary presentation on one of the three “pillars” of the UN: Development.

The UN at 75: Human rights as a pillar of the UN (Humphrey Tonkin, USA, interviews Giuliano Turone, Italy)
An interview with the well-known jurist and former judge Giuliano Turone, on the “pillar” of the Un concerned with human rights.

Between Two Pillars of the United Nations: A debate on human rights and sustainable development led by Sara Spanò and Humphrey Tonkin.

Sunday, 2 August 2020

The UN at 75: Esperanto and the League of Nations (Tyron Surmon, UK)
Member of the youth organization TEJO and student of history examines the early history of Esperanto at the League of Nations.
The **UN at 75: Peace as a UN Pillar** (Ulrich Brandenburg, Germany)
Former German ambassador to Lisbon and Moscow Ulrich Brandenburg addresses the UN “pillar” that relates to peace. What is the current state of world peace and what is the role of the UN?

**Monday, 3 August 2020**

The **UN at 75: Esperanto and UNESCO** (Trezoro Huang Yinbao, China)
UEA Vice-President discusses his experience in UEA/UNESCO relations.

**Thursday, 6 August 2020**

The **UN at 75: Hiroshima-Nagasaki Memorial Day**
- The Battle for Peace in Japan. President of the International League of Esperantist Teachers Mireille Grosjean (Switzerland) discusses the Japanese peace movement.
- Never Again Hiroshima: Osioka Taeko (Hiroshima/Japan). *The story of a Korean family that survived the attack on Hiroshima*
- On Hiroshima and Nagasaki (Mireille Grosjean). Exactly 75 years ago on this date, an atomic bomb destroyed the Japanese city of Hiroshima. We remember the victims and express our hope that such mass destruction will never occur again.
- Approval of a message addressed to the UN on the occasion of Hiroshima Memorial Day.

**Friday, 7 August 2020**

The **17 Sustainable Development Goals** (debate led by Mark Fettes and Humphrey Tonkin)
A general debate on the 17 Goals, with participation by authors of the Esperanto-language Guide to the 17 Goals.

**Sunday, 9 August 2020**

Celebration of the International Day of the World’s Indigenous Peoples
Event organized by the Canadian Esperanto Association on behalf of UEA

**Monday, 17 August 2020**

The **Sustainable Development Goals, group 1: The Social Base** (seminar and discussion)
No poverty; reduced social and international inequalities; good health and well-being; quality education; gender equality; peace, justice and strong institutions for all.
**Saturday, 22 August 2020**

The Sustainable Development Goals, group 2: Social Infrastructure (seminar and discussion)  
*Managing the sustainable distribution of water, food, energy, housing, work; developing sustainable approaches to production, consumption, industry, and innovation.*

**Monday, 31 August 2020**

The Sustainable Development Goals: Protection of Nature (seminar and discussion)  
*Fighting climate change, sustainable management of land and sea.*

**UN Breakout Rooms**

Ten breakout sessions to discuss the Esperanto movement’s collaboration with the United Nations and UNESCO were organized, at different hours to accommodate participants from around the world, between August 1 and August 7. Additional ad hoc sessions took place at other times during the Festival. Comments were noted and conveyed to the working group on the Festival theme.
Mr. President, Fellow Esperantists,

At the end of the World Congress we normally draft a congress resolution. It is directed chiefly to the exterior – to international organizations like the United Nations and UNESCO, nongovernmental organizations, national or local authorities. In preparing the resolution, we carefully collect information from all the meetings and other congress events that in any way relate to the congress theme, extracting every last drop from the limited number of events that we have been able to pack into a short seven-day congress.

The resolution begins with a flourish. It notes the number and topic of the congress: “the 103rd or 104th World Congress...” that occurred in this-and-that city in this-and-that country with X number of participants from Y number of countries. We quote the precise congress topic.

This year, we will not have a congress resolution because the topic of the World Congress in Montreal has been transferred to the World Festival of Esperanto. The working group for the festival topic is now drafting a Festival Resolution that will soon be forwarded to the UEA Committee for approval.

And this year the congress topic was particularly timely. This year marks the 75th anniversary of the United Nations. Our topic is “The UN at 75: Dialogue and Understanding in a Changing World”. Deciding on that topic, we were aware that the United Nations was preparing a whole campaign around it. To an unprecedented degree, the UN is turning to the public to ask its opinion, to gather its support, in an alliance intended to confront the extraordinary challenges that our world now presents.

