

U. N. E. S. C. O.

GENERAL CONFERENCE

EIGHTH SESSION

PROGRAMME AND BUDGET  
COMMISSION

CONFERENCIA GENERAL

OCTAVA REUNIÓN

COMISIÓN DEL PROGRAMA  
Y PRESUPUESTO

CONFÉRENCE GÉNÉRALE

HUITIÈME SESSION

COMMISSION DU PROGRAMME  
ET DU BUDGET

PRG

8C/PRG/3

PARIS, 1 June 1954

Original: English-French-Spanish

REPORT ON THE INTERNATIONAL PETITION  
IN FAVOUR OF ESPERANTO

I. The General Conference,

at its seventh session, adopted the following resolution:

- 4.14 "The Director-General is authorized to communicate to Member States the international petition in favour of Esperanto, which has been submitted to the United Nations and forwarded by that Organization to Unesco, and to undertake, in the light of comments received, the necessary preparatory work to enable the General Conference to decide, at its eighth session, upon the action to be taken on this petition."

It should be remembered that the petition referred to in this resolution was submitted by the Universal Esperanto Association to the Secretary-General of the United Nations on 2 August 1950 and forwarded by him to Unesco on 8 August 1950. The petition read as follows:

"I believe that the international language question is an important and practical one, to which the United Nations should give urgent and serious consideration.

I believe that a world auxiliary language, serving to supplement the national languages but not to supplant them, is necessary to facilitate communication between the peoples of the world and to promote social progress.

In view of the world-wide use of Esperanto, the only auxiliary language which has had appreciable success, I hope that the United Nations will help to spread the use of this language in every possible way; for example, by encouraging its teaching in schools where teachers are available, and developing its use in travel, international commerce and correspondence."

With the petition were received four volumes containing the original signatures of 459 persons in 18 different countries, and of the qualified representatives of 484 non-governmental organizations. According to information supplied by the Universal Esperanto Association, the total number of individual signatures which they had collected was 875,432, while the 484 non-governmental organizations represented altogether 15,454,780 registered members.

II. In order to give effect to the resolution adopted by the General Conference, the Acting Director-General, in a circular letter dated 9 February 1953 (CL/720), communicated the text of the petition to Member States, requesting them to let him have any information, views or observations which they might wish to furnish. The Acting Director-General desired especially to learn how far the teaching and use of Esperanto extended in the different countries, what results had been obtained, and what action, in the view of Member States, should be taken on the petition.

On 5 August 1953 a reminder (CL/811) was sent to States that had not yet forwarded their observations.

III. By 1 May 1954, 45 Member States had replied to the Director-General's request for their opinions. Several of these replies were simply acknowledgments; the others may be divided into three classes:

(a) Nine States<sup>(1)</sup> considered that they could not or should not express any opinion and confined themselves, for the most part, to mentioning that Esperanto was not taught or used in their countries, or that their experience of the subject did not justify the adoption of any official attitude towards it.

(b) Nineteen States declared themselves either against the introduction of Esperanto into the school syllabus, or against any action in favour of the petition. Nine of them<sup>(2)</sup> considered that encouragement of any artificial language was undesirable. The others thought that Unesco should devote itself to more effective and more urgent work.

(c) On the other hand, ten States said that action should be taken in favour of the petition.<sup>(3)</sup> Cuba, in particular, hoped that Esperanto would be adopted as a world auxiliary language; Honduras and Norway were prepared to consider the introduction of Esperanto into their schools and universities. The Lebanon suggested that the General Conference, at its eighth session, should set up a working party to study the petition and the action that should be taken on it. Yugoslavia wished Unesco to undertake a survey of the development of Esperanto and to assist in the future development of the International Esperanto Movement. Austria envisaged the preparation of a Draft Convention between Member States for the gradual introduction of the teaching of Esperanto into primary and secondary schools and higher educational establishments.

A brief summary of the replies received from Member States is contained in Annex I.

IV. In order to submit additional data to the General Conference, to assist it in forming an opinion on the subject, the Secretariat has tried to collect information on the aims and activities of the Universal Esperanto Association, and on what it has so far achieved. Extracts from the documentation thus assembled will be found in Annex II.

As the result of an invitation despatched by the President of the Universal Esperanto Association and supported by the Yugoslav National Commission, the Director-General was represented by an official of the Secretariat at the Universal Esperanto Congress held at Zagreb (Yugoslavia) from 26 June to 1 August 1953. The resolutions adopted by this Congress appear in Annex III. In particular, the Congress resolved to "offer Unesco all the services of the Association's journals to spread news of Unesco, and its work, throughout the world, on condition that Unesco supplies the Association with the necessary information". The Congress also recommended that Unesco should organize and supervise experiments in the teaching of Esperanto and its methods, showing its practical advantages and the way in which an international language can contribute to international understanding.

On 27 June 1953 the Universal Esperanto Association applied to the Secretariat for admission to consultative arrangements with Unesco, as enjoyed by certain other international non-governmental organizations. In accordance with the usual procedure, this request was, on 27 April 1954, forwarded to Member States for their opinion. It will be submitted, together with the comments received, to the Executive Board, and the General Conference will, during its present session, be asked to take a decision upon it.

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- (1) Australia, Dominican Republic, Iran, Jordan, Laos, Monaco, New Zealand, Pakistan, Uruguay.
  - (2) Ceylon, Denmark, German Federal Republic, Netherlands, Philippines, Sweden, Thailand, Union of South Africa, Viet-Nam.
  - (3) Austria, Cambodia, Cuba, Guatemala, Honduras, Lebanon, Mexico, Norway, Spain, Yugoslavia.

