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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

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Circular N° 23/2013

To: International Commissioners

September 2013

New Structure for the World Scout Bureau

Dear Brother and Sister Scouts,

Introduction

During its meeting in Buenos Aires from 21-23 September 2013, the World Scout Committee (WSC) took the decision to accept a plan from WOSM's Secretary General, Scott Teare, to modernise the structure of the World Scout Bureau (WSB). The overall aim of this plan is to provide better support and service to National Scout Organizations (NSOs) and support WOSM's growing membership.

The WSC has decided to ask all NSOs to endorse its decision by postal vote.

Background and process

The WSB serves as WOSM's secretariat and it provides support to NSOs with the ultimate goal of delivering better Scouting for more young people. Currently, the WSB operates a total of eight offices – three offices in Europe (the Central Office in Geneva, the European Regional Scout Office in Geneva and a satellite office of the European Scout Region in Brussels) and one Regional Scout Office in cities in each of the other five regions: Cairo, Kiev, Manila, Nairobi and Panama City.

As society, technology, communication habits and Scouting itself have changed over the years, there has been an increasing perception that the WSB Central Office does not provide sufficient 'value for money'. This has led to a widespread discussion about the Central Office's functions and structure and this has included the question of where it should be located.

Following World Scout Conference resolutions in 2008 and 2011, a considerable amount of time has been spent looking at ways to modernise and improve the WSB as a whole. This has included several rounds of consultation with NSOs and the WSC has reviewed a number of options aimed at improving the level of service provided by the WSB to NSOs and doing so in a more cost effective manner.

At its meeting in Jakarta in March 2013, the WSC approved a shortlist of 7 cities for the future location of the WSB Central Office. The WSC also decided that a specialist company should be commissioned to bring the short list of 7 down to 1 city and the Secretary General was given the authority to make the final decision based upon the specialist company's recommendation.

The WSC has reviewed the decision making process and accepts that it has been less than ideal. What the WSC considered to be primarily an operational decision has been seen by a relatively large number of NSOs as a highly political issue which they believed they should be involved with, particularly as it entailed the potential change of WOSM's legal seat.

As a result, the WSC reviewed both the process and the substance of the issue at its meeting in Buenos Aires in September 2013 and the many suggestions and opinions received from NSOs and regions were fully considered.

In addition, the Secretary General reminded the WSC that two consultations had been undertaken with the staff of the WSB Central Office and the responses to these two consultations were taken into account.

The outcome is that WSC has agreed a new solution, which it believes will better serve the Movement and also meet the concerns of NSOs in relation to the decision making process.

A New Structure for the World Scout Bureau

The Secretary General's proposal for a new global operational approach for the WSB comprising the following elements was agreed by the WSC:

- The Secretary General will introduce a more decentralised structure that moves from having a single Central Office to one that involves all WSB offices in order to create a global network of offices linked through virtual infrastructure and capable of serving our growing Scout population;
- An additional WSB office will be established in Kuala Lumpur which will serve as a shared service centre for WOSM and will include a number of the functions currently delivered by the existing WSB Central Office;
- The WSB will retain its legal seat incorporated in Geneva, although the current WSB Central Office in Geneva (Rue du Pré-Jérôme 5) will be closed.

With this new structure, there will be a dynamic allocation of WSB functions and staff according to changing needs and opportunities. This allocation will be the responsibility of the Secretary General, together with his Senior Management Team.

The Secretary General and his team will use all of the locations where the WSB has offices as bases for meetings with staff, the WSC, NSOs, volunteer working groups and external stakeholders, according to particular circumstances. It is envisaged that at least one member of the WSB Senior Management Team and an appropriate number of staff will continue to be located in Geneva (although not at Rue du Pré-Jérôme 5) and part of their responsibility will be to undertake tasks related to the WSB having its legal seat in Geneva.

By releasing itself from the construct of a 19th and 20th century organisation, WOSM can become a genuine 'World Organization', operating with agility and reacting swiftly to both the needs of its member NSOs and Scouting's growing youth membership. Such an approach strengthens the unity of Scouting and also implies significant cost savings – thus freeing up resources to provide a better service to NSOs.

