

**7th WORLD SCOUT  
YOUTH FORUM  
SUMMARY REPORT  
AND  
RECOMMENDATIONS**

**DOCUMENT**

# PART ONE

## SUMMARY REPORT

### INTRODUCTION

The 7<sup>th</sup> World Scout Youth Forum was held at Michaelhouse, Balgowan, South Africa, from 19-22 July 1999. It was the second Forum linked to the World Scout Conference.

113 young people, comprising 77 delegates and 36 observers from 53 countries, participated in this event. Only 5 of the 6 WOSM regions were represented, since unfortunately Eurasia was unable to be present.

The distribution of participants among the regions was as follows:

- 23 from the African Region (13 out of 34 countries)
- 6 from the Arab Region (4 out of 19 countries)
- 33 from the Asia-Pacific Region (11 out of 23 countries)
- 40 from the European Region (20 out of 40 countries)
- 11 from the Interamerican Region (5 out of 31 countries).

These figures are very encouraging and there is a better balance among the regions than previously.

It is extremely important to note that 75% of the Forum participants are present at the Conference.

Two countries, Mozambique and Bhutan, which will hopefully be recognised as members of WOSM at this Conference, sent observers to the Forum.

This Forum offered young people the opportunity to discuss and express their views on subjects of interest to them, to prepare inputs and recommendations for the World Scout Conference and the World Scout Committee and to develop skills to enable them to participate actively in the decision-making process.

The working methods were varied and participative, with brief introductory sessions in plenary and longer sessions in small groups. International teams were established to ensure that members got to know each other well and were able to have in-depth discussions.

During this Forum, there was a remarkable level of open-mindedness and mutual respect. Despite the fact that we are young and could not always agree on certain issues, we were able to live like one big family speaking the same language.

In this report, we give a brief presentation of the issues covered during this Forum and the general conclusions which emerged from it.

## **HUMAN RIGHTS**

As Scouts, and thus world citizens, we considered it essential to examine the role of our Movement and our personal responsibility in promoting human rights in our various countries.

It is our duty to ensure that the Universal Declaration is made truly meaningful to young people and to put the respect for human rights at the heart of our educational proposals, in accordance with our fundamental principles.

During this Forum, one evening was dedicated to discussions on this topic. Several associations presented their actions in this field.

The various subjects covered were:

- Children affected by war - Croatia
- Anti-personnel mines - Switzerland
- Family vegetable gardens - South Africa
- The right to be different - United Kingdom
- Children's rights - Thailand
- The right to be educated – Belgium

Through these workshops, the participants discovered that what might be considered a basic right in some countries might not necessarily be so in others. These discussions provided ideas for new actions which could be launched at home. In this way, each participant was made aware of the real issues involved in promoting human rights in different countries.

## **ESSENTIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF SCOUTING**

This Forum session was planned in order to prepare young participants for the discussions on Scouting's mission statement at the World Scout Conference.

When asked what Scouting meant to them and what it had brought them, participants emphasised the following key ideas:

- The importance of a movement based on non-formal educational methods;
- An opportunity offered to young people to reach their full potential in all areas of personal growth.

A member of the World Scout Committee, and member of the Forum Planning Committee, then presented Forum Document 3, "The Essential Characteristics of Scouting".

Each participant had the opportunity to discuss one of the 9 characteristics in the document in international teams. They were then able to ask questions of clarification to a panel composed of members of the World Scout Committee and World Scout Bureau who had been involved in preparing this document.

## YOUTH PARTICIPATION

The World Scout Conference, held in Bangkok in 1993, adopted a policy on youth participation in decision-making, affirming that: "Scouting is a Movement of young people, supported by adults: it is not a Movement for young people managed by adults only. Thus, Scouting offers the potential for a learning community of young people and adults, working together in a partnership of enthusiasm and experience".

This idea of partnership is not necessarily obvious. For this reason, the Forum devoted two sessions to the topic of youth participation.

During the first of these sessions, the participants were invited to share their experiences relating to youth participation in decision-making at all levels of their organisation, from local to world level. They were asked to identify the various obstacles involved, as well as ways of transforming these obstacles into opportunities.

Amongst the obstacles identified by the young people were:

- A lack of communication among youth representatives at national level and young people at local level;
- A lack of open-mindedness on the part of adults;
- Tokenism;
- A lack of unity among different countries and cultures;
- A lack of motivation on the part of young people.

Amongst the opportunities:

- Partnership among young adults and adults in the decision-making process;
- A desire for change;
- Training and support for young adults and adults to overcome communication barriers.

During the second session, the participants worked on case studies in teams. For each case, they tried to find a solution based on the notion of partnership between young people and older people.

Some positive points noted by the young people were:

- Designing a training system for young adult leaders to enable them to play a more active role in their associations;
- Increasing the participation of young people at world level;
- Establishing a democratic system;
- Working together for change rather than working independently;
- Using the ideas from the World Scout Youth Forum to run workshops at national level.