#### CONCLUSIONS

I. The petition from the Universal Esperanto Association particularly advocates the use of Esperanto in travel, international commerce and correspondence. These matters, it should be noted, do not come within Unesco's competence. The sole purpose of the present report is therefore to inform the General Conference of the opinions expressed by Member States on Esperanto teaching (in the words of the petition)<sup>1</sup> "to facilitate communication between the peoples of the world and to promote social progress".

II. Of the 38 States that returned replies of substance, only 10 favoured action to further the aims of the petition. In these circumstances the Director-General has not considered it advisable to provide for any special activities connected with Esperanto in the Draft Programme for 1955 and 1956.

III. This in no way implies a judgment on the merits of Esperanto, or on the contribution which the International Esperanto Movement might make to the development of peaceful relations among the peoples. The Director-General would recall that the Esperanto Movement has always proclaimed its devotion to the cause of peace and international understanding. He particularly draws the attention of the General Conference to the opinion of the United Kingdom National Commission, which, while believing that Unesco's programme should not include the promotion of Esperanto either in schools or otherwise, considers that this need not preclude the possibility of co-operation between Unesco and the Universal Esperanto Association in matters where the Association can be of assistance with the furtherance of Unesco's aims. The General Conference will doubtless appreciate the decision of the Universal Esperanto Congress to disseminate, in its journals, information about Unesco and its work. The Conference will have occasion, when considering the application of the Universal Esperanto Association, to decide upon the possible form of future relationship between Unesco and this Association (Item 9.6.4 of the agenda, document 8C/ADM/32).

IV. Several Member States have announced their readiness to introduce or expand the teaching of Esperanto in their primary and secondary schools and higher educational establishments. The General Conference might take note of this, and request these Member States to keep it informed of the results of their experiments in this field. At a future session, the General Conference might discuss, on a report from States which have carried out such experiments, the conclusions to be drawn and the measures, if any, which might be taken.

ANNEX I

EXTRACTS FROM THE REPLIES OF MEMBER STATES

AUSTRALIA: 29 July 1953

A report was drawn up by the Australian Esperanto Association. This report was examined by the Australian National Advisory Committee for Unesco:

"Members express considerable interest in the report, but did not reach agreement on the extent to which Esperanto's claims should be pressed as a possible solution to the language problem. The Committee recommended that the report should be transmitted to your Secretariat, but resolved not to comment on the proposals contained in the petition, until it had examined reports on the teaching and use of Esperanto in other Member States of Unesco....."

AUSTRIA: 11 September 1953 (Translated from the French)

Esperanto is taught in Austria in the secondary schools and higher educational establishments as an optional language, in the same way as ordinary modern languages. There exist, in this country, examination committees for the teaching of Esperanto. The Esperanto Movement in Austria has proposed the following resolution:

"Having regard to the facts mentioned in the annexed report ('Esperantobewegung in Oesterreich') on the value of Esperanto for the propagation of Austrian cultural values and for cultural exchanges between our country and the rest of the world; and since the development of Esperanto would considerably facilitate the implementation of Unesco's programme (importance of Esperanto for international understanding, popular education, the dissemination of culture and the international exchange of ideas); we propose that the General Conference at Montevideo adopt a draft convention by which Member States would undertake to introduce gradually - for instance, over a period of ten years - the teaching of Esperanto in primary and secondary schools and higher educational establishments. According to circumstances, it might be possible to envisage that such a convention should enter into force after its ratification by four or five States."

(Annex to the letter: Report presented to the Austrian Commission for Unesco in regard to the development of Esperanto in Austria.)

BELGIUM: 23 December 1953 (Translated from the French)

"The Belgian National Commission for Unesco, after discussing the matter at its meetings on 25 October and 28 November 1953, felt that it could not support the international petition in favour of Esperanto, submitted to the United Nations and forwarded by that Organisation to Unesco.

While recognising the noble ideal inspiring the authors of the petition, the Commission was not convinced that the dissemination of Esperanto would lead to results sufficiently concrete to justify its inclusion in the already overburdened curricula, and the various practical difficulties which would arise from its general adoption."

(Annex to the letter: Report on Esperanto drawn up by the Belgian Royal Esperanto League.)

BURMA: 3 June 1953

"... I have the honour to say that there is no teaching of Esperanto in my country, and it is not intended to introduce such a newfangled auxiliary language to promote international communications.

My Government wish to mention that an international language, though desirable, should be developed from a widely spoken current language rather than be invented as a new one if it is to be within practical bounds."

CAMBODIA: 4 June 1953 (Translated from the French)

".... The Royal Government nevertheless recommends that this language be encouraged. Its general use internationally would undoubtedly render great services, especially by facilitating communication between the peoples and promoting social progress."

CANADA: 3 June 1953

".... Very little activity exists in Canada in connexion with Esperanto, and the petition was signed by only some 488 Canadians.... Schools and colleges do not offer any regular Esperanto courses, and teaching of Esperanto seems to be dependent on sporadic efforts of individual enthusiasts.

.... While the Canadian Government sympathizes with the desire to facilitate communication between the peoples of the world and to promote social progress, it holds the view that the promotion of an auxiliary language is not a subject which should rate priority amongst the projects to be submitted to the eighth session of the General Conference of Unesco."

CEYLON: 3 March 1953

".... I have the honour to inform you that the present time is not opportune for the use and teaching of Esperanto in Ceylon. The important question engaging the minds of educationalists in Ceylon today is the development of the national languages."

