**UN recognises Interpreters and Translators!**

May 24, 2017, was a great world day for language--a milestone. On that day, the United Nations General

Assembly unanimously adopted Resolution A/71/L.68. This resolution recognizes "the role of professional

Translation in connecting nations and fostering peace, understanding and development." (How cool is that.)

In the same resolution, the UN declared September 30 International Translation Day. Around the world,

translators and interpreters have celebrated that date for years, but now it is "ratified" and supported by the UN.

Enclosed is the news item.

24 MAY 2017

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

PLENARY

SEVENTY-FIRST SESSION, 82ND MEETING (AM)

General Assembly Adopts Texts on Professional Translation, Multilingualism, Participation by Observers in United Nations

Oceans Conference. Taking up three texts on the role of professional translation, and cooperation between the United

Nations and the International Organization of la Francophonie, the General Assembly adopted two draft resolutions and a

draft decision today. Acting without a vote, the Assembly adopted a draft resolution titled “The role of professional translation

in connection with nations and fostering peace, understanding and development”, deciding to declare

30 September International Translation Day.

By the terms of that text, the Assembly requested that the Secretary-General continue to preserve high quality and excellence

in the work of language professionals within the Organization, while affirming the important role  of professional translation in

upholding the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter.  Andrei Dapkiunas (Belarus) presented the draft,

emphasizing that its meaning and importance was much broader and deeper than simply demonstrating respect for a

profession closely linked to diplomacy and international affairs.  It was not about institutions or bodies; rather, it was first and

foremost about people, the invisible workers and unsung heroes of the linguistic profession.  Language played an

underappreciated role in human society, despite the fact that deeper respect for culture and language could help to forge

greater unity and build bridges  among civilizations and cultures, he said.

Gustavo Meza-Cuadra (Peru), speaking for the Group of Friends of Spanish, said the Group championed multilingualism as

a core United Nations value touching on all areas of the Organization’s work.  It influenced how the United Nations projected

itself to the world.  The Secretary-General’s associated report, titled “Multilingualism” (document A/71/757), detailed various

activities carried out in support of multilingualism, including the proposed terms of reference for a Coordinator of Multilingualism

who would be tasked with implementing  multilingualism in a consistent and coherent manner across the Organization.

Noting that human resources work across the Organization was generally  carried out in English and French, he called for

human resources information brochures to  be published in Spanish on Inspira.  He also welcomed the launch of the

United Nations iLibrary platform, expressing hope that additional languages would soon be featured on the site.  Hopefully,

the Department of Public Information would soon be able to provide coverage of intergovernmental meetings in all six official United Nations languages.  He welcomed enhanced efforts to recruit qualified Spanish-language translators and interpreters, as well as other professionals.
Acting again without a vote, the Assembly also adopted the draft titled “Cooperation between the United Nations and the International Organization of la Francophonie” (document A/71/L.69), noting with satisfaction the continued strengthening of cooperation between the two organizations on human rights and gender equality.  Expressing its deep concern over continuing violations of human rights and international humanitarian law, the Assembly welcomed the implementation of the May 2014 cooperation agreement between the International Organization of la Francophonie and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). Also by the text, the Assembly noted with satisfaction the developing collaboration between the United Nations and the International Organization of la Francophonie on electoral monitoring and assistance.  Noting that a large number of civilian and military United Nations peacekeeping personnel were deployed in francophone countries, the Assembly encouraged efforts to increase the number and capacities of French-speaking civilian and military contingents. By further terms of the text, the Assembly decided that it would consider cooperation between the United Nations and the International Organization of la Francophonie during its seventy-third session.
Zina Andrianarivelo-Razafy (Madagascar) submitted the text, emphasized that linguistic diversity in peacekeeping missions was essential to success on the ground.  The resolution encouraged the promotion of exchanges and interactions between the two organizations, and stressed the commitment of francophone countries to supporting upcoming intergovernmental processes, including those relating to safe, orderly and regular migration, and the imminent United Nations Conference on Oceans.
Patricia Herdt, International Organization of la Francophonie, emphasized that entity’s unwavering commitment to addressing major international issues, saying it had positioned itself as a powerful source for action.  The resolution reflected efforts by both organizations to ensure that their actions were better coordinated and their solutions tangible. In a final action, the Assembly also adopted, once again without a vote, the draft decision “Sustainable development: Oceans and the law of the sea” (document A/71/L.72), by which the Assembly decided to accredit and invite organizations previously identified by the Secretariat to participate as observers in the work of the United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14.