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Creating a Better World

World Organization of the Scout Movement
Organisation Mondiale du Mouvement Scout
Всемирная Организация Скаутского Движения
Organización Mundial del Movimiento Scout
المنظمة العالمية للحركة الكشفية

**Chairman Simon Rhee
Address to the
40th World Scout Conference**

Dear Brother and Sister Scouts,

Good afternoon and welcome to the 40th World Scout Conference here in Ljubljana, Slovenia.

It gives me great pleasure and it is a true honour to stand here before you as the Chairperson of the World Scout Committee. It is over three years since our last Conference in Brazil. Many things have changed since then, both inside and outside the Movement. Our task here together over the next few days is to see how we can continue to develop the Scout Movement to be relevant and contribute to society in trying and testing times in order to fulfil our mission of "contributing to create a better world".

But before I go any further let me extend my warmest thanks, on behalf of the World Scout Committee, the World Scout Bureau and all Scouts gathered as well as worldwide, to the Slovenian NSO for their warm welcome here in Ljubljana and for their great efforts in preparing this 40th Conference and the 12th World Scout Youth Forum last week which, by all accounts, was a great success.

As hosts you have already done a wonderful job and we are grateful to you for your hospitality. We are looking forward to our time ahead together.

Thank you.

I have no doubt that in the coming days we will have an opportunity to engage in fruitful discussions, enjoy some warm hospitality and adopt positive resolutions to help lead our Movement over the next three years.

And we have much to discuss and much to decide. This is our chance to speak with one another, listen to each other and together, decide on the future direction of the Scout Movement.

Just before we look ahead, it is my duty and honour to look back at the last triennium and the work achieved by Scouts worldwide, the World Scout Committee and the World Scout Bureau, as well as the Regional offices and the many National Scout Organizations, and of course all the Adult volunteers that are so vital to Scouting.

If I look back at the last triennium, I can confidently say that we have achieved a great deal.

Of course it has not been without its difficulties and sacrifices along the way, but we have progressed as an organisation. And for this I must thank my World Scout Committee members for their support, trust, leadership and involvement. Without their strong leadership and backing, we would not have taken some of the more difficult, but decisive decisions that we have.

Thank you.

One key strategic decision we took was the opening of a World Scout Bureau office in Kuala Lumpur to serve as a shared services centre. This new office means that with our six Regional Offices and two shared service centres, we have an increased capacity to better serve the NSOs by being closer to their needs and realities.

On behalf of the World Scout Committee my thanks to the team involved in the logistics for their determined approach to this task. We are opening up a new frontier of Scouting in the East and I am sure it will be a success.

I would now like to turn and look at the **four Priority Working Areas** that the World Scout Committee boldly passed at the last Conference in Brazil in 2011 and that we have been working on over the past three years.

I would like to highlight the strategic importance associated with these Priority Working Areas for the Scouts.

Firstly, we have **Our Strategic Path**.

This was a bold decision for the development of a clear and focused strategy for the world bodies – **Vision 2023** and the **World Triennium Planning System**. Thanks to the Our Strategic Path Working Group, we have developed proposals for the World Scout Conference in collaboration with the other three Priority Area Working Groups. We have a renewed strategy for World Scouting that will come before this Conference and with it, a new Vision statement:

“By 2023, Scouting will be the world’s leading educational youth movement, enabling 100 million young people to be active citizens creating positive change in their communities base on shared values”.

What do you think? Is it achievable? Yes, of course it is! With your help, your enthusiasm and our Scouting values we can make this dream a reality.

Under the **Vision 2023** we have five Strategic Priorities. Let me touch upon them briefly now.

1. One - Youth Engagement.

Our Movement is focused on youth, it is based on youth, it is about youth. So it is no surprise that this is a number one priority. In consultation with the NSOs we have developed a position paper entitled “Unlocking our potential”. We will present this here in Slovenia for decision and I urge you to back it. Youth symbolizes our Movement and it is the future of the Movement. Without youth we are nothing. If our intention is to increase our membership to 100 million members by 2023 it must be focused on youth. It was the core and foundation of the Scout Movement and the dream of Robert Baden-Powell – let us get behind it and mobilize the youth of today to grow our Movement for the benefit of society at large.

2. Two - Educational Methods.

It is important that we have well-structured and well-managed youth programmes to drive our message home through education. The work we have achieved over the last triennium has been good. But there is more to do and I urge you to get behind this in all the Regions. Thank you to the Working Groups involved in this to date and carry on the good work.