CUBA: 21 October 1953 (Translated from the Spanish)

".... Our Government has always recommended the adoption of Esperanto as an auxiliary language, and the Cuban delegation to the seventh session of the General Conference voted in favour of the petition in question, regarding it as opportune and deserving of support.

In connexion with the eighth session of the General Conference, to be held next year at Montevideo (Uruguay), and in agreement with our permanent delegation to Unesco, we wish to point out that we shall continue to support the said petition, and are glad to note that the preparatory studies which Unesco has been authorized to undertake will be considered by the General Conference at its next session. We also approve the ideas, favouring a universal language, contained in document 7C/PRG/11 dated 22 August 1952; we in fact believe that, in order to promote international understanding and a greater international exchange of ideas, Esperanto should be adopted as a universal auxiliary language."

DENMARK: 28 January 1954

".... I beg to inform you that the question of Esperanto lessons in the secondary schools in Denmark has been raised several times but that the authorities in question have always been against such a suggestion. The reason for their negative attitude is that, in their opinion, it seems of far greater importance to spend the limited number of lessons allocated to the study of languages in the schools syllabus on living languages instead of setting apart lessons for the study of an artificial language."

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC: 14 April 1953 (Translated from the Spanish)

".... This question was referred to the competent Department of the Dominican Government, which has just informed us that, so far as the Department is concerned, there has been no development of the teaching and use of Esperanto."

EL SALVADOR: 26 October 1953 (Translated from the Spanish)

".... I recently received, from the Ministry of Culture, note No. 3282 of the 13 inst., containing the following information:

.... Esperanto has practically never been taught in El Salvador.

.... I consider that, despite the generous ideals underlying the Esperanto Association's action, which are held in honour by all, El Salvador cannot give practical support to plans for the universal teaching of this language, since its Government has more urgent material and cultural needs to deal with on behalf of its people - needs that also exist on the international plane with which Unesco is concerned, such as fundamental education, the reform of educational establishments, and so forth.

.... Consequently, the Government of El Salvador feels that, until Unesco has at its disposal a larger budget for the development of its activities in the fields of fundamental education and scientific research, and until the world situation becomes less troubled, Esperanto must rely solely on the generous private efforts of the Esperanto Association."

FRANCE: 17 July 1953 (Translated from the French)

".... After consulting the competent services of the Ministry of Education and the French National Commission for Unesco, I have the honour to inform you of my view that, in present circumstances, the future programme of the Organization, which must in principle be concentrated on a number of essential activities in each Programme Department, should not include any practical projects in this particular field."

GERMAN FEDERAL REPUBLIC: 13 June 1953

"The question of Esperanto was discussed at the meeting of the Executive Committee of the German Unesco Commission. On this occasion, the unanimous view was expressed that no artificial language could replace the living languages in the means of diffusing cultural values."

GREECE: 9 September 1953 (Translated from the French)

".... The Greek Ministry of Education has just informed us that:

(1) The compulsory teaching of Esperanto in Greek schools is, in its opinion, neither possible nor desirable, since the Greek school curriculum for the teaching of languages already includes two dead languages and two modern foreign languages, in addition to modern Greek.

(2) Further, the curriculum for 'analytical' teaching in force in Greek schools is much too heavily burdened to be able to include an additional subject, such as the teaching of Esperanto.

(3) Lastly, the Ministry of Education does not consider that, generally speaking, the dissemination of Esperanto is likely to make any practical contribution to the achievement of the aims mentioned in the declaration annexed to your letter CL/720."

GUATEMALA: 2 June 1953 (Translated from the Spanish)

"With regard to Unesco's enquiry concerning the possibility of adopting Esperanto as an international auxiliary language, the Guatemalan National Commission has consulted various organizations and institutions on the matter. All the answers were favourable, and we too consider the adoption of such a language desirable. We think that the adoption of any of the current living languages would involve a sacrifice on the part of the countries where it is not spoken, whereas a 'scientific' language, such as Esperanto, would avoid numerous contingent difficulties."

HONDURAS: 4 November 1953 (Translated from the Spanish)

".... The National Commission for Unesco has studied the international petition in favour of Esperanto, submitted to the United Nations (which forwarded it to Unesco) by the Universal Esperanto Association and the Esperanto Association of North America and stating that Esperanto is the only world auxiliary language which can be used as a supplement to the national languages in order to facilitate communication between the various peoples, and that it should therefore be taught in schools. Since this country at present lacks teachers who are qualified to teach

Esperanto, this Ministry has decided, as a preliminary measure, to organize as required, at the University of Honduras, short courses in Esperanto for those who may be interested in teaching or studying it."

INDIA: 18 April 1953

"... The Government of India has no special comments or suggestions to make on Esperanto. The Government of India, however, feels that the question of Esperanto is not of such urgency as to be included in the Unesco programme for 1955/56."

IRAN: 2 July 1953 (Translated from the French)

"... Efforts have been made on behalf of this language in Iran, where for some time now a Committee has been promoting the teaching of it. Recently an Esperanto grammar, with vocabulary, was published under the auspices of this Committee, and we are sending you a copy of it under separate cover...."

JORDAN: 19 February 1953

"... Esperanto is not taught in any educational institution in the Hashemite Kingdom of the Jordan. The National Commission does not know of any national who is acquainted with this language. Therefore, we are not in a position to give observations concerning the petition...."

LAOS: 2 September 1953 (Translated from the French)

"... I have the honour to inform you that, since the curricula in Laos are already heavily burdened (Laotian, French and English, in addition to Latin and Pali), Esperanto is not as yet taught in the State or private schools of Laos."