Why is the UN turning to the public? Because it realises that current problems exceed the capability of individual governments to solve them without the active support and cooperation of the public – particularly at the present time of rapid technological development when new ideas more frequently come from young minds unattached to traditional governmental institutions, and when these current problems require transnational solutions that exceed the capability of individual governments acting individually.
In turning to the public, the UN is also turning to nongovernmental organizations, NGOs, among them the Universal Esperanto Association. The UN Under-Secretary-General Fabrizio Hochschild-Drummond had planned to travel to Montreal to greet the congress in person and ask for its help. When the congress was cancelled, he addressed a special message to the World Festival. And his office, with responsibility for the UN’s 75th anniversary, launched a survey in, among other languages, Esperanto, to sound out the opinions of the worldwide public.

True: in the past, in our one-week congresses open only to those who had the time and money to travel to them, our congress resolutions had only limited weight. But this year we do not have to wring every last detail out of every congress meeting. It will not be necessary to name a city and a country. It won’t be necessary to mention the hundreds of participants or the dozens of countries from which they came.

Because this year we have explored the topic in several dozen meetings, across three months of activity. Our participants have come from all across the world – around a hundred countries and thousands of people. Never before have we been able to explore so profoundly our topic of the year, to work so productively.

Presenting now a few of the conclusions of our debates, I want first to specially thank the team who worked with me in dealing with the topic of the UN at 75. This team consisted of two former presidents of UEA, Mark Fettes and Renato Corsetti; Rakoen Maertens who has himself addressed both the UN and UNESCO as representative of TEJO, the World Esperanto Youth Organisation: Sara Spanò, former board member of UEA and former representative of TEJO to the United Nations; Jon Liechty who until recently managed the UEA office in New York and now coordinates the response of the Esperanto public to the UN survey, and Raul García, one of the UEA representatives to the UN in New York. And we had the faithful, generous and timely help of UEA’s vice-president, Fernando Maia. Thank you, all of you, for the work you have done and the work that remains to be done: preparing a final resolution, writing a report to the UN, planning follow-up activities.

I want also to thank those who presented to us the three “pillars” of the United Nations: former ambassador and president of the German Esperanto Association Ulrich Brandenburg, who spoke about peace; former member of the Italian Supreme Court Giuliano Turone, who discussed human rights; and our former president Mark Fettes, who addressed development, specifically sustainable development.

In fact, sustainable development has formed a significant part of our debates over the past three months. Rakoen Maertens and I recruited the assistance of sixteen Esperanto-speaking specialists (I was the seventeenth) to co-author a Guide to the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, which has been published in the Internet and also in book form. The
guide not only explains the Goals themselves, but also gives suggestions to Esperantists as to how they (that is, you!) can together assist in realising the Goals. Local groups, national associations, individual Esperantists can themselves study the Goals and work out ways to assist. They can form alliances with other local and national organisation to that end. They can exchange ideas with Esperantists in other countries. It would be good to be able to tell the UN about active cooperation and assistance from the Esperantists. And if we are really internationalists, we need to work together like internationalists.

We have discovered some things from the Festival discussions. People are unhappy about the lack of cooperation among the states to address world issues – particularly now, in a period of rising nationalism and rivalry. People are unhappy about the level of support, financial and moral, that the states devote to the United Nations. There was a lot of talk about multilateralism – the idea that world problems require world engagement, in which all sides work together for the common good. Frequently, participants echoed the assertion of the UN Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres, that the UN must learn to listen to the people, not simply dictate solutions to them, because only with the power of the community and the will of the community can we overcome our problems and develop new solutions.

It seems hardly necessary to add that the catastrophic pandemic, which has covered the world in the past few months and which necessitated the cancellation of our congress this year, required and will require a worldwide, multilateral response. The disease knows no frontiers, favours no one group of people over another, nor one language, one class, one religion. As it storms across the world, it looks for every crack, every tiny corner where solidarity is lacking, to insert itself and torment us. Our failure to collaborate creates such cracks, such tiny entries, and torments the peoples. This new pandemic is the outward manifestation of other plagues – the plague of egotism, the plague of distrust, the plague of lack of understanding.