3. Three - Diversity and Inclusion.

Unfortunately our world today is still divided by many issues and problems. The Scout Movement overrides such divisions. While there are issues in many countries all over the world, the work of Scouts to bring together different religions and societies and to help in times of need is, as never before, needed. Use your contacts, your resources and your skills to help improve diversity and inclusion in your societies.

4. Four - Social Impact.

It is vital that we have a real impact on today's society. Nowhere more do I see this true as with the Messengers of Peace Initiative. No other recent Scout programme has driven such change and has such potential. Working towards creating a real understanding and true peace at local level through MoP is vital for this.

5. Five - Communications and External Relations, underpinned by Governance.

It is important that we communicate the values and the true meaning of Scouting. In today's busy world, we are competing with many other youth movements and with the rise of social media – it is important that we communicate both amongst each other and to the wider world. Our Values as Scouts, what we stand for and what we can achieve together, must be communicated to the wider society and world. For this we must use our communications network and different channels, which are increasingly being driven by social media. Here we have made great strides. Our new website and our new social media channels are growing and will continue to be hugely important for us. So thank you to those involved in developing our new social media platforms to help us achieve this. You have done good work, but of course there is always more to do!

The second Priority Working Area was **Youth for Change**.

Thanks to consultations with our NSOs, we have updated the World Scout Youth Involvement Policy that will be presented here at this Conference for decision. I urge you to support it. Our Movement is based around guiding and educating young people stretching right back to the ideals of our founder Robert Baden-Powell. We should not lose sight of this.

The third Priority Working Area was **21st Century Leadership**.

A draft concept paper on Leadership Development in Scouting has been prepared based on the efforts of the Working Group during the triennium and a Conference Resolution will be submitted on "Leadership Development in the Youth Programme". Leadership will continue to be at the fore of everything we do in Scouting, to help develop clearly focused, strong individuals with the necessary skills to lead and show true leadership. Again our Founder, Robert Baden-Powell, was a great believer in developing leadership and leadership values in youth. At every level of the Scout pyramid, it is about learning to become a leader. Our 21st Century Leadership programme has been key in driving home this message. Thank you to those involved and please keep up the good work.

Last but not least, we come to the fourth Priority Working Area, **Global Support**.

Here again, as in the other three Priority Working Areas, the Working Group associated with Global Support has been very busy. They have developed a Global Support Assessment Tool that I know

some of the NSOs have already experienced. This tool will help NSOs become even better structured and efficient as we strive for our target of 100 million Scouts as part of Vision 2023.

Let me thank all those involved in the Priority Area Working Groups for your hard work.

Thank you.

Of course, in addition to these four Areas, many regular Scouting events have taken place over the last three and one-half years. I cannot mention them all here but my highlights would include; the 1st World Scout Education Congress in Hong Kong in 2013, the 22nd World Scout Jamboree in Sweden in 2011, our annual JOTA-JOTI events and the 14th World Scout Moot in Canada in 2013.

Then of course I must add our great new peace initiative - Messengers of Peace – and for this I extend a special word of thanks to the World Scout Foundation for their tireless efforts in helping with financial support the MoP project.

Thank you.

Let me now end with a few mentions of those that have been working tirelessly over the last three years in support of our goals from the last World Scout Conference.

Thank you to my fellow World Scout Committee members. In particular I must reference our outgoing Committee members, who are not eligible for re-election – Wahid, John May and John Neysmith, and Oscar. Without your strong support and views we would not have achieved what we have over the last triennium. For this I am eternally grateful.

Thank you also to the World Scout Bureau for your strong leadership in difficult times.

Thank you also to the all Regional Offices who have listened, implemented and driven forward the Scout movement and our policies in the various regions.

And thank you to all the NSOs who have continued with their support of our Movement, and implementation of our policy decisions.

And last but not least thank you to all of you fellow Scouts that make up the Movement. Your hard work, enthusiasm and continued drive to create a better world in sometimes most challenging times are very much appreciated.

And now, fellow Brother and Sister Scouts, before I pass the floor to Scott Teare, Secretary General of the World Organization of the Scout Movement, I ask you to please stand and pay tribute to those that have Gone Home since we last met - especially for a close friend and member of the World Scout Committee, Mr Eric Koo.

Please join me in a minute of silence.

Thank you.

Simon Rhee, Chairman, World Scout Committee