



**Neniam plu: Message of the Universal Esperanto
Association on the International Day of Commemoration
in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust, 27 January
2024**

Each year, January 27 is recognized across the world as Holocaust Memorial Day, memorialized by the United Nations as a day of special observance. The Universal Esperanto Association joins with the United Nations in noting this anniversary and in mourning the victims of the Holocaust. Some six million Jews, as many as half a million Roma, and massive numbers of disabled people, alleged degenerates, prisoners of war, and various ethnic and religious groups were systematically murdered because of unscientific and atavistic theories falsely based on heredity but in reality born of hatred.

Among the many victims were almost the entire family of L.L. Zamenhof, the founder of Esperanto. Only one of his grandchildren survived. At the first congress of speakers of the International Language Esperanto, in France in 1905, Zamenhof declared: “today we meet, not as French with English, Russians with Poles, but as people with people”. Throughout his life, Zamenhof believed in the basic humanity of all people, regardless of their backgrounds and ancestry. It was this principle – that we are all human beings, entitled to dignity, entitled to be valued for our humanity, entitled to live in harmony with others – that was lost in the tragedy of the Holocaust.

We in the Esperanto movement, speakers of a common language from all across the world, mourn those who died and pledge to practise that humanity, that respect for all people, that was lost in this twentieth-century tragedy and that haunts human relations even today. “Neniam plu”, “never again”, we declare. But declarations may not be enough: finding the human in all human beings must be a basic principle if we are ever to overcome the challenges that humanity faces today. We must work, converse, and reason together if humanity is to prevail.