And, not surprisingly, it turns out that we listen to the public in vain if we do not understand their languages: we must banish the discriminatory favouring of only a few languages over the others. We must understand that common problems and common solutions require common understanding, best achieved through solutions that include Esperanto. The UN needs a more inclusive politics if it wants to mobilize the world’s inhabitants around its goals.

At the same time we could not fail to note that even Esperantists, and the most committed internationalists among us, are not fully informed about the structures and the internal politics of the UN. If we want to influence the organization, we must understand it well.
You are perhaps aware that for the past several years a fledgling organization has come into being: Esperanto por UN, and its website esperantoporun.org. On that website you can find the Guide to the 17 Goals that I mentioned earlier, messages from UEA to the UN, translations of major UN documents, UN videos with subtitles in Esperanto, and similar material. We are now recommending that this organization be given a firmer structure and re-launched as an organization whose chief aim is to inform and educate the Esperantists about the UN and how they can engage with its work. At the same time we are proposing a firmer coordination among the working groups that represent UEA at UNESCO in Paris and at the UN in New York, Geneva and Vienna (and ultimately Nairobi). In this effort we will work particularly closely also with the World Esperanto Youth Organization TEJO.

UEA has a long history of cooperation with the UN and UNESCO, from the time of the presentation of the petition of UEA to the UN at Lake Success in 1950, which led to the UNESCO resolution of 1954 in support of cooperation with the Esperanto movement, and its reassertion in 1985. Today UEA is not only a member but also a board member of the Conference of Nongovernmental Organizations in Consultative Relationship with the United Nations, and we are active in several UN contexts. But it’s important that this leadership role be more broadly and more unanimously supported by the Esperantists as a whole. That will require good coordination, a large enough group of suitable and conscientious colleagues, and the will and desire not only to speak Esperanto but to practice it in spirit and strategy.

We have made a large and significant step forward this year, with your help and cooperation. But this must be just the beginning. If we have managed to do all this at a distance of two metres, imagine what we can do when we can once again march forward hand in hand...

Somewhat outside the agenda, I want to take the opportunity to thank the UEA board personally for allowing me the pleasant task of overseeing the treatment of the congress and festival theme this year, and to thank the UEA committee, quite independently of the current topic, for honouring me with the title of Honorary President, and doing so in the name of the membership of our Association. This is something I certainly did not expect and hardly merit. Mr President, my dear Esperantists, I will do my best to earn this merit through future work for the Association, and I invite you all, as colleagues and comrades, to work together for the common good. Thank you.
CONCLUDING FESTIVAL RESOLUTION

A team of attendees kept minutes and noted interventions in the formal meetings and informal discussions surrounding the Festival. On the basis of these formal and informal discussions, the working group on the Festival Theme drew up a concluding resolution, which was then submitted to the UEA Committee for modification and approval.

The following resolution was forwarded to the United Nations in three languages: Esperanto, English and French. It was published widely in the Esperanto press and circulated by UEA’s New York office.

REZOLUCIO DE LA MONDA FESTIVALO DE ESPERANTO 2020

La Monda Festivalo de Esperanto, virtuala aranĝo, kiu okazis sub aŭspicio de Universala Esperanto-Asocio dum tri monatoj de junio ĝis septembro 2020, kun partopreno de kelkaj miloj da personoj el entute 97 landoj, kaj kun pli ol 500 horoj da programoj en la Internacia Lingvo Esperanto,

Debatis en serio de prelegoj, seminarioj, diskutaj sesioj kaj aliaj aranĝoj la ĉeftemon UN 75-jara: Dialogo kaj interkomprenejo en ŝanĝiĝanta mondo, aparte traktante la tri kolonojn de UN, Pacon, Homajn Rajtojn kaj Evoluigon, kaj la Tagordon 2030 de Unuiĝintaj Nacioj,

Notis la atingojn de Unuiĝintaj Nacioj dum la unuaj 75 jaroj de sia ekzisto: rezultoj de la multflanka kunlaboro de la membraj ŝtatoj ĉirkaŭ problemoj de paco, homaj rajtoj kaj evoluigo, kies dimensioj superis la povon de la unuopaj ŝtatoj unuope agantaj;

Konstatis, tamen, ke tiu kunagado estas ankoraŭ nesufiĉa por superi la tutplanedajn krizojn kiujn ni nun frontas, kaj estas malhelpata de miskomprenoj kaj naciaj rivalecoj; sekve ke la estonteco de UN, kaj fakte de nia planedo, dependas de pli forta multflanka kunagado inter la registaroj, en kunlaboro kun la tutmonda civila socio;

