Blending the Indomitable African Spirit and Scout Values for a Better Africa
Joint Message by the Chair of the Africa Scout Committee and the Africa Regional Director on the Occasion of the 25th Anniversary of the Africa Scout Day on 13th March 2020

Dear Friends,

It has been 25 years since the African Union set aside the 13th of March as Africa Scout Day. Since then, we as a continent have experienced many changes, challenges and successes in our journey. One thing that is constant, however, is that Scouting has been an ally to youth education and progress at the community and regional level. Africa Scout Day is an opportunity for all Scouts and Scouters to celebrate our successes, reflect on where we have been and where we are going, and how we can work together internally in our Movement and expand our impact in the communities we live in.

Africa is a continent with many challenges, but it is also a continent with unimaginable potential and the power of a diverse and vibrant family of cultures. From harnessing the youth dividend to becoming a centre of innovation, our progress depends on how we, as Africans, choose to live – how we educate our young people, both in our schools, our homes and in Scout groups, to what we see as our civic duty and what we make our top priorities for how we spend our efforts.

The African Spirit is an indomitable one – in our continent we find appetite for life, largeness of spirit and a culture blessed with a strong passion for community. We are the birthplace of humanity and with our abundant resources, both human and material along with our amazing young people, we can be the birthplace of the future.

How many of you are familiar with the song ‘B-P Spirit’? In the song, we talk about having the B-P spirit right in our heads, deep in our hearts, and all around our feet. The B-P spirit is our Scouting spirit – a spirit of getting things done, of working together, and of smiling despite our difficulties in the situations in which we find ourselves.

Having also been born in Africa, it is not surprising that the Scouting spirit and African spirit are one in the Scouts of Africa. So, what does it mean that we have this Scouting spirit in our heads, hearts, and feet?

The head is the home of thoughts and analysis. This is where we see what challenges exist in our communities and countries and what we as Scouts can do to solve them. The heart is where we feel passion for our projects and get the drive to make them successful. It is where we find our love for Scouting and for giving service to others. Finally, the feet are what will carry us to take action. They take the thoughts from the head and the feeling from the heart and walk us to a place we can make change happen.

Today we challenge all of us as Scouts in Africa to use our heads, hearts and feet to carry the continent forward, and to find solutions to challenges we face with the spirit of Scouting and the spirit of Africa. We are the generation of the leaders of today and we have a responsibility to stand up and lead our communities and Africa into a brighter future.

Scouting has a demonstrated ability to bring together people from different cultures and backgrounds and to lead that team to making a better world. We have the ability to use our shared values and sense of brother- and sisterhood to bridge our differences so that we can work to realise the best that each and every one of us brings to the table. We have the tools and the skills to make our diversity and difference a source of massive strength and energy. We just need to take the first step and keep walking as the people join us in our journey to a better world.

It is regrettable that we had to cancel the Africa Scout day celebrations in Uganda due to the high risk associated with the spread of the COVID19 pandemic. Though very unfortunate, we are convinced it was in the best interest of all us, and we trust that you appreciate that as well. We are deeply grateful to the Uganda Scouts Association for the steadfastness despite the cancellation of the event and their unwavering commitment to deliver for us a wonderful 8th Africa Scout Jamboree later in August this year.
The cancellation notwithstanding, we have been able to run a successful Africa Scout Day Action Week challenge that has seen a lot of you share wonderful stories of the impact you are making in your communities. As we mark Africa Scout Day today, we urge you to find as many diverse ways as you can to celebrate this day and tell it out. Together let us showcase to the world the power of our movement to drive change.

May the African spirit of solidarity, community and service intertwined with our Scout values always guide thoughts, words and actions. May you be a positive inspiration to all those that look up to you for advice, guidance and assistance. May our collective efforts lead us to continuously upholding the honour bestowed upon us by the African Union with the creation of the Africa Scout Day in recognition of the Scout movement’s contribution to the education and development of the young people for an active community life and the training of adults and their impact through numerous community development projects that have directly contributed to the improvement of the living conditions of the concerned populations.

There is a Ugandan proverb that says, "A united family eats from the same plate". As Scouts in Africa, let us be a united family, and serve each other and our communities from the same plate of sustainability, inclusivity and growth. Let us share our spirit with each other and impact all those around us with a positive drive to create a better world.

Happy Africa Scout Day!

Victor Atipagah
Chairman, Africa Scout Committee

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