



World Scout Centre promotes peace

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Scouts learn, discuss and understand the critical needs of young people worldwide.

At the heart of the World Scout Centre is the display and exhibition area for Scouting around the world.

World Scouting presents broad themes encompassing a culture of peace, including gifts for peace, education for all and reducing the digital divide.

"It's a small world here. We can see an entire world in one place," says Tabouche Sourmia, 16, of Algeria.

The centre offers exciting and interactive activities where Scouts can send peace messages through drawings, photos and videos. In one drawing, Scouts from Russia describe the world as beautiful. The best are then uploaded to the World Scouting site, www.scout.org

World Scouting is grouped into six continental regions: Africa, Arab, Asia-Pacific, Eurasia, Europe and Inter-america. Around the regions, there are 28 million Scouts in 215 countries and territories.

Among regional flagship projects at the centre is the Amahoro Amani of Africa, a peace education project that combats ethnic prejudice in the continent's Great Lakes Region.

The Arab Region sees a project for one million working children in Egypt as its paramount undertaking. Sea Scouts in Egypt help more than 1,500 children in improving their working conditions.

Asia-Pacific Region's peace baton, now on display at the centre, has been held by more than 150,000 people in many countries.

As a symbol of worldwide solidarity after the tsunami in 2004, Scouts raised US\$800,000 to fund 55 projects. Local Scouts helped victims in worst-hit countries around the Indian Ocean.

Gifts for Peace

At the centre, visitors will find the greatest gifts Scouts can offer to their communities. Many of these projects were launched on the 1st of August.

In 2002, the World Organization of the Scout Movement (WOSM) endorsed the idea of creating projects as a meaningful way of celebrating the Scouting centenary. Since then, millions of Scouts in more than 110 countries have risen to the challenge.

They created 130 projects focusing mainly on managing conflict without violence, challenging prejudice and encouraging greater solidarity between WOSM and other organizations.

Among the gifts for peace projects:

- In Brazil, Scouts educate young people to avoid any firearms, even toy guns. They show ways of resolving conflict through dialogue and compromise.
- Canadian Scouts improve cultural differences to reduce racism, and they have created a website called Cultural Connections Collection to promote this.
- Scouts in New Zealand raise awareness on skin cancer, combatting obesity, psychological, physical and substance abuse, and the growing problem of young people committing suicide.
- In Slovakia, Scouts are helping the Roma minority by establishing a special group and an educational programme tailored to their community's needs.
- Since the Darfur crisis began in July 2003, Scouts in Sudan are managing camps for internally displaced people. They distribute food and raise awareness on health issues.

Scouts of the World Award

Volunteers and ISTs at the centre enthusiastically explain the Scouts of the World Award. The award prepares young adults for global citizenship in three core themes: environment, development and peace.

At the centre, Scouts can join a debate at the World Scout Forum corner. For those aspiring to be "president of World Scouting", he or she has to convince an audience of their position with a one-minute speech on a specific world issue.

The centre offers other activity areas to discuss the rights of children. Also, don't miss the corner for Rovering and write something about what Rovers do in your country. In many nations, Rovers are Scouting programmes for young people who are 18 to 25 years old.

World Scouting also includes volunteers and leaders. There's an area for volunteers and a special lounge where both groups can relax after a long hard day. That's a way of saying World Scouting cares for everyone.