

# Esperanto and the UN

## Newsletter of the Universal Esperanto Association's Office of Liaison with the United Nations

Number 66, September-October 2023



Universala Esperanto-Asocio

### ***“Bringing people together for peace”: UEA’s Message to the United Nations on the International Peace Day, 21 September 2023***

From governments to ordinary citizens, we must all decide on peace. This year’s topic for Peace Day is “Actions for Peace: Our Ambition for the Global Goals”. To reach these Goals for Sustainable Development we need peace, and at the same time the Goals propose a basis for sustainable peace among peoples and individuals.



Peace Day is an occasion to unite around the strengthening of a culture of peace. On this day we call for the observance of a ceasefire in wars and conflicts with the goal of a non-violent solution to differences. Let us reconsider military solutions to disputes and support peace on the basis of human rights and an open dialogue across language barriers as the better solution.

As a united humankind, in spite of everything, we face many challenges. Wars, climate change, poverty, disease and hunger are bringing unbearable suffering to millions of people. We need peace and unity to overcome difficulties and to achieve a more just, equal and secure future in which communication is open, honest, and equal.

Wars and hostilities have material and cultural causes. To bring an end to the material causes of conflict, we must reduce inequality. To bring an end to the cultural causes of hatred we must recognize our common humanity and our responsibilities as the common stewards of our planet. To begin this coming together, we have to talk together and, on the basis of that conversation, to act, build and conserve together. The International Language Esperanto, through its common base and its speakers across the entire world, offers a path to that unity in diversity that humankind must pursue.

Esperanto’s contribution to a peaceful world lies precisely in its bringing people together through a common language, in addition to local and national languages. In the Esperanto movement, by getting to know one another we at the same time use the language for the peaceful goals of the United Nations and specifically the Sustainable Development Goals. “By the path of peace and harmony we are capable of everything,” Zamenhof, the initiator of Esperanto, once said. And he was right. Let us therefore create a better world for everyone, where everyone is welcome and everyone has the same basic rights.

## UEA's World Congress in Italy approves resolution on immigration

The 1318 participants in the 108<sup>th</sup> World Congress of Esperanto, meeting in Torino, Italy, from 29 July to 5 August 2023, addressed the topic "Immigration: The Confluence of Human Values." The participants, attending from 69 different countries, not only discussed the topic, but experienced and lived it: because all participants spoke the international language Esperanto, no barriers of language prevented intercommunication and, in fact, in line with the congress theme, the human values of all participants intermingled in a harmonious atmosphere.

Many Esperanto speakers reported on their own experiences as migrants. They emphasized that knowledge of the Esperanto language helped them to receive support at the beginning of their new life, but that it was also essential to learn the national language of the country in question in order to integrate with society.

This was so for all migrants – whether they freely chose to move to another country or were obliged to leave their home country because of war, poverty or persecution.

*Accordingly, the congress participants noted as follows:*

1. The civil society of the host city of Torino provides a model example of the integration of migrants, and particularly refugees, in society.
2. With concern the congress participants noted that the number of refugees in the world in the past year has for the first time exceeded the figure of one hundred million. We point out that because of climate change more and more people are forced to leave their homes.
3. We call on all countries of the world to halt the causes of involuntary migration and we support the efforts of the United Nations and other international bodies to mitigate, if not to resolve, these problems.
4. We appeal to the states to which refugees turn to accept them and to give them all possible support to establish a free and independent life. We are convinced that migration ultimately yields a richer culture and a more prosperous society in these states themselves. We acknowledge the historical value of migration: migration is the basis for human development.
5. We call on all states to guarantee to migrants the possibility of life without linguistic discrimination or any other kind of discrimination. In short, we call on all states to follow the Universal Declaration of Human Rights proclaimed in the year 1948.
6. Now, in the year of the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Declaration of Human Rights, we note with concern that these rights are not respected in many parts of the world.
7. Therefore, we declare our solidarity with refugees and we emphasize that Human Rights are universal rights valid for every individual across the world, including migrants.

Torino, Italy, 5 August 2023

## **“Translators and interpreters are our allies in overcoming language differences” – UEA celebrates International Translation Day 2023**

Among the world’s riches is the abundance of its languages, with their various cultural characteristics and their various ways of expressing the relations of humankind to its surroundings. All of those



languages are important, as are all cultures and all peoples. For mutual understanding we therefore need a multilingual approach, but an approach which at the same time mediates between languages. Translation is, in its broadest sense, a coming together. It arises from our strong desire to dialogue and to find understanding.

On September 30 we honour the language professionals who work behind the scenes to facilitate mutual understanding and to advance diplomacy. Translation permits us to recognize varied narratives, points of view and ideas about the same world in which we live.

Through translation we celebrate our common humanity. Facing the challenges confronting humanity, translation is a bridge for considering peace and security, for strengthening multilateralism, and for advancing sustainable development, humanitarian help, dignity and human rights.

To work together, we need to understand one another well, in a respectful and open way. We need to communicate well and – equally important – listen well. For this reason, the Universal Esperanto Association, for example, seeks to use Esperanto to discover additional reasons and possibilities to live together in the world, where our actions have an effect across the whole planet. We strongly admire those who, in their various ways, seek to reduce language barriers – including translators and interpreters who work in conditions of personal risk, for example in armed conflicts.

Language rights are human rights – the right to express oneself in languages and language practices that one knows best. Efforts to translate are efforts to reach all people and leave no one behind.

Let us at one and the same time celebrate human linguistic diversity and the work of linking people across language differences – for the future survival and prosperity of the planet.

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**Universal Esperanto Association Office for Liaison with the United Nations, 777 United Nations Plaza, New York, NY 10017. [1] 212-687-7041. [www.esperantoporun.org](http://www.esperantoporun.org).**