



***Message of the Universal Esperanto Association on  
the occasion of the International Day for Tolerance,  
16 November 2022***

The Universal Esperanto Association greets the United Nations and all people of goodwill on the occasion of the International Day for Tolerance, 16 November 2022.

Tolerance is an important principle in pluralistic societies. Respect and esteem for other ways of being human and other forms of expression is basic to the survival of our societies. Tolerance is recognition of the human rights and freedoms of all.

Tolerance is linked to other democratic values for the pursuit of happiness for all. These values, such as freedom, justice and equality, depend on one another. Tolerance strengthens the culture of peace, non-violence, citizenship, inclusiveness and freedom of expression.

As UNESCO Director-General Audrey Azoulay has stated, we must protect and advance diversity of cultures, language and knowledge, particularly among Indigenous peoples, so that all world views can enrich humanity through dialogue and exchange. Too much useful knowledge is locked up behind barriers of language and culture.

It is important that we strengthen existing paths and create new channels for understanding on the basis of trust. Everyone should listen and be listened to. In every culture we can find ideas of tolerance: we must spread these ideas to build social unity and harmony. But, if we are to do so, we will need effective and egalitarian linguistic channels among peoples, so that all people can express themselves and be listened to.

When Zamenhof gave the international language Esperanto to humankind, he thereby proposed a way of advancing tolerance. The idea is simple but powerful: if we understand one another better, we will acknowledge the humanity in all people in all their diversity. This goal or desire to achieve peace and cooperation through understanding and coming together constitutes the essence of the spirit of the International Language Esperanto.

On this day we invite all people to become builders of tolerance. Languages and words are more important than we generally recognize. We must aim for linguistic equality so that everyone can join the dialogue of ideas and cooperation needed in these times when the entire future of the planet is at risk. Tolerance is more than merely desirable: it is necessary for us all if we are to live in peace, and if in peace we are to solve the problems of the planet.