

**Message of Greeting from Audrey Azoulay, Director-General of UNESCO,  
to the World Congress of the Universal Esperanto Association,  
Lisbon, July 29, 2018.**

I am pleased to be able to send these supportive words to the participants of the 103rd World Congress of the Universal Esperanto Association.

You are fortunate to be meeting in the magnificent city of Lisbon, a city rich in history, built at the crossroads of diverse cultures, a city open to the world, at the edge of the Iberian peninsula.

I have no doubt that the exceptional setting will inspire fruitful exchanges.

As you know, UNESCO has supported the teaching of Esperanto for many years.

Our Organization shares with the Esperanto movement common values: the aim of building a peaceful world, empathy among the peoples, respect for cultural diversity, solidarity across borders.

The cement of these values is the capability to dialogue, to listen, and to share.

Languages, the vectors of this dialogue, accordingly constitute, for the mission that we must accomplish and for the defence of the values that are ours, an essential element.

We must defend the languages, especially the less common languages, the indigenous languages, which we now know are disappearing at the rate of one every two weeks, an irreplaceable loss of our human heritage.

We must also defend multilingualism not only by appropriate public policies but also in the virtual space of the internet, giving life to the linguistic and cultural diversity of all communities, so that all people can enjoy their own history and, identity, on the basis of the symbolic resources of their community of origin.

This commitment is also yours.

It is so because Esperanto does not aim to erase the multitude of languages spoken in the world. On the contrary, it represents a means of communication respectful of all languages, both majority languages and minority languages, and seeks to establish one community of speakers separate from all economic, political, or cultural hegemony.

To speak Esperanto is to raise oneself to a level of cosmopolitan awareness, to be a citizen of the world - but without renouncing one's particular attachments.

The chosen theme for your congress this year is “Cultures, Languages, Globalization: Where Do We Go From Here?”

The direction to take is certainly the one that your Movement and our Organization have pursued on for many years, namely to undertake, now and in the future, to preserve and revitalize that essential element of the nonmaterial human heritage, that is language, and to defend linguistic diversity and promote multilingual education.

Thus we will successfully build a more open, more inclusive and peaceful world.

“Many voices, one world” is the slogan of our emblematic publication the *UNESCO Courier*.

“Multaj voĉoj, unu mondo” is how that ideal that we share is translated into Esperanto - now memorialized in the edition of our journal that will henceforth appear in Esperanto, *Unesko-Kuriero*.

Finally I want to convey, in the name of UNESCO, my cordial good wishes for the success of your Congress.

Audrey Azoulay,  
Director-General of UNESCO

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*El la franca originalo en la anglan lingvon tradukis Ronald J. Glossop, Usono*  
*From the French original into English translated by Ronald J. Glossop, U.S.A.*  
*Message de Audrey AZOULAY, Directrice générale de l'UNESCO, à l'occasion du Congrès mondial de l'association universelle d'Esperanto, Lisbonne, 29 juillet 2018:*  
<http://www.linguistic-rights.org/unesco/2018-29-07-LISBONNE-Congres-esperanto-Vfinal-AZOULAY.pdf>