



***Message of the Universal Esperanto Association on  
the occasion of International Mother Language Day,  
21 February 2024***

On this day, International Mother Language Day, we advance the importance of language diversity and multilingual education. Language rights constitute a foundation for just and sustainable societies because languages are at the heart of our daily life, identity, cultural inheritance and communal unity. Languages are a basis through which to approach all other human rights.

The protection and advancement of languages is vitally important because it is through languages that we convey our views of the world and preserve local and traditional knowledge and culture. Sadly, UNESCO tells us that 40 percent of the world's inhabitants do not have access to education in a language that they speak or understand. At the same time, more and more languages are disappearing.

In our increasingly pluralistic societies, and faced with the idea of a worldwide society that includes all of humankind, the question of languages is becoming an essential priority. In fact, languages are the very foundation of understanding and cooperation. Thus, language rights are directly related to democracy and to truly common decision-making on common problems.

Let us advance the values of a multilingual world as proposed by UNESCO: teaching in the mother tongue, multilingual education at all levels, and intercultural education. We hope that in this way peace, development and human rights will become a reality for all people, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.

Through languages we share our humanity. Let us use and advance all languages, including the international language Esperanto, to realize those principles and values. To celebrate solidarity among people of different backgrounds, we also invite all people of good will to the 109th World Congress of Esperanto in Arusha, Tanzania, from 3 to 10 August 2024.