



AZERBAIJAN 2017

**41ST WORLD SCOUT
CONFERENCE**



DOCUMENT

12

Background Document Regarding
Draft Resolution 2017-F
Spirituality in Scouting



SCOUTS
Creating a Better World

Background Document Regarding Draft Resolution 2017-F Spirituality in Scouting

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Languages

The official languages of the World Organization are English and French. The World Scout Bureau will make all Conference Documents available in both languages. When possible, it endeavours to make them available also in Arabic, Russian and Spanish - the three additional working languages of WOSM. In the event of a conflict arising out of the interpretation of this Conference Document or any other official document of the World Organization, the English text shall prevail.

In 2015, the World Scout Committee (WSC) formed the Duty to God Task Force, which was tasked to study and evaluate how Duty to God is implemented among the various World Organization of the Scout Movement (WOSM) members. Following this study, a report was produced in collaboration with the King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz International Centre for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue (KAICIID) and subsequently published on the WOSM website (www.scout.org/spiritualdevelopment). Here are some of the findings:

The status of the work done on the spiritual dimension in Scouting

This report provides an overview of perceptions, activities and suggestions for future improvement regarding the area related to Duty to God and spiritual development within Scouting. The Task Force initiated two surveys on the subject of Duty to God which was sent to all National Scout Organizations (NSOs), National Scout Associations (NSA) and members of the Interreligious Forum on World Scouting.

The Duty to God surveys, especially the first one conducted among NSOs/NSAs, received an unprecedented response rate which probably signifies a growing interest in this topic among the Member Organizations and associations. *This unparalleled level of response may be explained by the current political situation.*

What was surprising was not only the rate of response, but also the quality of the answers provided. Out of the total number of 163 WOSM members, 139 responded to Survey 1. The results of these two surveys, presented in this report, will hopefully be used to provide Scouting with a more complete and structured picture of spiritual development elements within the Movement as well as serve as an analytical basis for recommendations for potential modifications in the future.

The survey findings can be summarised into four main areas: spirituality, spiritual development in Youth Programmes, leader training as well as constitution and bylaws.

Spirituality

The data confirms that the importance of religion and spirituality in the modern world varies greatly depending on geographic location. This is clearly reflected in the survey responses.

While most of the NSOs/NSAs in the Africa, Interamerican and Arab Scout Regions see Duty to God as the key principle of Scouting, most NSOs/NSAs in the European and Asia-Pacific Scout Regions reflect the processes of secularisation and globalisation in their understanding of this principle. Within Scouting, single faith-based associations and open associations co-exist and each of them have their own perception of the Duty to God principle.

Spiritual development in the Youth Programme

Within Scouting, spiritual development is understood and practised in a multitude of ways, as demonstrated by the list of diverse activities conducted. The results of the surveys show that the effectiveness of spiritual development is rated quite positively compared to other Scouting activities. It also emerged that because Duty to God is one of the three main principles of Scouting, many respondents believe that this principle is therefore a key element.

The most widely practised activities related to spiritual development within Scouting are in the realm of personal reflection, followed by group reflection and discussions, and by participation in religious rituals. Out of the 217 responses received, almost half of the respondents were of the opinion that these activities take place at least once a week. Within and between NSOs/NSAs, there are different perspectives as to how this principle should be implemented in the Youth Programme.

The biggest challenge in applying the spiritual dimension in the Youth Programme is the question of how best to provide activities related to the spiritual dimension. Nonetheless, motivation ranks second and for a few, it is a tricky and challenging topic to deal with. Out of the 217 responses received, 61% had not yet sufficiently addressed these challenges and only moderately worked on an improvement.

Nevertheless, spiritual development is seen as an important element within Scouting and the majority of WOSM members have either gone through an educational review process in the area of spiritual development in the last 15 years or they are planning to do an educational review process in the area of spiritual development in the next two to three years.

Adult training

In order for Scout leaders to deliver spiritual development activities, many respondents have indicated that NSOs/NSAs face the challenge of limited material in this area, such as booklets or brochures. Furthermore, motivation and adequate training are substantial challenges when talking about training Scout leaders.

Constitution and bylaws

The survey confirms the continuing influence of the Founder's vision and shows that the current constitutional definition of Duty to God acts as a common ground for the vast majority of NSOs/NSAs in their approach to Duty to God. The vast majority (91%) of respondents reported that their NSO/NSA had a Scout Promise and Law as recommended by WOSM.

NSOs/NSAs are concerned about keeping the Promise and Law relevant to their members and potential members, and this is reflected both in the majority who have conducted a review in recent years or intend to do so, and in the ways in which the Promise and Law have been adapted in a number of NSOs/NSAs.

While a few respondents expressed their desire for change in the approach taken to Duty to God in the WOSM constitution, the responses suggest that this is not shared by the vast majority.

For consideration at the 41st World Scout Conference

The World Scout Committee moves the Resolution below for consideration by the 2017 World Scout Conference.

2017-F Spirituality in Scouting

The Conference,

- recognizing the good work being done by many Member Organizations in the area of Spiritual Development / Duty to God and the wide acceptance and use of the resources *Scouting and Spiritual Development* and *Guidelines on Spiritual and Religious Development in Scouting*,
- recognizing the strongly expressed desire for more support on the part of many Member Organizations in the area of Spiritual Development / Duty to God,
- reaffirming Conference Resolution 2014-05 and the broad agreement within the Movement of the importance of Spiritual Development / Duty to God,
- recommends that the World Scout Committee provides more support to Member Organizations in enhancing their youth programme and leader training in the area of Spiritual Development / Duty to God;
- recommends that the World Scout Committee, when considering approval of changes to the local formulation of the Scout Promise and Law, give due weight to the place of each Member Organization in determining the most appropriate formulation for their "culture and civilization";
- calls on Member Organizations to consider, in a spirit of fellowship, the wider interests of the Movement when presenting new formulations of their Scout Promise and Law for approval.

Proposed by: The World Scout Committee

For information, please visit www.scout.org/spiritualdevelopment.