And some negative ones:

- Young people do not play an important role in the decision-making process;
- Adults pretend to listen to young people, but often they do not follow this up with action or fulfil requests made to them;
- Decision-making bodies are often too bureaucratic and far removed from everyday Scouting.

This session aimed at preparing participants for the World Scout Conference and their return to their associations.

## **HOW SCOUTS IMAGINE THE FUTURE**

Nowadays, dreaming is often considered utopian. However, a Scout's dreams are often transformed into concrete projects. It is only a question of the time needed to transform these dreams into projects.

During our Forum, the young people indulged in dreaming - imagining what the future could bring to our Movement.

Each group was asked to present its dreams in the form of a mascot called a "BHAG" (a big, hairy, audacious goal!).

Here are some of the dreams expressed by the participants:

- Scouting existing in all countries and truly open to all young people;
- Scouting making the best use of new technologies to develop communication among different national organisations;
- Scouting recognised by the United Nations as a movement building peace;
- Scouting as a partner and supporter of different humanitarian actions and socio-cultural integration;
- A movement focused on young people and children;
- A movement offering educational programmes closely linked to life outdoors and in which nature occupies an important place in educational proposals;
- Scouting which is up-to-date and trendy;
- A movement which preserves its image and represents a community of young male and female citizens committed to their local communities, rather than a club for adults and young people who want to save the world from all its misfortunes;
- One world organisation uniting men and women in Scouting is an idea held by some participants who wish to implement it rapidly, and by others who consider it a long-term vision, whereas others prefer to preserve a variety of proposals.

Some of these dreams are undoubtedly rather wild, but we have plenty of time!

## OPEN FORUM

One Forum session was devoted to discussing topics proposed by the participants themselves. Each participant was invited to choose 2 of the 7 topics proposed. After a brief introduction by the young people who had proposed the topic, there was an open discussion.

The list of discussion topics was:

- Scouting and religion

Proposed by Axel Marion, Switzerland, and run by Mary Metcalf, Australia

To share different views on the relationship between Scouting and religion based on experiences in different associations.

- Scouting and armed conflict

Proposed by Prossy Molly Njabi, Uganda, and run by Amged Aboul-Fotoh, Egypt

To discuss the causes of armed conflict, consequences for populations and what Scouts can do in this context.

- A youth declaration for Scouting

Proposed by Valéry Pitra, France, and run by Fernando J. Piaz-Lopez, Mexico

To define who we are as young people in Scouting and identify our own needs, so that we can put our ideas into practice through Scouting.

- Scouting and street children

Proposed by Marie-Virginie Mbulbnum, Cameroun, and run by Tyler Arrell, Canada

To discuss the causes and consequences of the phenomenon of street children and enable participants to identify what Scouts can do to help solve this problem.

- Cooperation between men and women in Scouting

Proposed by Anders Vej-Hansen, Denmark, and run by Pau Noguera Bord, Spain

To share views on coeducation and ways of promoting equal opportunities and the sharing of responsibilities between men and women within WOSM.

- Scouting and youth violence

Proposed by Jonathan Fulkerson, USA, and run by Borre Gunnerund, Norway

To analyse violence among young people in numerous countries and discuss what Scouting can do about this problem.

- Cross-cultural differences in Scouting

Proposed by Chanyaswad Nithivadee, Thailand, and run by Hsiao-May Wang, Brazil

To discuss cultural differences, problems which may arise from them and ways in which Scouting can help each individual to understand his or her own culture better, as well as respect that of others.

It was not intended that each Open Forum session should reach a consensus, but merely that it should enable participants to exchange different opinions on the proposed topics.

## **WORKSHOPS**

At a later stage during the Forum, 4 workshops were proposed and run by the participants. Their main purpose was to offer participants the opportunity to exchange their experiences on concrete projects undertaken in their Scout association.

The following subjects were discussed:

- Practical decision-making process  
(by Amged Aboul-Fotoh, Egypt)

This method was developed to help Scouts make their own decisions by following a specific process presented in the form of a diagram.

- The participation of Scouts in youth councils  
(by Pau Nogera Borel, Spain)

To define how Scouts could participate in national youth councils and identify the main contributions which Scouts could make to these councils.

- Community development projects  
(by Stephen Razafindratsima, Madagascar)

To present community development projects as a means of enabling young people to become more aware of problems in their own country.

- The Scout Honor Society "Order of the Arrow"  
(by Will Porker, USA)

To share with Forum participants the benefits of the "Order of the Arrow" and the methods it uses to serve Scouting efficiently.

The workshops gave participants a chance to share their experiences with Scouts from other countries and to discover new ideas to implement back home.

## **CONCLUSION**

To conclude this report, we would first of all like to thank the Host Committee for doing everything possible to ensure exceptional living and working conditions for the participants.

We would also like to thank the Planning Committee for proposing the topics and working methods which enabled us to have extremely stimulating discussions.

We are even more thankful to the 113 participants at this Forum for all their contributions, which made this Forum so interesting.

Thank you all for your ideas. Thank you for your differences. They bear hope and augur well for the future.

