



Universala Esperanto-Asocio (UEA)

Nieuwe Binnenweg 176, 3015 BJ Rotterdam, Netherlands

tel +31 10 436 1044 **fax:** +31 10 436 1751

e-mail : uea@co.uea.org <http://www.uea.org>

<http://www.linguistic-rights.org>

Forum on Minority Issues

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Address by Mr Cesco Reale,

Representative of the EBU at the United Nations in Geneva.

Madam Chairperson, Dear participants,

Bonjour, Hola, NiHao, Salam, Hello, Prevet,

To reply to M. de Varennes,

I greet you on behalf of the Universal Esperanto Association, which works for the defence of linguistic rights, for the improvement of communication among peoples, for the preservation of minority languages in danger of disappearance and for cultural diversity.

Social integration and the integration of different ethnic groups is highly dependent on the linguistic problem. To this end, inter-comprehension is an essential instrument for bringing people of different ethnic groups and languages together. Hence the importance of a common language. But to use as a common language a language belonging to a people gives enormous advantages to the native speakers of that language and the states to which they belong.

Esperanto is an equitable solution, it is easy to learn in a few months. It has been shown that, because of its simple and regular grammar, learning Esperanto facilitates the mastery of other foreign languages and we believe that it is specially adapted for primary school pupils. It can provide them with a good linguistic basis without being a threat to their mother tongue.

According to various world-renowned experts, Esperanto is currently one of the best solutions available, given the costs and equity issues. And it is also an excellent pretext for us to reflect on the problem of the injustice of international communication and the safeguarding of cultural diversity.

For these reasons, consideration should be given to a more equitable multilingual communication management system. After more than a hundred years of Esperanto, it has been shown that communicating

in a neutral language is possible and effective. This is because Esperanto is a very logical and easy language, and above all, because it is not owned by anyone. Therefore, it is the language of all, it does not invade other languages by hegemonically exporting the culture of certain peoples, but it offers a bridge to bring all peoples to the same level, especially linguistic minorities.

Dankon! Thank you!