LEBANON: 1 April 1953 (Translated from the French)

"... This language is not taught in the State schools in Lebanon. The Lebanese Government suggests that, at the eighth session of Unesco's General Conference, an Expert Committee be proposed to study the petition submitted to the United Nations by the Universal Esperanto Association, and the action to be taken on it."

MEXICO: 13 April 1953 (Translated from the Spanish)

"... The Mexican Department of Education has informed me that it is interested in the development of the Universal Esperanto Association's work, and that it favours the measures being taken on behalf of that international language."

(Annex to the letter: Report presented by the Mexican Esperanto Association.)

MONACO: 2 October 1953 (Translated from the French)

"I have the honour to inform you that the Principality of Monaco, like most other countries, has taken no official practical steps to promote the teaching of Esperanto."

NETHERLANDS: 4 March 1954

"... In general, the teaching of Esperanto is not included in the curriculum of schools in the Netherlands. As regards primary education, I submitted to Parliament a bill some time ago permitting the teaching of Esperanto, which bill was however defeated on February 17, 1953. The act relating to training colleges for elementary school teachers allows for the inclusion of Esperanto in the curriculum."

This is also possible in secondary and grammar schools although, so far, none of these schools has availed itself of the opportunity.

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Although it cannot be denied that a fair number of Netherlands subjects sympathize with the idea of using Esperanto, it is my impression that no great enthusiasm exists for the teaching of this auxiliary language in the schools.

Under these circumstances it does not seem advisable to me to stimulate the teaching of Esperanto in the Netherlands schools."

NEW ZEALAND: 6 October 1953

".... The New Zealand authorities have no observations to make on this petition and do not, at this stage, desire to express any firm views on the action which Unesco might take to give it effect....

I should emphasize that Esperanto has never received any official sponsorship in New Zealand. The language is not included in the curriculum of our public schools nor is any Esperantist activity directly subsidized by Government funds...."

NORWAY: 25 June 1953

".... The Ministry of Ecclesiastical Affairs and Education recognizes the importance of Esperanto as a means of promoting mutual knowledge and understanding between countries and facilitating international intercourse and co-operation. The large response aroused by the Esperanto petition in Norway shows that the desire for an international language is backed by powerful opinion. The Ministry of Ecclesiastical Affairs and Education is therefore positively disposed to the question of, possibly experimentally, introducing Esperanto in Norwegian schools and universities as qualified teachers become available. The question of introducing Esperanto in the primary schools was discussed in 1952 at a meeting of school directors from throughout the country. The statement from the School Director Council included the following remarks:

'The success of the Esperanto Movement will have great significance for international co-operation, especially among youth. However, it has not been found advisable to include further subjects in the curriculum of the primary school, as this is already large. On the other hand, the School Director Council feels that opportunity should be given to include Esperanto as a subject in the continuation school, provided qualified teachers are available and the School Boards adopt a resolution to that effect.'

The Ministry of Ecclesiastical Affairs and Education agrees with the School Director Council that it is difficult, for the present, to introduce Esperanto as a subject in the primary school. The question of whether opportunity should be given to include Esperanto in the continuation school will be discussed at an impending revision of the laws governing continuation schools.

The Ministry would, however, favour an attempt to introduce Esperanto in other schools. The question would, however, assume a different character if it should prove possible to draw up an international agreement respecting the introduction of Esperanto in schools."

PAKISTAN: 21 April 1953

".... Esperanto is not used in Pakistan so far as we are aware, and we therefore have no information to furnish with reference to the last paragraph of your letter referred to above."

PHILIPPINES: 6 June 1953

".... The Philippines is experiencing considerable difficulty in finding a satisfactory solution to its language problem because of the existence of many Philippine languages. The development of a national language is already handicapped by the use of various local languages along with English and Spanish. It is felt that the introduction of Esperanto will further complicate the problem.

For the present, therefore, the introduction of Esperanto in the Philippines is not feasible.



It is believed that the time, effort and money necessary in the mastery of a new language may be better used in the solution of the more pressing problems of mankind, such as the elimination of illiteracy and the conquest of disease."

SPAIN: 16 September 1953 (Translated from the Spanish)

"... With reference to Unesco's circular letter CL/720, concerning the resolution adopted by the General Conference at its seventh session with regard to the petition submitted by the Universal Esperanto Association, I have the honour to inform you that the Spanish Government sees no objection to giving favourable consideration to this petition, provided that no addition to the Organisation's budget is involved."

SWEDEN: 12 June 1953

"... The Swedish National Commission for Unesco has referred the matter to the Royal Swedish Board of Education and to the Swedish Esperanto Association, whose reports I enclose as respectively Appendixes 1 and 2."

Appendix 1: "The use and teaching of Esperanto in Sweden:

The Royal Swedish Board of Education shares the view that a world auxiliary language would be of great value to facilitate communication between the peoples. As opinions are divided about the choice of such an auxiliary language, the Board considers it important to point out the necessity of an agreement on one language. When an international agreement has been made on the use of such an auxiliary language at international conferences and similar occasions, only then, in the Board's opinion, can the question of including this language in the curriculum of schools in Sweden become of current interest.

The recent extensive investigation of the Swedish educational system has given no reason to suppose it advisable to introduce a neutral world language among the obligatory subjects of instruction in the elementary school. On the other hand, optional instruction in Esperanto has been given in certain cases outside school hours to interested students. Also there are study circles for this language..."