Krome notis, kun aprobo, ke UN klopodas pli aktive engagi civilsociajn organizojn, inter ili Universalan Esperanto-Ascion, por serĉi solvojn al tutmondaj problemoj kaj por realigi Tagordon 2030 kaj ties Celojn por Daŭripova Evoluigo;
Insistas, pro tio, ke la membraj ŝtatoj de UN pli forte kaj celkonscie kunlaboru, flankenmetante siajn diferencojn, kaj ke la tutmonda civila socio pli konscie kaj insiste subtenu tiun kunlaboron;

Reasertas la pludaŭron de la plurjardeka kunlaboro de la Esperanto-movado kun la mondaj organizajoj UN kaj Unesko, kies valoroj kaj celoj tute kongruas kun la valoroj kaj celoj de la Esperanto-parolantoj;

Alvokas ĉiujn al observo de la homaj devoj pri monda solidareco, paco kaj multflanka decidado pri problemoj komunaj al la tuta homaro;

Rekomendas al ĉiuj esperantistoj ankoraŭ pli intense informigi pri la agadoj de UN kaj Unesko (ankaŭ pere de materialo pri UN eldonata en Esperanto), disvastigi tiujn informojn inter la publiko, insisti ĉe siaj politikistoj pri la valoro de multflankismo, kaj laüeble mobilizi sin al kunlaboro kun UN kaj Unesko je ĉiu nivelo, ankaŭ pere de ties lokaj civitanaj asocioj;

Atentigas al UN kaj Unesko pri la bezono de pli inkluziva lingvopolitiko, se ili volas mobilizi la tutmondan socion ĉirkaŭ siaj celoj, kaj pri la valoro de utiligado de la internacia lingvo Esperanto por atingi homojn en multaj landoj – valoron kiun Unesko jam komencas sperti per sia admirinda eldonado de verkoj ankaŭ en Esperanto.
RESOLUTION OF THE WORLD FESTIVAL OF ESPERANTO 2020

The World Festival of Esperanto, a virtual event organized under the auspices of the Universal Esperanto Association over a three-month period from June to September 2020, with participation by several thousand people from a total of 97 countries, and with over 500 hours of programming in the International Language Esperanto,

Having debated, in a series of lectures, seminars, discussion groups and other activities the Festival’s principal topic The United Nations at 75: Dialogue and Understanding in a Changing World, with particular attention to the three pillars of the UN: Peace, Human Rights and Development, and the United Nations Agenda 2030;

Having noted the achievements of the United Nations over the first 75 years of its existence, resulting from the multilateral collaboration of the Member States around problems of peace, human rights and development, whose dimensions exceeded the power of the individual states acting alone;

Having concluded, however, that this cooperation is still insufficient to overcome the planet-wide crises which we now confront, and is hindered by misunderstandings and national rivalries; accordingly, that the future of the UN, indeed of the planet, depends on yet stronger multilateral cooperation among governments, working with civil society worldwide;

Having further noted, with approval, that the UN seeks the more active engagement of civil-society organizations, among them the Universal Esperanto Association, in the search for solutions to worldwide problems and the realization of Agenda 2030 and its Sustainable Development Goals;

Accordingly insists that the UN Member States work together more conscientiously and with greater determination, putting aside their differences, and that worldwide civil society support such cooperation with greater awareness and insistence;

Reaffirms the continuance of the several decades of cooperation by the Esperanto movement with the UN and UNESCO, world organizations whose values and goals precisely match the values and goals of Esperanto speakers;
Calls on all parties to observe the human responsibilities of world solidarity, peace, and collective decision-making concerning problems common to all humankind;

Recommends to all Esperantists that they inform themselves more intensively about the work of the UN and UNESCO (also by means of material on the UN published in Esperanto), that they distribute this information to the public, that they insist to their politicians about the value of multilateralism, and that they mobilize themselves, as much as they can, around cooperation with the UN and UNESCO at all levels, including through these organizations’ civil society associations;

And draws the attention of the UN and UNESCO to the need for a more inclusive language policy if they wish to mobilize all worldwide society around their goals, and to the value of using the International Language Esperanto to reach populations in many countries – a value that UNESCO is already experiencing through its commendable publication of works also in Esperanto.
RÉSOLUTION DU FESTIVAL MONDIAL D'ESPÉRANTO 2020

Le Festival Mondial d'Espéranto, événement virtuel qui s'est déroulé sous les auspices de l'Association Universelle d'Espéranto pendant trois mois, de juin à septembre 2020, avec quelques milliers de participants de 97 pays en tout, et plus de 500 heures de programme en langue internationale espéranto.

