

Message of the Universal Esperanto Association on World Refugee Day

20 June 2018

The United Nations has designated June 20 as World Refugee Day. On this day we particularly remember the many millions of people who have been displaced from their homes by war, violence, and natural disasters. The Universal Esperanto Association joins many other organizations in pointing to the necessity of international cooperation to address the needs of refugees and to work for their peaceful and secure return to their places of origin or their asylum in the countries in which they find themselves through no fault of their own.

Among many issues that need to be more vigorously addressed is the language problem: many refugees find themselves in situations in which they cannot communicate with those around them, including government officials, teachers, health workers, and relief workers. As speakers of the International Language Esperanto, we are particularly aware of this failure to address language differences adequately.

On the occasion of World Refugee Day 2018, we call on governments, non-governmental organizations and the United Nations itself to address language issues more directly and in a spirit of linguistic justice, non-discrimination, and humane concern.

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