SWITZERLAND: 28 May 1953 and 3 July 1953 (Translated from the French)

On 28 May 1953, the Federal Political Department sent Unesco a letter, accompanied by a report drawn up after the Federal Department of the Interior had consulted the national bodies more particularly interested in the question of Esperanto. The conclusions of this report were of a negative nature. The letter of 28 May also gave the following information:

"The Swiss National Commission for Unesco, which has also consulted its members, has reached a conclusion very similar to that contained in the enclosed document.

Further, the restrictive budgetary measures adopted by the General Conference of Unesco in 1952 involve a concentration of the Organisation's work programme. It is essential to attend first and foremost to the immediate needs of Member States, and we do not feel that Esperanto falls within this category.

Although we are in full sympathy with the ideal inspiring the Universal Esperanto Association, we feel that, in present circumstances, Unesco could hardly include the teaching of Esperanto in its programme."

A second letter from the Federal Political Department, dated 3 July, contained the following information:

"In a letter dated 28 May 1953, we sent you two reports which emanated from the Federal Department of the Interior and the Swiss National Commission for Unesco, incorporating the results of an enquiry as regards Esperanto. These reports reflect the attitude adopted in this matter by the Swiss authorities. Swiss circles more particularly interested in the question of Esperanto are not in complete agreement with the conclusions to which the enquiry has led.

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Accordingly, Esperantists have asked us to send you a memorandum setting forth their point of view. We enclose it herewith and feel that it will be of some interest to you."

(Annex to the letter: "The Swiss Esperanto Association's comments on the Federal Department of the Interior's report on Esperanto.")

THAILAND: 7 May 1953

"... I have the honour to inform you that we have not taken any step to introduce the teaching and use of Esperanto into our schools and educational institutions, and our National Commission considers that the time is not yet opportune to take such a step..."

UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA: 15 April 1953

"... There are individual enthusiasts for Esperanto in the Union of South Africa, but there is no organized or official teaching of that language.

... The internal requirements of the Union, furthermore, make it highly desirable that South Africans should know one of the many native languages, and European school children are accordingly being encouraged to become proficient in one or more of these languages. In view of the above considerations, it would not be possible to arrange curricula so as to include the teaching of still another language such as Esperanto."

UNITED KINGDOM: 2 November 1953

"... This matter has been carefully considered by the U.K. National Commission which has consulted the British Esperanto Association..."

The Commission has noted that in so far as the Universal Esperanto Association is interested in the promotion of international understanding, its aims are consistent with those of Unesco, and the Commission notes that Unesco has already entered into informal relations with the Universal Esperanto Association. However, the Commission does not consider that at this stage Unesco should itself take any steps towards the promotion of Esperanto either in schools or otherwise, although this need not preclude the possibility of co-operation between Unesco and the Universal Esperanto Association in matters where the Association can be of assistance with the furtherance of Unesco's aims."

(Annex to the letter: Report by the British Esperanto Association.)

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA: 5 August 1953

Communication of a memorandum drawn up by the Esperanto Association of North America:

"... Let me add that it is the view of the Department that it is not appropriate for Unesco to sponsor and promote Esperanto or any similar auxiliary language. In the United States, the teaching of Esperanto is a matter for decision by local school systems, and it is presumably a matter within the domestic jurisdiction of other Member States. Because of the demands already being made on Unesco's resources, it is the further view of the Department that it would be unwise for Unesco to embark upon further action or study on the subject of Esperanto or any similar auxiliary language, especially until Unesco has done much more to solve the problem of illiteracy."

URUGUAY: 18 November 1953 (Translated from the Spanish)

"... I have the honour to inform you that the Executive Council of the Uruguayan National Commission for Unesco approves the report of the Sub-Commission on Letters, Theatre and Cinema (Annex III) and that, although it expresses no opinion on the substance of the problem, it has no objection to the latter being discussed at the eighth session of the General Conference."

(1) Memorandum of the Sub-Commission on Letters, Theatre and Cinema of the Executive Council of the Uruguayan National Commission, addressed to the Faculty of Humanities and Sciences (Annex I).

(2) Memorandum of the Institute of Philology of the Faculty of Humanities and Sciences, addressed to the Dean of that Faculty, and subsequently transmitted to the Sub-Commission on Letters, Theatre and Cinema (Annex II).

(3) Memorandum of the Sub-Commission on Letters, Theatre and Cinema, addressed to the Executive Council of the Uruguayan National Commission, in answer to the request for its opinion (Annex III).

(4) Memorandum of the Uruguayan Esperanto Association, addressed to the Sub-Commission on Letters, Theatre and Cinema, refuting the conclusions of the Institute of Philology (Annex V).

(Translated from the French): Extract from Annex III (Report of the Sub-Commission on Letters, Theatre and Cinema) "... most members of the Sub-Commission feel that our country's experience as regards the use of Esperanto is not such as to justify the adoption of an official attitude with respect to the Universal Esperanto Association's petition which gave rise to Unesco's note and our Executive Council's request for advice."

VIET-NAM: 5 June 1953 (Translated from the French)

"... I have the honour to inform you that, so far as Viet-Nam is concerned, the inclusion of Esperanto teaching in our official programmes cannot be envisaged, even as an optional subject, owing to the fact that the curriculum for the teaching of languages in our lycées and colleges is already overburdened.

"... In these circumstances, it is impossible to introduce further subjects into the modern language curricula; nor can we consider giving Esperanto a place to the detriment of French and English."

YUGOSLAVIA: 12 October 1953 (Translated from the French)

"... The National Commission is of opinion that it would be useful to prepare a study on the development of Esperanto, since the latter can facilitate communication between the peoples, as well as international understanding. The National Commission also feels that the General Conference, at its eighth session, could adopt a resolution under which Unesco would assist the future development of the Esperanto Movement."