Decision making process

The WSC decided by consensus to adopt this new structure for the WSB at its meeting in Buenos Aires from 21-23 September 2013.

The WSC also agreed by consensus to ask NSOs to endorse its decision by postal vote during October 2013. The WSC recommends all NSOs to support this decision and to take maximum advantage of the new possibilities it will create for them. By constantly developing and improving our offices and systems we will be able to offer better Scouting to more young people, which is our ultimate goal.

The WSC carefully reviewed concerns that had been raised by part of our constituency with regard to Kuala Lumpur being one of the WSB's locations. Prior to the WSC meeting, the Secretary General had made a due diligence visit to Malaysia to investigate the concerns that had been raised and the reports obtained from the highest level in many governmental and non governmental organisations confirm that Kuala Lumpur is well suited as a location for International Non Government Organisations such as WOSM.

The WSC wishes to record its thanks to the WSB Central Office staff and reconfirms its confidence in the WSB's senior executives. Since his appointment as Chief Operating Officer, Aidan Jones has helped the WSC craft its commitment to modernising the organisation of the WSB. Following Scott Teare's arrival as WOSM's Secretary General in January 2013, that work has accelerated and Scott has taken on the modernisation agenda as his own, demonstrating through his leadership that he is determined to lead a staff team that properly supports its NSOs and is ready to meet the needs of a growing worldwide Scouting youth membership.

Endorsement of WSC decision by NSOs

The attached postal vote form provides NSOs with the opportunity to endorse or not the decision of the WSC. Please return this form, duly signed by an official of your NSO, to the WSB before Friday 25 October 2013. In the same spirit of consensus that prevailed during the WSC's meeting in Buenos Aires, if no response is received from your NSO by that date, the WSC will conclude that your NSO is not opposed.

Yours in Scouting,

Simon Rhee
Chairperson, World Scout Committee

for and on behalf of the following Members of the WSC...

- Wahid Labidi, Vice-Chairperson
- John May, Vice-Chairperson
- Karin Ahlbäck
- Abdullah Alfahad*
- Marcel Blaguet*
- João-Armando Gonçalves
- Erik Khoo
- Mari Nakano
- John Neysmith
- Dan Ownby
- Oscar Palmquist
- Scott Teare, Secretary General
- Olivier Dunant, Treasurer
- Gilbert Mussumba, Regional Chairperson, Africa Region**
- Youssef Mahmoud Khaddage, Chairperson, Arab Region**
- Shou-Po Chao, Chairperson, Asia-Pacific Region
- Bagrat Yesayan, Chairperson, Eurasia Region
- Andrea Demarmels, Chairperson, European Region
- Leonardo Morales Morales, Chairperson, Interamerican Region
- Lars Kolind, Board Member, World Scout Foundation

and Youth Advisors to the WSC:

- Felipe de Paulo
- Esben Holager
- Sarah Rita Kattan**
- Vemund Ovesen
- Doina Postica

* *not present at the meeting; proxy given to another WSC member*

** *not present at the meeting; concurrence received following the meeting*

Note: This circular is being issued concurrently in English and in French. Translations in Arabic, Spanish and Russian will be issued as soon as possible by the Regional Offices concerned.

WORLD SCOUT COMMITTEE

NEW STRUCTURE FOR THE WORLD SCOUT BUREAU

POSTAL BALLOT FORM

Only the recognized National Scout Organization in each member country may vote.

Name of Member Organization (National Scout Organization):

Country:

We endorse/do not endorse (*delete as appropriate*) the World Scout Committee's decision concerning the new structure of the World Scout Bureau as described in Circular No. 23/2013.

Additional comments may be added below or attached.

Name – please use capital letters: _____

Position in Member Organization: _____

Date: _____ Signature: _____

Please submit to arrive at the World Scout Bureau by 25 October 2013.

Ballot papers may be sent by e-mail to: ajones@scout.org

or sent by postal mail to:

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