

The wall of Peace

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I need to present myself. I am a senior scientist at CNRS, France. I work in planetology and in space weather. My last scientific papers are on Ganymede, Mars, Jupiter and the Earth.

In 2003, I chaired the first European network on Space Weather, COST 724, with participants of 24 countries. From the beginning, I assigned five goals to this group (on top of doing good science of course): an international journal, an international portal, a European space weather center, an annual international meeting and a European definition of Space Weather. All goals were reached and in November this year, we will celebrate the tenth anniversary of the European Space Weather Week (<http://www.stce.be/esww10/>).

Already in 2003, I was not happy with the US National Space Weather Plan definition : *Conditions on the sun and in the solar wind, magnetosphere, ionosphere, and thermosphere that can influence the performance and reliability of space-borne and ground-based technological systems and can endanger human life or health.*

Indeed, this definition confuses the environment (or the weather) and the discipline. It also uses scientific words unknown from the public. But most of it, it is based on fear through "endanger human life or health". In my group, many had already experienced war, or their families had (like me), and we were not at all afraid to die because of a solar flare. Finally, this definition puts no emphasis on the understanding the Universe, on the knowledge, which is in our point of view the first motivation for doing research. After 3 years, we finally came to an agreement approved officially by representatives of 24 countries and ESA:

Space weather is the physical and phenomenological state of natural space environments. The associated discipline aims, through observation, monitoring, analysis and modelling, at understanding and predicting the state of the sun, the interplanetary and planetary environments, and the solar and non-solar driven perturbations that affect them; and also at forecasting and nowcasting the possible impacts on biological and technological systems.

I asked to all my colleagues to translate it in their own languages. Indeed, I find it of prime importance that all the cultures can access the concepts in their own words. Over the years, anytime I met someone speaking another language, I used to ask her/him a translation. It turned out to become an exciting exercise because in several languages, words had (and have) to be invented. Therefore, it looks to me as if the people doing the translation are making a precious gift to their language-speaking people and, using "big words", to Mankind.

With the 10th anniversary of the European Space Weather Week approaching, we thought that all the translations (more are coming) should be printed on a poster, one poster per language, all the same size, the same colour, and be posted on a big wall at the entrance of the meeting. All the languages (or as much as possible) telling the same scientific message altogether. Proving that through science, we can say the same things still with a great respect to the cultural differences. This is why this wall will be called it the "wall of peace".

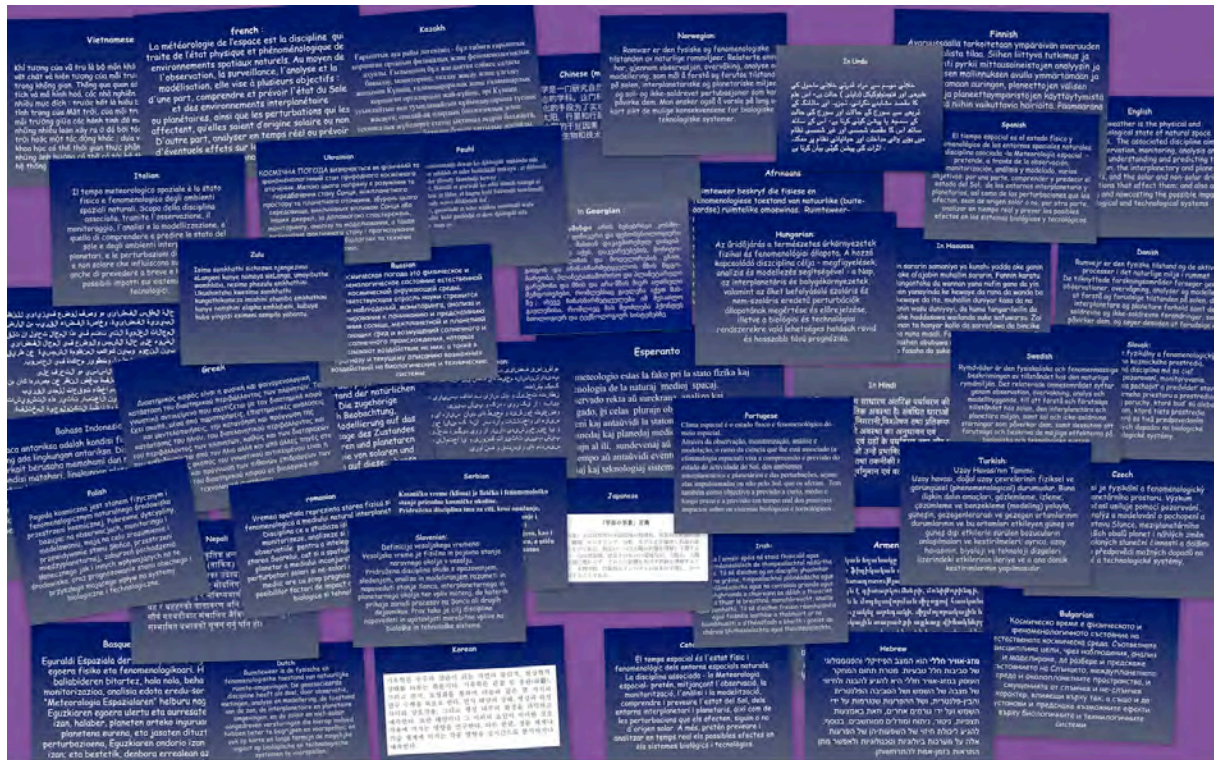
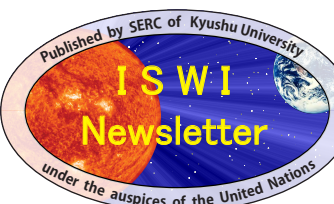


Figure 1: This is a blend of the languages that we actually have. The wall of peace will look very different, since all the languages will be printed with the same size of characters, same colors and the same size of posters.

We are now putting a lot of efforts in gathering many languages. Not only European ones, but from all over the world. Africa, Asia, Oceania. Not only from Western countries but from all the countries. All People are equal, all languages must be respected. We now have 44 languages from all the continents, and we will reach much more by the 10th European Space Weather Week in November, 2013.



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