



SCOUTS[®]
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

**Secretary General Scott A. Teare
Address to the
40th World Scout Conference, Slovenia 2014**

“Unity in Diversity”

Dear Brother and Sister Scouts.

Welcome to the 40th World Scout Conference here in Slovenia! It is a real honour for me to stand in front of a World Scout Conference for the first time as your Secretary General of the World Organization of the Scout Movement.

Let me begin by expressing my sincere gratitude to the Scout Association of Slovenia and all of its numerous volunteers for having worked relentlessly with our World Scout Committee and World Scout Bureau staff to prepare and organise the 12th World Scout Youth Forum and this 40th World Scout Conference.

The Youth Forum was a huge success and should give us the right spirit and motivation for the important, mutual work we have during the Conference in the days ahead.

Thank you!

After my arrival at the airport, I exchanged various currencies into Euros. And admittedly, in preparing for the trip here, I looked up to check when Slovenia became a member of the Euro-Zone.

The answer is 2007.

I also noted that 2014 marks the 10th anniversary of Slovenia’s membership into the European Union.

Who could have anticipated these swift and successful developments in 1991 when Slovenia gained independence? For me, this is a clear message that you can achieve incredible things when you are united in a vision and you take concrete and sustainable action to achieve that vision.

Remembering the early 1990s and looking at this broader region at that time should remind us that international crises have been and are – as sad as it is – a reality of humankind.

We cannot take peace and a peaceful life for granted.

What we as Scouts can do is to live up to our values of respect, integrity, trust and excellence and by that contribute to creating a better world.

The fact that we are hosted today by a National Scout Organization from a country that has established itself as a valued member of the European Union so quickly after independence should give us hope and confidence that current crises can be ultimately solved and that those who are currently affected by violence, war, unrest, discrimination or natural disasters around the world can

go back to a peaceful life.

I made another calculation on the occasion of this 40th World Scout Conference.

If World Scouting were a country today, it would be the 6th largest country in the European Union and the 33rd largest country in the world, right between Argentina and Algeria.

And if we were to be successful in reaching 100 million Scouts by 2023 as our draft new Vision suggests, World Scouting would become the 12th largest country in the world, right between Mexico and the Philippines and Number One (1) in the European Union!

This is not just a numbers game; this simply shows the extraordinary reach of our Movement and its potential.

Before sharing some highlights of the Triennium, I would like to sincerely thank my predecessor, Luc Panissod, for all his hard work and dedication in serving World Scouting for many years, including as our Secretary General.

Luc worked tirelessly to establish a strong World Scout Bureau despite all the challenges in World Scouting when he took over as Secretary General.

The first part of this Triennium belongs to Luc, and I ask that you join me in welcoming Luc Panissod to the stage to briefly report on his portion of the past Triennium.

(Luc Panissod speech)

Thank you Luc.

Several of the achievements shared in the 2011-2014 Triennial Report are the direct result of Luc's leadership. I join Luc in asking that you take the time to read the report.

We will have time later in the Conference to properly recognize Luc for his service to World Scouting. I have said many times that Luc is a long-time, personal friend and the "hand-off" from his administration to our current administration has been flawless.

Luc Panissod is an outstanding human being and I am proud to be his friend and to have shared this time with him on stage this afternoon.

Ours is a volunteer-based movement and you, our volunteers, are the lifeblood of this Movement.

Your dedication is incredible. We need more people like you to ensure that we grow this vibrant movement from 40 million members today to over 100 million members in less than 10 years' time.

So, what can each of us sitting here do to start a big ripple effect in bringing 10 million volunteers to form the foundation for a future 100 million strong membership?

Let us reach out through all media to invite our friends and relatives to join us in serving the Scout Movement.

Albert Einstein said, "Logic will get you from A to B. Imagination will take you everywhere."

The time has come to use imagination to change our all too comfortable status quo and focus on new ideas to reach more young people.

It is from my personal experiences that if you try to do something big, then it becomes very hard to completely fail.

I would like to express my gratitude to the top most volunteer decision makers of WOSM, the current World Scout Committee members who have done a magnificent job over the past three years and have devoted so much of their valuable time and energy to the Movement.

I have said many times, publicly and privately, that you should expect (if not demand) decisive leadership from your World Scout Committee.

I personally have witnessed our committee discuss serious and difficult issues with a passion to serve to the best of their ability. They accepted a serious obligation to act between World Scout Conferences. In the context of addressing change, they have followed a democratic process that included obtaining feedback from NSOs that drive the decisions they make.

