
Document 9



WAGGGS / WOSM Relationships



**36th
World Scout
Conference**

**36e Conférence
Mondiale
du Scoutisme**

H E L L A S 2 0 0 2

Conference Documents

- 1 - Provisional Agenda
- 2 - Rules of Procedure
- 3 - Registration Fee System
- 4 - A Strategy for Scouting: The Proposed Concept
- 4a - A Strategy for Scouting: Working Methods at the Conference
- 5 - World Scout Committee Elections
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Background

Fact-Finding Study

1. You will recall that the 30th WAGGGS World Conference in Dublin in July 1999 adopted a resolution on “Long Term Vision”, which included a recommendation that *“there should be a joint study that would analyse the present situation of WAGGGS and WOSM and examine joint options for the future”*. Later in July, the World Scout Committee informed the 36th World Scout Conference in Durban of its decision *“to undertake, in consultation with the WAGGGS World Board, a fact-finding study”* aiming at *“identifying the relevant issues if a long-term vision of one new world organization were to be considered, noting in particular the implications for WOSM at all levels”*.

The World Scout Committee requested Mr. John Beresford, former Chairman of the Committee, to carry out the fact-finding study for WOSM, which he completed in September 2000.

Report on Fact-Finding Study

2. At its meeting in October 2000, the World Scout Committee considered carefully Mr. Beresford’s report on the fact-finding study. As a result, it concluded that while *“a unification [with WAGGGS] would unquestionably be an important historical event which may, in the long term, be beneficial for Scouting and Guiding– this would be a major undertaking which would have to overcome a large number of obstacles and solve many practical problems”*. It therefore agreed that before deciding on future steps, it needed to have the opinion of the WOSM members. Consequently, the Committee sent a circular to all national associations (Circular 27/2000) to which was attached the Beresford Report (which was also placed on the web), together with a short questionnaire which associations were asked to answer by March 1, 2001 *“to enable the Committee to take into account the views of its WOSM Members when reaching a decision on how to further proceed on this important subject”* at its next meeting in April 2001. The World Committee’s Circular concluded by stating that *“In the meantime, the World Scout Committee will propose to the WAGGGS World Board to pursue dialogue on this matter within the WAGGGS/WOSM Consultative Committee”*.

Questionnaire to national associations

Informal exploratory discussions with WAGGGS

3. The WAGGGS World Board accepted the World Scout Committee’s proposal to pursue dialogue and a meeting was therefore held in Pax Lodge in London on 14 January 2001. The meeting, which was an informal exploratory discussion without any commitment in relation to the future, aimed at encouraging better understanding between the two world organizations; it considered the questions of mission, educational methods and fundamental principles within both organizations, on the basis of informal preparatory papers that had been drafted for that purpose. The meeting also agreed to formally reinstate the Consultative Committee which would hold its next meeting in Prague in July 2001 on the occasion of the European Conference. In order to avoid misunderstandings or create false expectations and in a spirit of complete transparency, it was agreed that the minutes of the meeting would be circulated to all Member Organizations and placed on the web sites of WOSM and WAGGGS; this has become the standard procedure for all the following meetings.

Results of questionnaire to national associations

4. At its meeting in April 2001, the World Scout Committee considered the response to the questionnaire which it had circulated to all national associations; a total of 81 responses had been received. The first question of the questionnaire was *“Do you believe that the creation of one new world organization through unification with WAGGGS would strengthen our ability to achieve our mission as an educational movement for young people and that the study of this option should be pursued?”*. The other questions set down the main criteria that should apply if this option were to be pursued.

Decision of World Committee

The position of the World Scout Committee following consideration of the responses was summarized in a circular sent to all national associations in April 2001 (Circular 14/2001), in which the Committee pointed out that *“It has studied the answers carefully and noted that the question mentioned above was a controversial one within WOSM and that no consensus exists on the subject. However, what was most encouraging was the strong agreement expressed by respondents on the criteria that should apply if a mandate were to be given, at any stage, to open negotiations.*

While the World Scout Committee has accordingly decided not to pursue the question of a merger with WAGGGS until the meeting of its governing body, the World Scout Conference in 2002, at which the question will be considered, it will continue to work to enhance mutual understanding and is ready to assist WAGGGS to clarify their options of their own Long Term Vision identified at their World Conference in Dublin in 1999 and to understand the implications of a possible merger, so that the discussion at the World Scout Conference in 2002 may be better informed”.

Enhancing mutual understanding

5. The process of enhancing mutual understanding between the two organizations continued with the publication, in June, on the web sites of WOSM and WAGGGS, of three informal discussion/background papers, developed jointly by a member of the World Scout Committee and a member of the WAGGGS World Board. The three papers, dealing respectively with *Missions, Educational Methods* and *Fundamental Principles*, were intended to serve as an aid to understanding each organization’s approach.
6. The following month, the Consultative Committee met, as scheduled, in Prague on 6 July before the European Conferences. The main items on the agenda included an update on the activities since the meeting in January, an exploration of WAGGGS’ Long Term Vision and the option of one new world organization; potential structures of a new world organization (role, organization, membership/application) and future steps (including presentations to the joint European Conference). The Consultative Committee agreed to meet again in London on 8 December.
7. The Consultative Committee met again in Pax Lodge in London on 8 December to pursue discussions aiming at enhancing understanding, which had proved to be very useful, whether or not they decided to create one new world organization in the future.

