

Esperanto and the UN

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Universala Esperanto-Asocio

Universal Esperanto Association speaks out on human rights

At a moment of international tension, when worldwide co-operation and worldwide values are under sustained threat, the Universal Esperanto Association, with members all across the world, took the occasion of International Human Rights Day, December 10, to speak out on the need for international respect and understanding. Human rights, it pointed out in a message addressed to the United Nations, are written into UEA's Constitution and have been ever since the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was first formulated and approved.

According to UEA's Constitution, "Good international relations and respect for human rights, as they are defined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other internationally recognised instruments, are essential conditions for the work of UEA."

In a message addressed to the United Nations on the occasion of International Human Rights Day, December 10, UEA called on the UN to firmly defend the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and continue to work for its full realisation.

"The idea of human rights is the most powerful and capable means of leading us to a reality in which all people are respected and are able to fulfil their common and personal goals in life. Therefore, we constantly and collectively reassert, as stated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, our firm belief in the dignity and value of the human personality and in the equal rights of all '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.'"

The message quotes UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mr. Volker Türk, who states: "We must reconnect with human rights, remembering that they are about people – about their needs, wants and fears, as well as their hopes and aspirations."

According to UEA's powerful message, "Human rights are the food that we eat, the air that we breathe, the words that we speak, the possibilities that we realise, and the protections that keep us secure. They are the common ground that unites us in diversity, the foundation of our life, the guide for decisions that affect us all."

The message draws particular attention to linguistic human rights, "not least because they are an everyday matter – everything from intimate conversation to public debate. We must combat linguistic discrimination. Everyone has a right to participate in language communities, to use, protect and advance their language. Likewise, everyone has a right to be multilingual and to communicate with multiple language communities."

The message ends with a specific appeal to the thousands of speakers of Esperanto across the world: "The Universal Esperanto Association calls on speakers and supporters of the

International language Esperanto around the world to respect and take action for human rights, and to pursue solidarity, understanding and esteem for other peoples. Let us – individuals, communities, peoples – unite for human rights, justice and equality. And let us encourage our governments, opinion leaders, and ordinary people, to do the same.”

UEA mourns passing of journalist and Esperanto leader Roman Dobrzyński

With much sadness, UEA recently announced the passing of Polish journalist and Esperanto leader Roman Dobrzyński (1937-2025) on November 13, 2025. Dobrzyński was named an Honorary Member of UEA for his many years of service to the Polish and international Esperanto movements and his important cultural contributions as journalist and writer.



Born in Warsaw in November 1937, he learned Esperanto in 1955 and soon became involved in the Polish youth Esperanto movement. Graduating from Warsaw University with degrees in journalism and law, he began a career with Polish Television, producing over 200 documentaries and interviews, specializing in international affairs, and particularly assignments in Latin America. Skilled in the art of diplomacy, he chaired the organizing committee for the 72nd World Congress of Esperanto in 1987, which, in a moment of political and social reawakening, attracted over 6000 Esperantists to Warsaw from

around the world, the largest single gathering of speakers of the language in Esperanto's history.

Dobrzyński was the author of a number of books, including *Zamenhof Street* (2003), a series of conversations with architect and engineer Louis-Christophe Zaleski-Zamenhof, grandson of the founder of Esperanto, Ludvik Zamenhof. Translated into some fifteen languages, the book was about to appear in English translation at the time of Dobrzyński's passing, translated by Humphrey Tonkin, who was president of UEA at the time of the 1987 World Congress. The book is now slated for publication in January 2026.

Dobrzyński served as president of the Polish Esperanto Association in the 1980s and edited, over the years, several Esperanto journals, including the Polish Esperanto Association's *Pola Esperantisto* and the youth magazine *Kontakto*. Along with Roman Malinowski, speaker of the Polish Parliament and a key figure in the first post-communist Polish government, he established the Zamenhof Foundation, in Białystok, birthplace of the creator of Esperanto. The Foundation serves as an international cultural centre and memorial to Ludvik Zamenhof.

Esperanto-speaking teachers to meet in China

The 2026 annual world congress of the International League of Esperanto-Speaking Teachers (ILEI) will take place at Zaozhuang University, in Shandong Province, China, from 10 to 16 July, according to a recent announcement. Shandong University is home to the largest Esperanto Museum in Asia and the only government-recognized department of Esperanto studies in China.

The congress is expected to draw Esperanto teachers from all over the world. Theme of the congress will be “Educating Professional Esperantists and Protecting Esperanto Culture”. As part of the congress, a linguistic symposium will examine the topic “Raising Linguistic Consciousness,” a crucially important topic with the rise of A.I. The final days of the congress will focus on the culture and history of Shandong Province, birthplace of the Chinese philosophers Confucius and Mozi.

The 2025 ILEI congress was held in Belgrade, Serbia.



Universal Esperanto Association and World Braille Day 2026

January 4 is World Braille Day. Declared by the United Nations General Assembly in 2018, World Braille Day celebrates the life of Louis Braille (1809-1852), a French educator and the inventor of a tactile reading and writing system named after him, intended for use by the blind. He presented his work to his peers for the first time in 1824, when he was fifteen years old.

The International Language Esperanto was founded in 1887. As early as 1904, Professor Théophile Cart, working with the school for the blind in Lausanne, Switzerland, adapted braille for use with Esperanto, and, from as early as the beginning of world Esperanto congresses in 1905, blind people have played a prominent part in the dissemination

and use of the International Language Esperanto, organizing congresses and conferences in all parts of the world and attending World Congresses of Esperanto.

The Esperanto Dissemination Group (DGE) is an organization working in the blind community in Japan. It is currently celebrating a new volume on Louis Braille in Esperanto by Esperanto speaker Kozawa Mami. DGE was inspired by World Braille Day to continue its work among blind Esperanto-speakers and to engage the Universal Esperanto Association in recognizing this important UN day.

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