



First Scouts of the World Discovery in Finland

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The very first Scouts of the World Discovery in Finland took place in Helsinki from 8 to 11 May 2009, with 23 enthusiastic Rover Scouts from all across the country willing to face our common global challenges in the fields of environment, sustainable development and peace. Most of the participants will complete their SW Award with a Voluntary Service by taking actively part in reforestation, construction and environmental education at a scout camp in Senegal in Summer 2009. A Rover Scout group of four will design their individual SW Voluntary Service projects, too.

The SW Discovery began on the 8 of May as two tents were put up at the beautiful Rastila Camping site, at the coast of the capital city of Helsinki and just 18 minutes from the city centre by the underground - a symbolic step towards a more socially active Scout Movement in Finland. Evening meal ready and done, the participants presented each other the Millennium Development Goals and were challenged to develop a personal feeling towards them by arguing and casting votes.

Saturday - Europe Day - was opened with activities concerning environment followed by a climate change forum prepared by the Climate Expert of the Finnish Association for Nature Conservation. After lunch, the participants visited the headquarters of two organisations, now in the fields of development and peace: The Finnish Non-Governmental Development Co-Operation Organisation Platform to the EU, Kehys, and the pacifist organisation The Committee of 100. The experiences were shared together in a vivid discussion before the dinner. The theme of development was deepened and the hope for individual possibilities for changing the world encouraged during the evening activities.

Sunday and sunshine on the National Mothers' Day, it was time for the last but not the least important area of the Scouts of the World Discovery: peace. The participants travelled not only through a Forest of Peace Proverbs but also to the planet Gaia with the Paralleia 5000 space-time capsule. In a role play, they attended the Peoples' Assembly in search for a better world in a multicultural environment. Before conclusions there was also time for discussing SW Voluntary Service and individual projects ?even for picking a bunch of flowers for all the mothers in the world, a Finnish tradition.

On Monday the participants had the possibility to share their newly developed ideas with Finnish Youth Delegates to the United Nations in a youth panel, followed by MDG-related activities. The panel was organised by the International Affairs Committee of the Capital Region District (The Guides and Scouts of Finland) and students from the High School in Munkkiniemi.

The SW Discovery was possible thanks to wonderful ideas provided by the Finnish Youth Co-Operation - Allianssi ?network, British Council ? Finland and EEDF (Eclaireuses Eclaireurs de France). Several active and selfless individuals helped organising the event.

A participant shared his thoughts on the SW Discovery: "For me, the weekend had the effect I think it was supposed to have - a feeling that I can personally make a difference in the world"

This article was prepared by Tom Henriksson, a Rover Scout in charge of the First Scouts of the World Discovery in Finland. The photo was produced by Mikko Roininen, participant.

For more information on how to obtain the Scouts of the World Award visit: www.scoutsoftheworld.net

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