Ayant débattu sous forme d'une série de conférences, séminaires, sessions de discussion et autres événements, le thème principal: Les 75 ans de l'ONU, Dialogue et intercompréhension dans un monde qui change, en traitant séparément les trois piliers de l'ONU, la Paix, les Droits de l'Homme et le Développement, ainsi que l'Agenda 2030 des Nations Unies,

Ayant noté les résultats atteints par les Nations Unies au cours des 75 premières années de son existence, fruit de la coopération multilatérale des États membres sur les problèmes de la paix, des droits de l'homme et du développement, dont les dimensions ont dépassé le pouvoir de chacun des États agissant séparément;

Ayant constaté, cependant, que cette action commune est encore insuffisante pour surmonter les crises planétaires que nous affrontons, et est entravée par les incompréhensions et les rivalités nationales; que, par suite, l'avenir des Nations Unies et, en définitive, de notre planète dépend d'une coopération multilatérale plus forte entre les gouvernements, en collaboration avec la société civile du monde entier;

Ayant noté, avec satisfaction, que les Nations Unies s'efforcent d'impliquer plus activement les organisations de la société civile, et parmi elles l'Association Universelle d'Espéranto, dans la recherche de solutions aux problèmes mondiaux et la réalisation de l'Agenda 2030 et de ses Objectifs de Développement Durable;

Insistent, de ce fait, pour que les États membres des Nations Unies coopèrent plus intensément et consciencieusement, en laissant de côté leurs différences, et pour que la société civile du monde entier soutienne cette coopération avec plus de zèle et de persévérance;

Réaffirment que, depuis plusieurs décennies, le mouvement espérantiste coopère assidument avec les organisations mondiales, l'ONU et l'UNESCO, dont les valeurs et objectifs sont en pleine conformité avec les valeurs et objectifs des espérantophones;
Appellent toutes les parties à respecter les obligations de l'homme en matière de solidarité mondiale, paix et processus multilatéral de décision concernant les problèmes communs à l'humanité tout entière;

Recommandent à tous les espérantistes de se tenir encore plus intensément informés des actions des Nations Unies et de l'Unesco (au moyen, notamment, du matériel sur l'ONU édité en espéranto), de diffuser ces informations au public, d'insister auprès de ses hommes politiques sur la valeur du multilatéralisme, ainsi que, dans la mesure du possible, de se mobiliser pour coopérer avec l'ONU et l'Unesco à tous les niveaux, y compris au moyen des associations locales de la société civile;

Attirent l'attention des Nations Unies et de l'Unesco sur le besoin d'une politique linguistique plus inclusive, s'ils veulent mobiliser autour de leurs objectifs toute la société mondiale, et sur la valeur de la langue internationale espéranto utilisée pour atteindre un public de nombreux pays - valeur dont l'Unesco commence à faire l'expérience par son initiative admirable d'éditer des ouvrages également en espéranto.
Publication

Guide to the 17 Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations

Under the editorship of Humphrey Tonkin and Rakoen Maertens, UEA, in partnership with the publisher Mondial, produced a guide to the SDGs under the title Gvidilo al la 17 celoj por daŭripova evoluigo de Unuiĝintaj Nacioj, available in book form and also on line at http://esperantoporun.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Gvidilo-al-la-17-celoj-por-dauprova-evoluigo-de-UN.pdf Seventeen authors contributed brief essays on the seventeen goals, adding suggestions on how Esperanto speakers can learn more about the Goals and contribute to their realization.

