

To the United Nations: Message on the occasion of the first International Day of Education, 2018

On 3 December 2018, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution naming 24 January as International Day of Education. The Universal Esperanto Association, an organization devoted to the promotion of international understanding and informed citizenship, welcomes this effort to highlight the importance of education – for development, as a human right, and as the foundation of democratic society.

Despite the progress already made since “a quality education for all” was adopted in 2015 as Goal 4 of the Sustainable Development Goals, it is estimated that some 260 million children and youths remain outside the educational system, and one third of girls who even complete primary education drop out at the secondary level. And despite the admirable efforts of UNESCO to promote mother-tongue education, many children are prevented from learning in their native languages.

We are also acutely aware that even the finest national systems of education often give little attention to the teaching of international understanding and provide inadequate occasions for young people to learn the importance of such understanding in a world in which so many problems and opportunities are global in nature. The Universal Esperanto Association, which promotes the use of the International Language Esperanto for equal communication on a worldwide scale and favours the learning of other languages in schools, is working to overcome such isolation, in collaboration with civil society organizations of all kinds.

We congratulate the UN General Assembly and thank the UN Member States who worked to bring about this resolution. Our organization, along with ILEI, the International League of Esperanto Teachers, pledges to support the United Nations, UNESCO, UNICEF and the entire UN family in making the International Day of Education a day for rededication to the importance of Quality Education for All.

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