

Newsletter for November 2015

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Sustainable Development Goals: Universal Esperanto Association Pledges Support

September 25. “As an organization dedicated to international cooperation and understanding, the Universal Esperanto Association is eager to do everything it can to publicise, support and implement the Sustainable Development Goals,” declared the Association’s UN representative Professor Humphrey Tonkin, following a meeting announcing the acceptance of the SDGs by the 192-member United Nations. The meeting, “From Global Conversation to Global Action,” emphasized both the importance of action for the implementation of the goals and the need to involve everyone in the process. Echoing a widely proclaimed objective, “No one must be left behind,” declared Helen Clark, former prime minister of New Zealand and now administrator of UNDP, the UN’s development arm. She stressed the universality of the Goals, transcending both individual nation states and even conventional international bodies.

“The inclusiveness of the SDGs is at once their strength and their challenge,” asserted Tonkin. “It is not simply that global action must follow global conversation: the conversation must go on simultaneously with the action, and must include all people, among them those whose languages are not widely known and whose voices are seldom listened to. If this effort is not to be another top-down development effort, we must learn to listen to the diversity of languages and messages, not simply tell their speakers what to do.”

Earlier, in the opening address to the 82nd Italian Esperanto Congress in San Benedetto on August 22, the president of UEA, Professor Mark Fettes, called on the speakers of Esperanto to join in the effort to promote the SDGs: “By consciously aligning ourselves with the movements for sustainable development we can find a new meaning for Esperanto and new directions and goals for our activities at the local, national and international levels.”

Fettes pointed out, however, the neglect, both in the formulation of the SDGs and in international development work in general, of “the broader significance of multilingualism for sustainable development, and the huge obstacles to education and communication caused by language differences and language discrimination.” The challenge, he stressed, is to maintain linguistic diversity while improving dialogue, particularly with the oppressed and under-represented.

“This is where our Association can make a difference and enrich the process,” said Tonkin. “We can stress the importance of two-way communication and of the linguistic dimension in economic and social development.”

SDGs Translated into Esperanto, Distributed Worldwide

November 3. From “Forigi malriĉon ĉie, en ĉiuj ĝiaj formoj” to “Plifortigi la realigajn kapablojn kaj revigligi la tutmondan partnerecon por daŭripova evoluigo,” a team of experts has translated the seventeen Sustainable Development Goals into Esperanto and the Universal Esperanto Association has distributed them worldwide in the pages of the Association’s monthly journal *Esperanto*, whose November issue was dedicated to the Goals. The SDGs are also available on the UEA’s website at http://www.uea.org/teko/un/dauripova_evoluigo_2030 and that of UEA’s New York office, www.esperanto-un.org.

In addition:

- The Association has been regularly represented at NGO meetings promoting the goals, by UEA’s UN representative Humphrey Tonkin, office director Neil Blonstein, and other members of the Association’s UN team, including Allison Thorsen.
- The Association has issued a brief position paper entitled “The Sustainable Development Goals: The Art of Translating Words into Change.” The paper stresses that “translating words into action involves language” and it calls on the UN to devote greater attention to the linguistic dimension of development – a plea widely echoed in the scholarly literature by such experts as Oxford University Professor Suzanne Romaine, and even the British Council, sponsor of a conference on language and development to be held in New Delhi in November.
- The Association has translated the UN’s brief video presentation of the SDGs and made it widely available. See <http://www.esperantoporun.org/videoj/adopto-de-la-celoj-por-dauripova-evoluigo/>.
- An article in the December issue of the Association’s journal will call on all Esperanto organizations to support the SDGs by concrete action.

Universal Esperanto Association Celebrates the UN’s 70th Anniversary

November 3. In an article in the October issue of the Association’s journal, José Antonio Vergara, UEA board member from Chile, reminds his readers of Esperanto’s strong commitment to building a better world and urges support for the United Nations. This sentiment is echoed in an editorial in the November issue by editor Fabricio Valle.

The Association has also translated the UN’s 70th anniversary video *Fanfare for All Peoples* and urged its widespread use: <http://www.esperantoporun.org/videoj/fanfaro-por-ciuj-popoloj-70-a-datreveno-filmeto-de-la-un/>.

Secretary General Ban Ki-moon’s UN Day message celebrating the anniversary was circulated in translation by the press service of the Association to Esperanto journals and other news outlets worldwide.

News of local and regional events organised by Esperanto associations to celebrate the anniversary continues to arrive from many parts of the world.

UNESCO again recognises Zamenhof, Initiator of Esperanto

November 18. The 38th UNESCO General Conference ended today at the organization’s headquarters in Paris. Among the decisions taken was the identification of UNESCO with 53 anniversaries proposed by member-states. One of these anniversaries is the centennial of the death of L. L. Zamenhof (April 14, 2017), creator and initiator of the International Language Esperanto in 1887. The celebration was

proposed by the government of Poland, with the support of the governments of Germany and Slovakia. Zamenhof's birth was recognized by UNESCO in 1959, when Zamenhof was named "one of the world's great personalities." The Universal Esperanto Association was represented at the 38th General Conference by a four-person delegation: Renée Triolle, François Lo Jacomo, Oleksandra Kovyazina and Nathalie So Yun Kesler.

Among other anniversaries recognized by the General Conference were the 200th anniversary of the death of the novelist and essayist Madame de Staël (France), the 2400th anniversary of the birth of the philosopher Aristotle (Greece), the 300th anniversary of the death of the mathematician and philosopher Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (Germany), and the 400th anniversary of the death of the writer Miguel de Cervantes (Spain).

Esperanto Youth Organisation Re-elected to ICMYO

October 15. At the annual gathering of the International Coordinating Meeting of Youth Organisations, the Esperanto youth organisation TEJO was re-elected to the ICMYO board. ICMYO is an important and influential network, considered by the UN as a major voice of young people. Representing TEJO at the New York meeting were Fernando Maia Jr. (Brazil), Namir Rodriguez (Dominican Republic) and Michael Brandini (USA). TEJO represents young Esperanto speakers across the world, organizes annual conferences, publishes a quarterly journal, and is actively involved in work for international understanding.

Internationally Known Jurist Elected Honorary Patron of Universal Esperanto Association

October 1. Giuliano Turone, of Italy, known for his work on the infamous case of Italian Mafioso Michele Sindona, has been elected to membership in the Association's prestigious Honorary Committee of Patrons for his humanitarian work and his work for Esperanto. As a young judge he was involved in the handling of several high-profile cases of public and private corruption. Later he became a member of the Corte di Cassazione, Italy's highest court of appeals, and was for a number of years a prosecutor in the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, and, subsequently, professor in the Catholic University of Milan. He has published several books on law in Italian and is well known in Esperanto circles as an actor in several one-man shows and as honorary president of Esperanto's UN association, Esperanto for the UN (Esperanto por UN). His multilingual website Dante Poliglotta is widely visited and includes translations of Dante in numerous languages in both textual and spoken form. Turone learned Esperanto as a young man and was active in the Esperanto youth organisation TEJO.

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