(Annex to the letter: Report on the teaching and practice of Esperanto in Yugoslavia.)

## ANNEX II

### INFORMATION ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE UNIVERSAL ESPERANTO ASSOCIATION (UNIVERSALA ESPERANTO-ASOCIO) BASED ON A REPORT PREPARED BY THE ASSOCIATION'S RESEARCH AND DOCUMENTATION CENTRE

(October 1953)

The idea of an international language is a very old one. Increasing efforts to establish an international auxiliary language date, however, mainly from the 19th century.

Following many attempts to work out an international auxiliary language, Esperanto was finally created by Dr. L. L. Zamenhof (1851-1917). In 1887, he published a book entitled La langue internationale, in which he listed the basic grammar rules of Esperanto. To make up the vocabulary for this language, Dr. Zamenhof based himself on "international" roots; he used a system of prefixes and suffixes for the purpose of forming, from a very small number of roots, as large a number of words as possible.

The first Universal Esperanto Congress was held at Boulogne (France) in 1905. Since then, except in the war years, Universal Congresses have been held annually.

#### Organization of the Esperanto Movement

The Universal Esperanto Association was founded in 1908 to facilitate relations between peoples, without distinction of nationality, race, religion or language, and to develop among its members a feeling of brotherhood and mutual respect.

The Association proclaims that respect for human rights is one of the basic conditions of its operation (Statutes, Article IV).

The Association has national organizations in the following countries: Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Denmark, France, Italy, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States of America, and Yugoslavia. Its membership also includes a number of specialized international federations: the Association of Workers, the Esperantist Scientific Association, the World Association of Esperanto Journalists, the World Association of Esperanto Doctors, the World Association of Esperanto Youth, the League of Esperanto Scouts, the International Esperanto League for Postal Communication and Transport Services, the International League of Esperanto Teachers and the Universal League (Federalist League). In addition, the Association accepts individual members.

The Association, which is administered by an Executive Committee, appoints delegates in certain countries to promote Esperanto activities in the towns in which they live. The Association's headquarters are at Rickmansworth (United Kingdom), and its library is at the Palais Wilson, Geneva. The Association publishes a monthly review, entitled Esperanto.

It is difficult to estimate exactly how many people, in the different countries of the world, know Esperanto. According to figures given by the Research and Documentation Centre of the Universal Esperanto Association, there were some 380,000 Esperantists in the world in 1951, as compared with about 126,000 in 1926.

#### Esperanto in Education

An enquiry was conducted in 1950 and 1951, by the Research and Documentation Centre, in 29 countries. According to information collected during this enquiry, Esperanto courses have been organized since the end of the war in universities in Austria, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Egypt, the German Federal Republic, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

National Esperantist groups have started night classes in the majority of countries. In schools where Esperanto is taught, 18% of the pupils are less than 12, 64% are between 12 and 15, and 18% are over 15 years of age. According to information assembled, 40% have learnt Esperanto by themselves, while 4.2% have been taught it at home, 1.6% at school and 54.2% in classes organized for the purpose.

By 1953, 2,000 Esperanto textbooks had been published in 50 languages. One textbook, entitled Key to Esperanto, was published during 1953 in 34 languages by the Universal Esperanto Association, while 106 special dictionaries covering the various fields of science, philosophy, technology etc. were published in 19 different countries.

Owing to its great simplicity, Esperanto can be learnt very quickly, pupils can speak and write it after one year of study; at the end of three years, they have acquired an excellent knowledge of it.

According to teachers who have been consulted, a knowledge of Esperanto makes it easier to learn foreign languages. Pupils who learn Esperanto show a keener interest in other nations; experiments conducted in schools in the United Kingdom have shown that the study of Esperanto gives pupils a greater feeling of international brotherhood.

#### Translations

The world's greatest literary works have been translated into Esperanto: the Bible, the Odyssey, the Iliad, and the works of Shakespeare, Edgar Allen Poe, Molière, Racine, La Fontaine, Balzac, Goethe, Dante, Camoens, Pushkin, Gogol, Turgenev, Tolstoy, Leibnitz, Descartes, Renan, Kant, Marx, Engels and Lenin, as well as many scientific works.

#### Original Esperanto Works

Short stories, novels and poems have been written in Esperanto. Japanese scientists have published their works in Esperanto. In Brazil, "Brazilian Statistical Summaries" have been published in Portuguese, Esperanto and English.

#### Esperanto and Science

In scientific circles, a movement in favour of Esperanto has started. A resolution was adopted in 1924 by 40 members of the Academy of Sciences in Paris. In 1950, the Scientific Council of Japan passed a resolution advocating the development of Esperanto and its utilization as an international scientific language. In 1951, a resolution in favour of Esperanto was adopted by a Scientific Conference in Munich. Lastly, the Scientific Congress held at Oslo in 1952 addressed a resolution to Unesco, requesting it to study the rôle of Esperanto in education, science and culture.

#### Dissemination of Esperanto

During 1953, 50 periodicals, written in Esperanto and intended to encourage the development of the language, were printed throughout the world. In addition, 9 scientific periodicals and 100 mimeographed bulletins were published in Esperanto; 100 reviews published in other languages included items in Esperanto.

Over 1,000 periodicals have quoted the text of the resolution adopted by the General Conference of Unesco on the subject of the international petition in favour of Esperanto.

Radio broadcasts in Esperanto have been organized since 1922. By 1953, the following stations had organized broadcasts: Bauru (Brazil), Berne, Hilversum (Netherlands), Lille (France), Madrid, Paris, Rabat, Rio de Janeiro, Rome, Vienna and Zagreb (Yugoslavia).