Decision of WAGGGS World Board of October 2001

An important item on the agenda of this meeting concerned a decision taken by the WAGGGS World Board in October 2001, which is summarized in a WAGGGS World Bureau Circular of November 2001 (the full text of the circular is attached).

- 7.1 The WAGGGS circular begins with the following statement *“The Board made a unanimous decision at its meeting in early October NOT to ask the World Conference to make a decision on the Long Term Vision at this stage”*. The WOSM representatives sought clarification from WAGGGS of the meaning and implications of the decision, expressing concern that continued dialogue without a timetable would be an inappropriate use of scarce resources. The WAGGGS representatives explained that this decision had been motivated by the WAGGGS World Board’s consideration of what is best for girls and young women; the full discussion at all the WAGGGS Regional Conferences had revealed a great diversity of views within WAGGGS. There was insufficient information at this stage relating to how the option of a common future with WOSM would be in the best interest of girls and young women. Consequently, a decision on this question at the WAGGGS World Conference in Manila in June 2002 would be premature; the World Board was consciously and positively seeking further exploration of the possibilities of a common future.
- 7.2 The WAGGGS Circular mentions that the World Board agreed to *“continue discussion with WOSM to further explore aspects of an allied future”*; the description of the “allied future”, which is made in the circular, includes among other aspects *“The exploration of new structures at world and regional level that do not impose new structures at national level”* (underlined in text).

Concerning this matter of national structures, it is important to note that, in the questionnaire sent by the World Scout Committee in October 2000 (mentioned in paragraphs 2 and 4 above) one of the criteria set by the Committee for pursuing the option of creating one new world organization (Question B3) was that *“At national level, a single world organization would require the setting up of one national organization in each of its member countries. While these could take various forms (either a fully integrated national organization or a federation of national associations), they will all need to be united at national level within one legal entity which would constitute the only recognized national organization within the country”*.

This criterion is fundamentally different from WAGGGS’ description of an allied future that does not involve new structures at national level.

The future

8. In conclusion, the World Scout Committee wishes to emphasize that it understands WAGGGS’ need for more time to consider its Long Term Vision and does not wish to put any pressure on its sister organization. This is the reason why the Committee has agreed not to ask the World Conference to make a decision on this subject at this stage, although it would of course welcome a discussion of this subject in Thessaloniki.

The World Scout Committee will continue its dialogue with WAGGGS within the Consultative Committee to enhance mutual understanding and strengthen cooperation, and will continue to provide periodical information to national associations on the progress being made. In case concrete proposals arise out of this dialogue, national associations will be duly consulted. The next World Scout Conference in 2005 will receive a complete report on WAGGGS/WOSM relationships including any concrete proposals that may have been agreed.

W.B.3200
November 2001

FOR INFORMATION

WORLD BUREAU CIRCULAR

TO: All Member Organizations

FROM: Lesley Bulman



Founder
Robert Baden-Powell
First Baron Baden-Powell of Gilwell, OM

World Chief Guide 1930 - 1977
Olave, Lady Baden-Powell, GBE

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LONG TERM VISION **Information Sheet**

The Board made a unanimous decision at its meeting in early October NOT to ask the World Conference to make a decision on the Long Term Vision at this stage. It decided:

In light of:

- ◆ The need to accommodate the diversity of all our Member Organizations and to ensure that all equally understand the issues, options and consequences of a new future;
- ◆ The work achieved by the Consultative Committee in building trust and co-operation between both world organizations;
- ◆ The importance of keeping WAGGGS united around our diversity and across borders;

The World Board agreed to:

- ◆ Make no recommendations to the 31st World Conference on the Long Term Vision
- ◆ Implement further strategies to strengthen WAGGGS
- ◆ Continue discussion with WOSM to further explore aspects of an allied future.

This is a positive decision, based on the need:

- to ensure WAGGGS remains united. The Board is confident that, in time, a way forward can be found that will be understood and accepted by ALL Member Organizations.
- for WAGGGS Member Organizations to have more concrete information so that they are clear on the practical consequences of any decision on the Long Term Vision
- to investigate more thoroughly a possible new world organization with WOSM
- to continue to build the relationship with WOSM
- to strengthen WAGGGS so future decisions are based on strength

An 'allied future' means:

- One new world organization with the Scouts is still on the agenda
- The actual structure and format of an allied future continue to be discussed by the Consultative Committee
- The exploration of new structures at world and regional levels that do not impose new structures at national level.
- Exploring ways of work that ensure leadership by women and appropriate policies and procedures agreed by our current Membership
- Enabling excellent programmes to be developed for girls-only, boys-only and co-educational groups.

The process of looking at Long Term Vision with WOSM continues. Work is progressing well with the Consultative Committee so we are not making artificial deadlines, however there will be a finite end to the process.



LESLEY BULMAN
Director, World Bureau

November 2001