Available at: https://www.amazon.co.uk/Gvidilo-Dauprova-Evoluigo-Unuiĝintaj-Esperanto/dp/1595694102/ and www.mondialbooks.com
Kompilajo (Compilation), a poem by Wolfgang Günther in honour of the Festival theme and in support of the United Nations at 75

De & al.
Eko & fino.
Quo vadis, UN?
Interligata mondo. Ĉiumomenta horo nula.
Komunikado kaj transportado.
Intencoj & hazardoj.
Vortojn serĉi & trovi...
Paco, homaj rajtoj, daŭripovo.
Daŭripovo, inkluzivo & resilienco de la vojo:
Kion preventi? Kion konservi? Kion ŝanĝi?
Radiala, ĉu? Lineara, ĉu? Cirkula, ĉu?
Inter, ĉu? Trans, ĉu?
En urbo & kampo, en domo & strato.
Individue & kolektive, hodiaŭ & morgaŭ.
Korpe, anime, socie, sociale, vivmedie.
Silente & pinthore, unu- & pluridirekte, blokite & liberveture.
Jes, kvalite liberaj...
NI ĈIUJ ESTAS
PLI MULTO OL NIA SUMO!
La kaŝita tria inter subjekto & objekto.
Akvo & pano.
Amo, amoro kaj rock-en-rolo, ekz..
Kondutmanieroj.
Vortoj & gestoj.
Neŭtrala komuna lingvo aktuala...
Vi & mi & oni & ĉiuj en komunikado.
Rigora en argumentado,
malfermita pri la nova,
tolerema al la alia.
Redukti, kompensi, adapti.
Diri, montri, doni: Iri la parolon!
Enoj, traoj, eloj, interoj, centroj, periferioj, transoj
& kiel oni gardas, fartas & dormas...

From & to.
Start & end.
Quo vadis, UN?
Interlinked world. Every moment zero hour.
Communication and transportation.
Intention & chance.
Searching & finding words...
Peace, human rights, sustainability.
Sustainability, inclusiveness & resilience of the path:
What to prevent? What to conserve? What to change?
Radial, then? Linear, then? Circular, then?
Between, then? Across, then?
In city & field, in house & street.
Individually & collectively, today & tomorrow.
Bodily, mindfully, socially, societally,
environmentally.
Silently & urgently, uni- and pluridirectional,
traffic stopped or moving.
Yes, qualitatively free...
WE ARE ALL
MORE THAN OUR SUM!
The hidden third between subject & object.
Water & bread.
Love, sex and rock-and-roll, e.g.
Behaviours.
Words & gestures.
Neutral common language for today...
You & me & one & all in communication.
Rigorous in argument,
open to the new,
tolerant of the other.
Reduce, compensate, adapt.
Say, show, give: Go with speech!
Ins, throughs, outs, betweens, centres,
peripheries, acrosses
& how you protect, do & sleep...

-- Wolfgang Günther
On the occasion of the Virtual World Festival
of Esperanto, "MondaFest'2020" (UEA) & in
support of the work of the UN on the
occasion of "UN at 75".
APPENDIX 1: The 75th Anniversary of the Nuclear Attacks on Japan

At the Virtual Congress of Esperanto, taking place from August 1 to August 8, 2020, with 1833 Esperanto-speaking participants from 94 countries, Ms. OSIOKA Taeko, of Hiroshima, spoke on behalf of Ms. PAK Namju, a Korean who spent World War II in Hiroshima and was a victim of the USA’s nuclear attack on that city. As a guide for visitors to the Peace Park in Hiroshima, Ms. Osioka often tells PAK Namju’s story to Japanese school groups and to Esperanto speakers from throughout the world. The use of Esperanto allows speakers of this idiom created as an international language to learn the facts directly from their source and to empathize with the victims. Seventy-five years later, no one can forget: everyone should know.

Ms PAK Namju, speaking clearly and firmly through the voice of OSIOKA Taeko, wants everyone to know that in war nobody wins. Both sides lose. At the end of a war one army finds itself in an advantageous position and decides the fate of the other country. But in both armies, of both countries, there are wounded and dead. Consider France in 1945: in theory France was among the winners, but it was badly damaged. The winner does not emerge healthy and strong from war: that view is just a myth. The winner suffers, in fact suffers much as the loser also suffers: soldiers from both armies suffer nightmares and sleepless nights because of memories of battle. Some of them have lost an arm, or a leg, or an eye; all have certainly lost family members or fellow soldiers. “War is always the result of failure,” remarked the French minister Dominique de Villepin at the UN Security Council in New York in 2003: it results from the failure of peace talks to solve problems.

“When elephants fight, the grass suffers,” says an African proverb. Thus, we should emphasize the suffering of members of the public, civilians, in modern warfare. The Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki were no threat to the United States, but the USA wished to save its army and test its bombs: the people of those two cities became their lab animals. A terrifying but unacceptable strategy.