The success of our Forum is also largely due to the rainbow spirit of the South African nation which inspired our gathering.

On numerous occasions, we were carried away by the joyful spirit of this country, as epitomised in the South African song "Shosholozza". For us, this became the symbol of young people from all over the world, united in the same project, exchanging ideas and building lasting friendships.

## **PART TWO**

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **RECOMMENDATION 1 CONTACT WITH NATURE**

The Forum

- considering that, according to the words of Baden-Powell, “Nature is the real purpose of Scouting and the key for its success”
- considering the present rapid technological development
- recommends to the World Scout Committee to do more to inspire National Scout Associations to keep their programmes closely linked with Nature, for example by supporting various multinational environmental projects.

#### **RECOMMENDATION 2 YOUTH PARTICIPATION**

The Forum

- noting that the World Scout Youth Forum seeks the relationship between adult members and youth to be one of partnership and respect
- recognising the work that has been done at the “Youth Participation” session of the 7<sup>th</sup> World Scout Youth Forum
- recognising that in most National Scout Organisations a lot of progress has been made
- believing that there are still steps to take before World Scout Conference Resolution 2/93 (adopting the Policy on Involvement of Young Members in Decision-Making) is achieved
- recommends that a day is spent in workgroups critically discussing Youth participation at the next World Scout Conference (2002)
- suggests topics for this discussion focus on, among others:
  - a discussion amongst youth and adult members as to how each interact in the decision-making process within their organisation today;
  - evaluation of resolution 2/93 after 9 years of progress
- recommends that work be done before the next World Scout Conference to stimulate critical discussion within NSOs on the above discussion.

### **RECOMMENDATION 3 YOUTH PARTICIPATION**

#### The Forum

- considering that involvement of young members in decision-making is based on the principle that “Scouting is a Movement of young people supported by adults; it is not a Movement for young people managed by adults only”
- recommends
- that at least one member of the World Scout Committee should be under the age of 30
- that the Chairman of each WOSM Scout Region should have a youth equivalent
- that WOSM distributes the final report of any Regional Scout Youth Forums to National Scout Organizations in all WOSM Scout Regions.

### **RECOMMENDATION 4 SOLIDARITY AND PARTNERSHIP**

#### The Forum

- noting that only 53 out of 151 Member Organizations are present at the World Scout Youth Forum
- acknowledging that many countries are frequently less equitably represented than others in world Scout events such as World Scout Youth Forums, World Scout Jamborees, World Scout Moots and, most importantly, World Scout Conferences where decisions are made
- recognising that many Member Organizations in poorer countries themselves require financial support for their operations
- being reminded of one of our Scout laws, “A Scout is a brother to all Scouts”
- recommends that the World Scout Bureau continue to seek opportunities to help support poorer Member Organizations and the participation of their members in world Scout events, while seeking ways and means to ensure proper accountability by these associations
- recommends that a scheme similar to the solidarity “Operations” launched for World Scout Jamborees and World Scout Moots be introduced to support the participation of young members in World Scout Youth Forums.

## **RECOMMENDATION 5 GUIDELINES AND RULES OF PROCEDURE**

The Forum

- believing that the current vote on the Rules of Procedure does not enable delegates to gain influence on how the Forum should be run
- recommends to the World Scout Committee that, as well as adopting the Rules of Procedure, it should be possible for the participants to alter by a 2/3 majority the Guidelines for World Scout Youth Forums.

## **RECOMMENDATION 6 PREPARATION OF DELEGATES**

The Forum

- recommends that young participants going to the Youth Forum be appointed at least 6 months before the Forum to ensure that they be properly prepared
- requests the World Bureau to ensure that Forum documents are sent at least 3 months in advance.

## **RECOMMENDATION 7 LENGTH OF YOUTH FORUMS**

The Forum

- “recognising that youth forums in Scouting provide a dual opportunity for young members to discuss issues of interest to them and to make recommendations on them; and to learn the skills necessary to enable them to take a part in decision making in the Movement” (Resolution 10/93 of 33<sup>rd</sup> World Scout Conference)
- recommends that future World Scout Youth Forums should last a total of six days:
  - two days of appropriate training in the issues and structures currently in World Scouting, as well as specifically developing negotiation, presentation and public speaking skills; the aim being to enable youth delegates to fully participate and contribute to both the Forum and the Conference.
  - four days to discuss issues which will appear on the subsequent Conference agenda and to debate and make recommendations on other issues raised by the youth participants.

## **RECOMMENDATION 8 TOPIC FOR SCOUT YOUTH FORUM**

### The Forum

- considering that Scouting and Guiding are based on common heritage
- repeating that the conviction of WOSM is that in today's society coeducation of the two sexes should be the general norm
- taking attentive note of the will expressed at the 30th World Conference of WAGGGS (July 1999) to explore during the next triennium the possibility of uniting with WOSM
- declares that in its opinion one united world organization would best serve the needs of scout in the world
- asks the World Scout Committee to propose the topic of creating one united World Organization on the agenda of the next Regional and World Scout Youth Forums.