An enquiry made of the Rome, Berne and Zagreb broadcasting stations showed that Esperanto programmes were in fact listened to in many countries, and that hundreds of letters from Esperantist listeners were received yearly.

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Annex II

The British Esperanto Association has granted its sponsorship to films produced by private commercial companies with the intention of showing that Esperanto is one of the means of solving the international language problem. In 1951, a Yugoslav company prepared a documentary film with a commentary in Esperanto.

ANNEX III

**RESOLUTIONS PROPOSED BY THE FIFTH COMMISSION OF THE UNIVERSAL  
ESPERANTO CONGRESS IN ZAGREB AND APPROVED BY THE EXECUTIVE  
COMMITTEE OF THE UNIVERSAL ESPERANTO ASSOCIATION**

(July - August 1953)

1. The Committee expresses its gratitude to the delegates of the Swiss Government who proposed and supported the resolution in favour of Esperanto at the last session of Unesco's General Conference, and congratulates Messrs. Lapenna and Durrant who, with the help of the French Esperanto Association, managed to secure consideration of the resolution at that session.

2. The Committee of the Universal Esperanto Association

- (a) offers Unesco all the services of its journals to spread news of Unesco, and its work, throughout the world, on condition that Unesco supplies it with the necessary information;
- (b) expresses the hope that Unesco will accede to the request of the Universal Esperanto Association that it be granted consultative status;
- (c) requests Unesco, in its future programmes, to take the initiative of organising and supervising experiments in the teaching of Esperanto and its methods, showing its practical advantages and the way in which an international language can contribute to international understanding. Such experiments would take place in special schools selected by Unesco. The Committee requests the Bureau to prepare as soon as possible, in co-operation with the International League of Esperanto Teachers and international associations, a detailed report on the present position as regards Esperanto teaching in schools, in order to assist the preparatory work contemplated by Unesco;
- (d) recommends that the Universal Esperanto Association, in collaboration with Unesco, organize a conference of educators to discuss, for example, history books or other educational topics. This conference would be financed by the Universal Esperanto Association. Unesco might make premises available for the conference, if possible at its own headquarters.

3. The Committee of the Universal Esperanto Association requests the Bureau to co-operate with countries outside Europe that have recently won their independence, like Cambodia, Egypt, Indonesia, Laos and Viet-Nam, in order that such countries, which do not wish to be under the trusteeship of a European country, may have access, through the international language of Esperanto, to world culture on a linguistically neutral basis. Esperantists in such countries, supported by the Universal Esperanto Association, should request their respective governments to make the necessary proposals to Unesco. The Universal Esperanto Association hopes that Unesco will officially recognize the value of the Esperantist Movement as a means of encouraging international understanding, and that it will therefore give the Association its assistance in various fields.

4. The Commission requests the Committee of the Universal Esperanto Association to assist Mr. Lapenna in his work, since the organization of a publicity campaign, designed to secure a favourable decision at the Montevideo session of Unesco's General Conference, is now of the greatest importance and the necessary funds for it must be obtained. ....

5. The Committee of the Universal Esperanto Association requests that negotiations be started with a view to ensuring that competent people, speaking Esperanto, take part in non-Esperantist international congresses.

6. ....

7. The Committee hopes that the press campaign, to be organized in preparation for the General Conference of Unesco, will start immediately.

8. . . . .

9. The Committee recommends that the possibility be considered of inviting not only international organizations, but also representatives of the main political parties of Unesco's various Member States, to the Universal Congress at Haarlem. In this connexion, the Commission recalls that the decision to be taken by Unesco will depend upon its Member Governments, which in turn depend upon their political parties. . . . .

**Final resolution of the 38th Universal Esperanto Congress - Zagreb, 1 August 1953.**

**(Translated from the French translation of the original Esperanto)**

The thirty-eighth Universal Esperanto Congress requests national and international official bodies to give careful consideration to the practical usefulness of Esperanto as a means of promoting international understanding. The Congress notes with satisfaction the interest which Unesco, in sending an observer to the Zagreb Congress, has shown in Esperanto. The Congress hopes that the appropriate authorities in the various Member States of Unesco will make a thorough and impartial study of results already achieved and of the opportunities which the language offers, and that they will make practical proposals to Unesco for the utilisation of this language, which supplies a practical answer to the problem of a universal tongue.



U. N. E. S. C. O.

GENERAL CONFERENCE  
EIGHTH SESSION  
PROGRAMME AND BUDGET  
COMMISSION

CONFERENCIA GENERAL  
OCTAVA REUNIÓN  
COMISIÓN DEL PROGRAMA  
Y PRESUPUESTO

CONFÉRENCE GÉNÉRALE  
HUITIÈME SESSION  
COMMISSION DU PROGRAMME  
ET DU BUDGET

**PRG**

8C/PRG/3 Add.  
PARIS, 6 October 1954  
Original: English

Item 8.4.4.1 of Provisional Agenda

REPORT ON THE INTERNATIONAL PETITION  
IN FAVOUR OF ESPERANTO

ADDENDUM

The Director-General has received from the General Secretary of the Universal Esperanto Association the following memorandum which he transmits to the General Conference:

"The 39th Universal Esperanto Congress, which took place in Haarlem, Holland, from 31 July to 7 August 1954 in the presence of 2,100 delegates from 28 countries, in its meeting on 7 August unanimously decided to convey to the Director-General of Unesco the following memorandum:

This Congress first expresses its thanks to the Secretariat of Unesco for the preparation of the document 8C/PRG/3 of June 1954, under the title 'Report on the International Language Esperanto'. It finds, however, that in that document essential facts about the Petition and about the international language, Esperanto, are presented incompletely. This deforms the meaning and the present rôle of Esperanto and gives to the Esperanto movement a character that does not correspond to the facts. Therefore the Congress, in the interests of truth and scientific objectivity, feels compelled to draw attention at least to the more important of the incomplete assertions in the Report, and to complete them by the following information:

(1) The Petition in favour of Esperanto was signed in 78 countries by 895,432 individual persons and 492 organizations with a total of 18,454,890 members. Among the individual signatures are the names of the President of a Republic, 4 Prime Ministers, 405 Members of Parliaments, 1,607 linguists, 5,262 university professors and other scientists, 1,328 education specialists, 1,519 journalists, 5,113 doctors of medicine, more than 40,000 teachers, more than 200,000 lawyers, engineers, builders and pharmacists, more than 280,000 professional people, and several tens of thousands of workers of all trades. The original signed copies of the Petition - apart from the copies already transmitted to Unesco - are at the Central Office of the Universal Esperanto Association, and are at the disposal of Unesco at any time.

(2) The main desire expressed in the Petition is not 'the use of Esperanto in travel, international commerce and correspondence', but the hope that the United Nations 'will help the spread of the use of this language in every possible way; for example, by encouraging its teaching in the schools...'. From the text of the Petition it is clear that the signatories put the main emphasis upon help for the further spreading of Esperanto, leaving the United Nations, now Unesco, to decide how such help shall be effected.

(3) The fact that Esperanto generally is not yet taught officially in the schools is very well known to the signatories of the Petition. All the more outstanding is the spread of this language and its considerable attainments in the most diverse fields of international life. The whole sense of the Petition was and remains that Unesco, objectively recognizing these attainments - which, furthermore, respond to the fundamental purposes for which Unesco was founded - should help in the further spreading of Esperanto in ways which it may itself find most opportune. If Esperanto were generally taught in the schools of the world then, obviously, the Petition would be superfluous.

(4) The Congress regrets that the Report contains no mention of the personal experience of the observer sent by Unesco to the Universal Esperanto Congress in Zagreb regarding the practical functioning of the language, not only in the debates of the working organs of the Congress but also in the International Summer University, in the literary competitions, art evenings and other functions.

(5) The information given about the activities of the Esperanto movement inevitably necessitates the following corrections or completions.

(a) Organizations of the Esperanto Movement: National Esperanto organizations are to be found not only in Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Denmark, France, Italy, Holland, New Zealand, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Britain, United States of America and Yugoslavia, as mentioned in the Report, but also in the following countries: Bolivia, Egypt, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Iceland, Israel, Japan, Cuba, Poland, Uruguay, the Saar, Guatemala, Morocco and Venezuela, in all 32 countries, not 17 as indicated in the Report. Furthermore, there are societies and individual Esperantists in all countries of the world. The Universal Esperanto Association has members in 79 countries. In addition to the already mentioned specialist associations of scientists, journalists, doctors of medicine, youth, scouts, teachers, postal and telegraph workers, and federalists, there are also international Esperanto organizations of workers, Catholics, Protestants, Quakers, railway workers, philatelists. The so-called 'Delegates' are not persons whose task it is to forward the Esperanto activities of the towns where they live, but persons who perform the most diverse services for foreign Esperantists. A special category of delegates - scientists, doctors, lawyers, etc. - gives services relating to their own professions. Each year the delegates of U. E. A. fulfil about 15,000 practical services. Special services were performed by the delegates during the two world wars in forwarding correspondence, helping in the search for missing relatives, and in other ways mitigating the ravages of war.

(b) Education: The Esperanto societies organize annually about 1,500 evening classes. In addition, Esperanto was taught in the school years 1952-53 and 1951-52 in 8 schools in Austria, 2 in Brazil, 21 in Britain, 1 in Bulgaria, 2 in Denmark, 2 in Finland, 28 in France, 23 in Germany, 3 in Greece, 2 in Italy, 35 in Yugoslavia, 11 in Holland, 1 in Norway, 3 in Sweden, 25 in the United States of America. The number of specialist dictionaries and glossaries is 109, and not 106 as mentioned in the Report.

(c) Translated and Original Literature: Up to the present there have been translated into Esperanto not only the greatest literary works by authors mentioned in the Report, but also the chief works of the literature of small countries, works which often are not translated into other national languages, not even in those of the great nations. Also the original literature in Esperanto is increasing from year to year. It should be noted that a number of works have been translated from Esperanto into national languages. The book by Alsberg on radio, originally written in Esperanto, has now been translated into 18 national languages. Works from Eastern European literature, for example works by Sienkiewicz, B. Prus, Orzeszko, Sierozzewski, Capek, Petřfi, Vazow and others, have been translated into Chinese from Esperanto translations. In this way Esperanto has played and continues to play an important rôle as a bridge-language. On the occasion of the General Conference of Unesco in Montevideo there is being organized an exhibition of Esperanto books, and every delegate will realize that the work done in this field is considerable and noteworthy.

The Congress requests the Director-General of Unesco to make known to the Member States this memorandum, and reconfirms the readiness of the Esperanto movement to help with all means at its disposal the realization of the great ideals for which Unesco was founded, and which correspond in all essentials to the ideals and objectives for which the Esperanto movement has been working, and which it has realized, during the past 66 years.

Haarlem, 7 August 1964

For the Presidium of the  
39th Universal Esperanto Congress

(signed) DAVID KENNEDY  
President"