Universal Esperanto Association notes the UN’s successes in the diplomatic solution of conflicts, but also notes that wars continue to destroy huge regions, to force people on to the roads to flight and exile, to terrorize them, to impoverish them, to wound them, to kill them. At the same time we note that no power, no state, despite the huge stocks of atomic bombs and the far greater strength of new types of bombs, has used any of these weapons since Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

The handbook A History to Open the Future, jointly published in 2005 by China, the Korean Republic and Japan, was translated into Esperanto in 2007. The book presents the tragic events of the first half of the twentieth century in that part of East Asia, and its title
eloquently stresses the fact that only after recognizing all of the evils of the past can a peaceful future be constructed.

Among the activities of the World Festival of Esperanto is a “virtual exhibition” entitled “Hiroshima-Nagasaki: 75 Years for Peace”. The exhibition consists of two “rooms”, the first consisting of photographs, and the second a series of educational videos on aspects of the tragedy: https://mondafest.net/hiroshimo/.

The Universal Esperanto Association issued the following message to the United Nations:

Esperanto speakers across the world are today marking the 75th anniversary of the explosion of atomic bombs over the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. This event, the largest loss of civilian lives in warfare in the entire history of the world, should serve as a reminder to all humankind that the way of peace is always preferable to the way of war, and that in the world of today we need organizations like the United Nations to help us settle our disputes peacefully.

The tragedy of Hiroshima and Nagasaki has not led all member-states of the United Nations to abandon nuclear warfare: only 43 states have so far signed the UN’s Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. However, since the events of 75 years ago no nation has used nuclear weapons in warfare. Yet trafficking in armaments has continued unabated, and today there are more unresolved regional wars than ever.

Esperanto is the language of peace: it seeks to unite the world in a common linguistic bond – not taking away national and regional languages, but adding another layer that makes linguistic communication fully international. It is a language designed to prevent war and to promote peace, much as the United Nations seeks to do.

This week, our Association is holding its Virtual Congress of Esperanto, with programming around the clock over seven days, and with some 2000 registrants from all parts of the world. The Virtual Congress is part of a three-month World Festival of Esperanto, MondaFest, in which many thousands of Esperanto speakers are participating.

The main event on Hiroshima and Nagasaki today featured a Japanese Esperanto speaker commemorating the life of a Korean resident of Hiroshima who, along with her family, was severely wounded. She was introduced by a peace advocate from Switzerland. This combined Japanese, Korean and Swiss celebration of the life of a victim of Hiroshima helped remind us all that the key to overcoming the nuclear threat to humankind is human kindness itself.

We join with the United Nations in mourning the dead and in the hope that their fate will always be remembered as a lesson to us all in the vital pursuit of the path of peace.
APPENDIX 2:
August 9: Message of the Universal Esperanto Association on the International Day of the World’s Indigenous Peoples

The Esperanto community celebrates voices of Indigenous peoples on the International Day of Indigenous Peoples, August 9, 2020

The Universal Esperanto Association again gave special attention to the International Day of Indigenous Peoples on August 9, 2020. Esperanto speakers around the world were invited to learn more about the history, contributions and current struggles of Indigenous peoples through a series of talks, films and publications hosted virtually by the World Esperanto Festival, MondaFest’ 2020: https://eventaservo.org/e/indighenaj-popoloj-2020.

Among the contributions were a welcome message by Georges Sioui, a historian with the Huron-Wendat Nation (Canada), and a number of subtitled short films by up-and-coming young Indigenous directors under the auspices of the Canadian National Film Board. The city of Montreal, Canada, had been scheduled to host this year’s World Esperanto Congress until the Covid-19 pandemic forced its postponement to the year 2022. The Congress was to have had a significant focus on Indigenous themes. It is hoped that this focus will now be central to the 2022 event, taking place in the year of the launch of the International Decade of Indigenous Languages.

Also highlighted was a recent issue in Esperanto of UNESCO’s flagship publication, UNESCO Courier, devoted to Indigenous languages. Esperanto is now among the languages in which the Courier regularly appears.

The Esperanto movement was active in celebrating the International Year of Indigenous Languages in 2019. As an organization committed to multilingualism and the preservation of linguistic diversity, the Universal Esperanto Association promotes the use of the International Language Esperanto for international communication.