Would all members of the World Scout Committee, including our Youth Advisors and non-voting members please stand to be recognised.

Thank you.

If following our presentations this afternoon – or at any time during the conference – you have a question, please ask any member of the World Scout Committee. They will be happy to assist you in any way possible. They are here to help provide answers and (more importantly) they are here to listen!

Now I would like Simon, Wahid and John May to please stand.

Standing before you is the leadership of the leadership.

This small group has inspired and supported change in a number of areas including how we reorganise the World Scout Bureau staff. They have helped the staff to restructure to better overlay and support our regional office.

Under the leadership of these three dedicated Scouters, the current World Scout Committee may well be the most involved and change-oriented World Scout Committee ever elected. To each of them, I remain grateful for their support.

Thank you!

And to the World Scout Bureau staff – and I mean all 120 located in World Scout Bureau offices around the world – you’re simply the greatest. Your support to me as Secretary General is greatly appreciated. I am proud of who you are and what you do to support our Movement.

A famous, contemporary Futurist named Joel Barker once said: *"Vision without action is merely a dream. Action without vision just passes the time. Vision with action can change the world."*

Part of your mandate at this 40th World Scout Conference will be to adopt a new Vision for World Scouting – Vision 2023. But before getting deeper into this agenda, let me highlight a few defining moments which marked this past Triennium, and demonstrate that our Movement has indeed focused a lot of energy on *action*.

As you know, Youth for Change was chosen as one of the four key Priority Areas for the 2011-2014 Triennium. The purpose was to bring together the various strands of youth engagement within WOSM, as well as to highlight the impact that young people can have in their communities.

Young people are a tremendous source of energy, creativity and values that can shape a better future, both inside Scouting and in the local communities in which they live.

Scouting is a Movement of young people, supported by adults. From WOSM’s total membership of over 40 million, more than 82% are young people. They are in their formative years; acquiring knowledge, skills and attitudes that make them more open to perform positively in society - not just in the future but also today. Even though they are still in a learning process, this does not stop them from active contributions, both within and outside the Movement. As we jointly define the next Triennium, I urge that we continue to remember that the education of young people is at the centre of everything we do.

I would also like to highlight the 1st World Scout Education Congress, which was organised in Hong Kong in November 2013 and brought together almost 500 onsite and over 1,450 online participants, mainly active in the areas of Youth Programme and Adults in Scouting.

The Congress offered Educational Methods experts from across World Scouting a platform to share experiences, assess the relevance of the Movement in today’s society and point towards a common direction for the future development of Scouting – ultimately re-positioning education of young people as the core business of Scouting.

As Luc mentioned, this past Triennium also saw the development of a flagship initiative of World Scouting: Messengers of Peace. The aim of the Messengers of Peace Initiative is to inspire millions of young Scouts throughout the world to undertake peace and service actions in their communities and thus contribute to creating a better world. This is something that has never been so important than in these days.

What does creating a better world mean? It means that Scouts in Lebanon worked hard to improve

the wellbeing and the integration of thousands of Syrian refugees in Lebanon.

Working closely with the national authorities and local communities, Lebanese Scouts have focused on the basic needs of families fleeing the war in neighbouring Syria, providing winter supplies, warm clothing and helping children in particular to feel at home in their new communities.

Creating a better world means that when Typhoon Haiyan struck on 9 November 2013, devastating many communities across central Philippines, Scouts from all over the country reacted within hours of the disaster to provide support to multiple relief organisations. They were joined by countless Scouts from around the world and NSOs who donated financial support to help relief operations.

I would like to thank the World Scout Foundation for their support in helping make the Messengers of Peace such a success.

There is a Chapter in the Holy Koran that tells of the Prophet Mohammad calling tribal leaders together. He explained to them that Allah did not make them different to fight about their differences. Rather, He made them different so they would discuss those differences and become stronger.

The story speaks of diversity and unity.

I believe that the Messengers of Peace initiative emphasizes both the diversity and unity of our world Scout family. This is what I call ***unity in diversity***.

This *unity in diversity* is well represented here in this room: hundreds of delegates representing 162 NSOs – all here from different cultures but all here with a common purpose and a common set of values.

In order to grow quality Scouting across the globe, we must support and strengthen the capacity of these 162 National Scout Organizations. This led us to create the Global Support Assessment Tool. And to support the rollout of this tool across the globe, a worldwide pool of trained volunteers and staff was created to help NSOs set priorities, get adequate support in place and then monitor the results.

