



***Message of the Universal Esperanto Association on  
the occasion of International Human Rights Day, 10  
December 2023***

*Dignity, freedom and justice for all people and all languages!*

Universal Esperanto Association greets the United Nations and all people of goodwill on the occasion of the 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. From its foundation, in 1908, our Association has worked for international understanding, solidarity and respect among all people. Human rights are fundamental to our Constitution and we work tirelessly to advance the goals of the UN and UNESCO in our role as an organization in consultative relationship with those institutions.

Respect for human rights was specifically written into the UEA's Constitution even before the formal establishment of the Declaration. Today, the Constitution unambiguously asserts that "good international relations and respect for human rights, as they are defined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other internationally recognized instruments, are essential conditions for the work of the UEA."

Dignity, freedom and justice for all people, and for speakers and users of all languages, are essential rights. On the occasion of the 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration, we resolutely reconfirm our struggle for the respect and realization of those rights.

Although the world has changed greatly over the last 75 years, the demand for human rights remains, and will continue to remain, a worldwide cry. We must do more, so that all members of the human family are treated in conformity with their essential and equal dignity.

The Declaration has created a foundation and a clear guide for the advancement of human rights generally – in all places and under all circumstances. It has allowed for the acknowledgment and definition of specific rights of women, of older persons, of children – and of minorities, vulnerable groups, indigenous peoples, migrants and others. At the same time it is a clear guide for all people, in all places, to awareness of, and advocacy for, their various rights.

At the present time, of remembrance and of mobilization for the future, we draw special attention to the relationship between languages and human rights. Despite the fact that discrimination on the basis of language is specifically forbidden in Article 2 of

the Declaration, this fundamental dimension of human life is all too often overlooked. Also overlooked is the close relationship between language and personal identity.

Full human rights include linguistic human rights, which should form a basis for reciprocal respect and cooperation. Language policies are an essential part of action for human rights – to prevent discrimination and to build common understandings of the major challenges that confront humankind.

Human Rights Day takes place five days before Zamenhof Day, December 15, when we celebrate the birth of the founder of Esperanto, L. L. Zamenhof, who in his work for the language sought to create peace and equality for all people, everywhere. This year, we will link the two topics: Zamenhof Day will also be a day of special recognition of the Declaration, in support of the efforts of the United Nations.

The universality of human rights requires our constant action. We must continue our efforts and always raise our voices in favour of a world of full rights for all individuals.