



Message of the Universal Esperanto Association on the occasion of the International Day of Families, 15 May 2023

The Universal Esperanto Association, a nongovernmental organization in consultative relationship with the United Nations, greets the UN and UNESCO on the occasion of the International Day of Families, 15 May 2023. The family unit is a basic element in the organization of human society, where children are raised and nourished, where individuals unite to protect their children and nourish their love, where older people are supported and at the same time make their contribution. Respect for basic human rights requires that we, as individuals and as states, support the family, and also present it as a model of respect, trust and understanding.

When in the year 1994 the UN celebrated the International Year of Families, our Association played a significant role, organizing a conference in Graz, Austria, partly financed by the UN, on international families. The conference was followed, in Maribor, Slovenia, by a gathering of Esperanto-speaking families.

Soon we will celebrate the thirtieth anniversary of this special UN year, which had such a positive effect. This year, the UN is directing its attention to demographic questions on Family Day. At the end of 2022 world population reached eight billion. The UN Secretary-General, Mr. António Guterres, named this event a milestone in human development because it largely resulted from improvements in health systems and progress in medicine, rather than through a rise in human fertility: in fact, improvement in people's life situation tends to lower fertility rates.

However, if the total number of people in the world continues to grow, it will so strain resources that human well-being will fall and fertility will again rise. We find ourselves in a delicate moment that requires the full cooperation of scientists and politicians across the world to raise the prosperity of families while levelling off the world's total population.

The Universal Esperanto Association has members and member-organizations across the entire world – people particularly aware of the fragility of our planet and the importance of world communication to solve world problems. At home we speak many languages, but we form “one family circle” (in the words of our founder) because we possess a common “family” language. Our aim is to dedicate that international language to the solving of problems of war and peace, of human rights, and of human trust. We join with the United Nations and UNESCO in protecting, strengthening and nurturing families across the entire globe and in maintaining an equilibrium between people and resources, for the collective good.

