



***Message of the Universal Esperanto Association on
the occasion of the International Day of Older Persons,
1 October 2023***

The aging of the world's population is an ongoing process, not least because of giant steps in the medical sciences. Full respect for human rights includes special attention to specific groups. For this reason, in the year 2023, we consider the universal human rights of older persons.

This moment is important because the Universal Declaration of Human Rights has itself reached the age of seventy-five since its launch in 1948. A world in which everyone fully enjoys the same rights is possible only through firm solidarity among generations. New commitments by the entire society are needed for the true protection of current and future generations of older persons.

Human rights are for the entire lifespan, but special measures are needed for each period of life. Governments must build intergenerational models to protect human rights. To do so, they must bring the generations together and listen also to older persons.

When we speak of mutual understanding and mutual listening, languages matter. Frequently older people are the conveyors of linguistic treasures, such as specific endangered languages and variants of national languages. In truth, older persons are living sources of information on cultural and linguistic change.

Esperanto is a bridge language, not only, in the most literal sense, between speakers of different languages, but also, through the Esperanto community, between different generations. The Esperanto movement offers everyone numerous ways to gain richer knowledge and new information about countries, cultures, values, and customs; to find new friends across the world; to discover new ways to work together in numerous fields; to enjoy new opportunities to see the world through a different collaborative perspective – and with new opportunities to solve major world problems through cooperative activities among all peoples and all generations.

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