



25th Arab Regional Scout Conference

Report from the Secretary General

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Dear sisters and brothers in Scouting,

When we first met at the Arab Scout Conference in Cairo in 2004 I was your "new" Secretary General having only joined the office months earlier. Today, it is just over three and a half years since I took office and I'd like to share the exciting advancements we made at the World Scout Bureau, the results already achieved and the challenges we have before us.

In 2004 we were looking towards 2007 as a fundamental milestone in the history of Scouting, with one theme in mind: **"One World, One promise"**. The vision I proposed to the World Scout Committee and shared with you was therefore one of **"One" Organization serving "One" Movement**, sharing that Promise.

As George reported, on behalf of the Chairman Herman Hui, the World Scout Committee has worked as a united team, and unity of the Movement was identified by the World Scout Conference as the main focus of the Governance review.

Promoting the unity of the Movement is the first constitutional purpose of the World Organisation and therefore of all its members, at all levels.

Unity has been the focus as well in the strategical reorganisation of the World Scout Bureau, aiming at better supporting and promoting Scouting worldwide.

Central and regional structures have been aligned in terms of functions and responsibilities, looking for synergy and an optimisation of resources. The WSB's Board of Directors, which includes all Regional Directors, ensures strategical and programmatic coordination, as well as progressive corporate integration.

Following the recommendation of the World Scout Conference, the average age of executive staff has been lowered by more than 10 years. Younger executives are progressively empowered and steps forward are being made in terms of gender and geo-cultural balance, however never sacrificing professional competence: professional competence has oriented the restructuring process of the WSB at Central and Regional levels.

No organisational arrangement will ensure unity, unless aspects such as goals, plans, methods and resources are fully shared. In the past fiscal year (October 2006-September 2007), for the first time in the history of the WSB, the activities implemented by all offices (central and regional) were based on an integrated **Yearly Operational Plan** developed according to a single **Triennial Global Plan**. For the time being, this could only be produced by compiling the pre-existing regional plans, but we expect to be able to generate the next Triennial Plan as an integrated output of regional and global inputs to the World Scout Conference.

Good planning can only be the result of evaluation and lessons learned. Therefore, the WSB engaged itself in an overall **evaluation** of the work done since April 2004. The exercise involved all the staff in all offices of the WSB and results were taken into consideration in the sub-sequent planning.

In another historical step, we are now standardising the format of all offices' periodical reporting to feed integrated Quarterly Management Reports to the WSC. And I am sure you'll be happy to know that all NSOs and key stakeholders will soon receive the **Annual Report of the Secretary General**, adopted by the WSC at its last meeting. From now on, as never before, NSOs will be informed on an annual basis on the activity of the WSB, integrating outcome and information from all Regions. Unity is also fostered through the strong visual corporate identity that we developed starting from the

branding and communication strategy approved by the World Conference in Tunisia. The coherent, unitarian use of the **new brand** "Scouts, creating a better world" and of our emblem throughout the world gives us enormous additional strength in presenting us as the World Movement we are. **Regional Communications Fora** have supported NSOs to discover and use the full potential of the adoption and the coordinated use of the new brand. One "**Scout.org**", instead of seven very dissimilar websites, represents a historical turning point.

The first "**World Scouting Report**", focussed on "Youth, a social force", was launched globally in cooperation with representatives of the UN in Geneva, and conveys an important message to the international community. In fact the collaboration with the UN, is at the centre of our now **focussed external relations strategy** for the repositioning of World Scouting.

To consolidate and grow, the Scout Movement needs more resources and solidarity among its members. Besides the traditional and recently increasing financial support from the World Scout Foundation, taking advantage both of the advances in the area of communications and of the adoption of a new approach to projects, partnerships have been established with external donors, including and increasingly from the private sector. Whoever the partner, we care that priorities and plans are not donor driven, but respond to orientations set by the World Scout Conference and decisions taken by the World Scout Committee. In addition, corporate partners must also demonstrate appropriate **ethical and social responsibility** standards. This is a challenging and growing area of work.

Notwithstanding the enormous effort to modernise the organisation, in line with Strategic priorities 6 and 7, our "**core business**" is education. On the long run this is how we make a difference. "Creating a better world" expresses our vision and the Strategy toward that goal is the education of young people through Scouting. The Strategy adopted by the World Scout Conference since 2002, however, cannot be effective without the convinced and strong commitment of all NSOs to its implementation. The five identified educational Strategic Priorities, i.e. **Youth involvement**, special attention to the **adolescents**, the full engagement of an increasing number of **volunteers**, **reaching out** to those most in need and ensuring full and fair participation in Scouting to both **girls and boys, women and men**, must be streamlined across the Scout programme and orient actions and organizational arrangements NSOs put in place to implement it. The WSB has been putting a lot of energy in supporting you in this endeavour, with technical assistance, training and the production of specific tools. Your feed-back however is strongly needed to orient further action.

As you can well imagine, a lot has been invested into making this **centennial year** a real success. Thanks to the effort we made in putting in place the Communication and branding strategy we were prepared to harvest the opportunity offered by the centenary, and we started the new century of Scouting with renewed enthusiasm and commitment. Hundreds of inspirational **Gifts for Peace** were presented at the **Scouting's Sunrise** on 1 August.

Also the centennial **World Scout Jamboree** helped to reaffirm the unique role Scouting may play in today's society. With 40.000 participants from all the 155 countries where there are recognised NSOs the Jamboree surely achieved the objective of reaffirming Scouting's world brotherhood. The **World Congress** to be held in Geneva in ten days time, the last world event of the centennial celebrations, will confront top researchers with the Scouting experience and offer an additional evidence of the contribution of hundred years of Scouting to non-formal education and to Society at large.

There is much more to come. I'll be happy to share more information with you and look forward to your comments and suggestions.

Finally I wholeheartedly thank the members of World Scout Committee who honoured me with their trust and support, the staff of the WSB for their loyal commitment and the readiness to serve Scouting with hundreds of extra hours, with the same passion and dedication of the wide network of volunteers that are contributing worldwide to this exciting adventure with admirable Scout spirit; to all of them my personal sincere thanks.

Starting the new Scouting Century with unprecedented challenges let us think of future generations of Scouts. Those future Scouts will judge today's leaders of the World Organization – all of us – by our coherence and loyalty to the fundamental principles and values to which we committed with our Scout Promise.