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

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

4th September 2018

8th Africa Scout Youth Forum Opens in Harare with a Focus on Youth Leadership for Sustainable Development

Harare - Zimbabwe: Over 50 Scouts from 29 countries all over Africa and beyond have converge at the ZESA national Training Centre in Harare, Zimbabwe for the 8th Africa Scout Youth Forum that will be run from 4th – 6th September 2018. The event is organized by the Africa Scout Region of the World Organization of the Scout Movement and hosted by The Scout Association of Zimbabwe.

The Africa Scout Youth Forum takes place every three years in conjunction with the Africa Scout Conference. It provides an opportunity for youth members of Scouting in Africa to discuss different issues and make recommendations to the conference. The aim of the Youth Forum is to provide a learning platform and to increase youth participation in decision-making processes at regional level. The theme for the event is ***Scouting in Africa: Building Foundations for Sustainable Development.***

Speaking at the Opening Ceremony, the Regional Director Frederic Kama-Kama said that the Youth Forum is one of the safe spaces that Scouting provides young people to discuss different topics, share lots of experiences and challenge one another. "Our contributions, as Scouts, to the Sustainable Development Goals is one way of working towards a sustainable world. The community service initiatives you implement at community level are a good entry point for spreading the sustainability message among your peers and families," he added. He also recognized the Government of the Republic of Zimbabwe for the support extended to Scouting, in particular in the organization of this 8th Africa Scout Youth Forum and other regional Scout events taking place here in Harare.

In remarks read on his behalf by Victor Atipagah, Dr. Wayne Davis, Chairman of the Africa Scout Committee urged the participants to take the lessons of this Youth Forum and apply them to help grow and develop Scouting in your communities and countries. "For us to live in a way that guarantees the future of those coming after us, requires a collective effort – something that is highly exhibited by young people. I therefore challenge you today to take advantage of your preparedness as Scouts and your skills to contribute to creating a better world - and tag along your friends by encouraging them to become Scouts, so that with more of us we can live this world a better place," he said.

The Chief Guest, Hon. Kazembe Kazembe, Minister for Youth, Sports, Arts and Recreation on his part observed that there has been an increased realization that young people are critical to the development of Africa. "The Africa Scout Youth and Conference are coming after the country's harmonized general elections is an indication that Zimbabwe is indeed poised for a new beginning," he said.

"Youth must have the opportunity for access to recreational and education opportunities and facilities and protected from harmful practices and abuse. I have instructed my officials to work with The Scout Association of Zimbabwe on how we can unite our efforts to advance youth empowerment and skills development, in line with our aspirations as the people of Zimbabwe to become a middle-income country by 2030. Scouting is a unique movement with provides lifelong learning to the youth by inculcating the values of society and service. I urge you play a pivotal role in the promotion of peace, dialogue, friendship and development in your respective countries," he concluded.





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The Chairperson of the 8th Africa Scout Youth Forum, Solomon Etim from Nigeria recognized the wonderful opportunity that young people have through this forum. "It's a wonderful opportunity for us to bring to bear the local challenges we are facing to bring to bear the challenges we face in our communities. It's an opportunity for us to look back to what we have achieved so far and to plan ahead in line with our theme on sustainability," he said. He encouraged all participants to consider what it is that they can do to make this movement grow and add their voice to contribute to that growth.

"I am proud of what is happening here today. As Scouts we are part of shaping the future of our communities," said Julius Kramer, Youth Advisor to the World Scout Committee. He noted that young people need to be empowered and to get access to decision making and need to be part of the discussion. "What we see here is exactly that. We are trying to make sure that young people have a voice in society and they get to shape their future," he added.

Over three days, the young people aged 18 – 26 years will engage in a series of discussions on key thematic areas, take part in capacity building workshops, gain new knowledge and skills, share cultures and experiences and make new friendships. Apart from electing a new team of six Youth Advisors to the Africa Scout Committee, the forum will also prepare and present to the 17th Africa Scout Conference a set of recommendations geared towards improving the Scouting experience and opportunities for young people across Sub-Saharan Africa. The discussions of the forum will also help to shape the work of Scouting in Africa over the next three years and towards the achievement of Vision 2023 of the World Scouting.

Many of the youth will later on join the 17th Africa Scout Conference which will be held from 7th to 10th September 2018 at the Rainbow Towers Hotel in Harare, Zimbabwe.

***** ENDS *****

Notes to the Editor

Every three years the Africa Scout Youth Forum which provides an opportunity for youth members of Scouting in Africa to discuss different issues and make recommendations to the Africa Scout Conference meets. The Youth Forum also provides a learning platform and serves to increase youth participation in decision-making processes at regional level. Learn more at scout.org/africayouthforum

About the World Organization of the Scout Movement (WOSM)

Founded in 1907 by Lord Baden Powell, Scouting is one of the world's leading educational youth movements, engaging millions of young people around the world to be active citizens to create positive changes in the communities they live in. As it has been doing for more than a century creating a better world it will continue to do so, and even better with the many Messengers of Peace across the globe. Established in 1922, WOSM is a confederation of 164 National Scout Organizations in a network of over 50 million members, including some 7 million volunteers. For more information please visit scout.org.

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