



Message of the Universal Esperanto Association on World Children's Day, 20 November 2024

Listen to the future, listen to children! Seventy years ago the 20th of November was established as World Children's Day, to advance unity and awareness concerning the importance of improving children's wellbeing and creating a world where children could fully grow and develop. But in fact it is precisely children, the most dependent and weakest of people, who too often suffer because of war, poverty and unjust discrimination.

UNICEF, the UN Children's Fund, invites us to listen to the children. By doing so we can fulfil their right to self-expression, understand their ideas for a better world, and include their priorities in our actions today.

According to our Association, which has been working since 1908 for mutual understanding among different peoples, better listening begins with an awareness of language problems. Thus, we welcome UNICEF's proposal, at the same time bearing in mind that such listening depends on linguistic human rights, linguistic justice, and linguistic inclusion.

Governments, businesses, teachers, parents – everyone must unite, along with children, to fulfil children's human rights. In fact, a better world for children is a better world for everyone. We should therefore reverse our goals: first we should think about children and their needs, then about territorial, commercial and political disputes.

Through Esperanto, our Association broadcasts the goals of UNICEF, calls for understanding among children and across peoples, and furthers linguistic human rights for children – including the right to learn in one's native language.