This service mentality also stems from the diversity of our staff at the WSB, which is a key strength to ensure that we best support our 162 National Scout Organizations with respect, integrity, trust and excellence in service. These are the values, based on the Scout Promise and Law, that I would like each and every one of us as staff members and volunteers to live by each and every day.

Finally, *unity in diversity* has also been the credo of our Communications & External Relations efforts in the past Triennium. Both have made a big leap forward in this past Triennium. Let me highlight a few examples here.

Over a hundred youth members from various NSOs have been selected to represent World Scouting externally at events run by reputed, global institutional partners.

World Scouting has built several new partnerships, particularly from within the United Nations

system and other civil society organizations. The United Nations Millennium Campaign has commended World Scouting's efforts at a special recognition ceremony at the UN General Assembly in New York in September 2013.

In the next Triennium, World Scouting must continue to work closely with other youth organisations, civil society, knowledge institutions, corporate partners, donors and the United Nations in contributing to creating a better world.

Over the past three years, World Scouting has also fully embraced 21st century communications. Our social media footprint has grown, allowing us to remain relevant with young people.

This I believe: There is little doubt that we live in a world that is changing more quickly and more profoundly than we could ever have imagined when Scouting was founded. With the ongoing and lightening-fast technological advances in electronics, especially computerised games, it is clear that today's generation has moved from instigators of play to consumers of play. When this phenomenon is coupled with social media access and its instant global reach, it is having an unimagined, perhaps sometimes confusing, influence within families and consequently on behaviour. In this sense, Scouting has an important role to play in personal development through the leadership experiences it offers, such as problem solving through teamwork. Scouts are also connected to their natural environment. Because Scouting is "value" driven and based on the "Scout Promise", it reinforces the notions of duty, honour, commitment and community service by doing a "Good Turn Daily." Scouting today is the best leadership development programme on earth!

On 15 October 2013, World Scouting launched a totally renewed website, which includes – in addition to many state-of-the-art features - a platform for all Scouts to share best practices, celebrate successes, exchange Scout stories and more.

This is also the place where we can now share information with NSOs in a modern way and where the external world can see our institutional and individual achievements. This is what I call a permanent online Jamboree!

Moving forward, let me quote the Dalai Lama who said: *"In order to carry a positive action, we must develop a positive vision."* This is exactly what we are all here for this week. Providing better scouting for more young people.

Following intense consultation, which started in November 2013, our Movement concluded that the Mission of Scouting continued to be relevant, while our Vision needed to be revisited.

Thanks to your contributions, we now have defined an ambitious new Vision 2023 and a clear Strategy for Scouting. The Vision 2023 and the Strategy for Scouting are the result of a comprehensive and thorough process that included active contributions from all regions and levels of our Movement.

I am proud of the outcome and I am convinced you will share my enthusiasm.

Dear friends:

Reading a letter from President Lech Walesa this morning, my belief in looking ahead and forward has strengthened further. We can always spend lots of time analysing the past, but nothing creates momentum like moving forward with a positive energy.

Today, I stand here with a call... to each and everyone of you... asking for that 'Solidarity'... that ***unity in diversity***... the very same one that Baden-Powell, our Founder said... should be respected and practised everyday... as brotherhood, sisterhood and kinship... by all Scouts!

In the next Triennium, my priority as Secretary General is straightforward: How can we better utilize our volunteer and professional resources across the world to increase our global impact on young people and our service to NSOs.

With such focus, we will grow tomorrow's leaders by providing young girls and boys with an education for life, based on a strong set of values.

To achieve this goal, we need to be *united in our diversity*.

This 40th World Scout Conference represents a unique opportunity for our Movement to be better at what really matters: To give every young person we possibly can the opportunity to join a local Scout group.

It is in a local Scout group that values are shared.

It is in a local Scout group that leadership skills are learned.

It is in a local Scout group that our National Scout Organizations can help people change lives, and even sometimes save lives.

Every plan, every strategy, every action of ours should be done with the Scout in the middle of everything. I believe in this, and everyday of my working life, I think of the Scout who is at the centre of everything that we do, and I remind all my team members to do the same as they work to serve the World Organization of the Scout Movement.

Ladies and gentleman,

my name is Scott Teare.

I am a Scout.

I am a Messenger of Peace.

I am proud to serve as your Secretary General!

Scott A. Teare
Secretary General
World Organization of the Scout Movement