



DESMOS
INTERNATIONAL LINK
OF ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN SCOUTS
LE LIEN INTERNATIONAL
DES SCOUTS ORTHODOXES

DESMOS COMMITTEE MEETING
LIMASSOL, CYPRUS
February 2-4, 2007

M I N U T E S

The DESMOS Committee Meeting was held in the premises of the local Scout Centre in Limassol, in Cyprus. The host of the Meeting was the Cyprus Scout Association.

P r e s e n t :

Christos Papageorgiou , Desmos President,	Greece
George Bahow , Desmos Vice-President	Israel
Christos Marneros , Desmos Treasurer	Cyprus
Marko Petrovic , Desmos Secretary General	Serbia
Georges Abboud , Desmos Committee member	Lebanon
Zoran M. Petrovic , Desmos Committee member	Serbia
Maher Sahlieh , Desmos PR and Int. Relations Commissioner	Palestine

Georges El-Ghorayeb , World Scout Committee Member / WSC Liaison to Desmos	Lebanon
Vassilis Birtsas , Assistant International Commissioner SHP	Greece

A p o l o g i e s :

Naaman Shahada , Desmos Deputy Secretary General <i>(due to health reasons)</i>	Israel
Tanja Golubovic , Desmos Committee member <i>(due to personal reasons / family moving to another place)</i>	Republic Srpska (B&H)
Lazar Apostolov , Desmos Committee member <i>(due to personal reasons / marriage)</i>	Macedonia (FYRO)



The Meeting Agenda:

In regard to the initially proposed Agenda, considering the fact that the DESMOS Committee Meeting was attended by high representative of the World Scouting, the World Scout Committee Member Mr. Georges El-Ghorayeb, who is in charge of liaison with The International Link of Orthodox Christian Scouts "DESMOS" on behalf of WSC, it was suggested and unanimously accepted to add the new item and give the opportunity to Mr. Georges El-Ghorayeb to address the DESMOS Committee and present the scout solidarity project "The Rebirth of the Phoenix".

Consequently, the initially proposed Agenda was changed and the Meeting Agenda accepted by the DESMOS Committee was as follows:

1. Address of the Desmos President, Christos Papageorgiou
2. Address of the Desmos Vice-President, George Bahow
3. Report of the Desmos Treasurer, Christos Marneros
4. Report of the Secretary General, Marko Petrovic
5. Report on the World Scout Inter-religious Forum, London, November 2006, Christos Papageorgiou, Desmos President
6. Report on the IFJS Forum, George Bahow, Desmos Vice-President
7. Address of the World Scout Committee Member, Georges El-Ghorayeb
Presentation of the scout solidarity project "The Rebirth of the Phoenix"
8. Desmos at the 12th European Guide and Scout Conference, Slovenia, May 2007
Introduction: Marko Petrovic, Desmos Secretary General
9. Desmos at the World Scout Jamboree, UK, July-August 2007
Desmos contribution to celebration of the Centenary of Scouting
Introduction: Christos Papageorgiou, Desmos President
Marko Petrovic, Desmos Secretary General
10. Discussion on Desmos promotional materials,
 - Zoran M. Petrovic, Desmos Committee member
 - Maher Y. Sahlieh, Desmos PR and International Relations Commissioner
11. Discussion on the activities foreseen in the forthcoming period
 - Desmos cross-border activities on the occasion of The Thinking Day 2007
 - Desmos activities on bilateral basis
 - Training on Spiritual Dimension in Scouting, in Serbia
 -
12. Open discussion

At the beginning of the Meeting, Desmos President suggested the minute of silence for the late **Malek Gabr**, former WOSM Deputy Secretary General, a giant of the World Scouting, who passed away recently.

Desmos Committee members and present guests paid tribute to the man who did so much for Scouting worldwide.

Ad. 1 - Address by the DESMOS President, Mr. Christos Papageorgiou

Mr. **Christos Papageorgiou** expressed his thanks to the Scout Organization of Serbia that hosted the previous Desmos Committee meeting, which he estimated very successful, and to the Cyprus Scout Association, which is hosting this Committee meeting.

Desmos President welcomed the Committee members and guests, emphasizing the importance of the fact that Mr. Georges El-Ghorayeb, the World Scout Committee member and WSC liaison person to Desmos, joined us for this annual meeting. He said it's significant for Desmos that after quite a long period we have such an important personality of the World Scouting with us.



Desmos President said there was a number of important events in the period since the last Desmos Committee meeting and as the most important he indicated the following:

- **The 2nd Scout Inter-religious Symposium**, held in Fo Guang Shan Temple, Kaoshiung, Taiwan, in May 2006, where Desmos was represented by the President Christos Papageorgiou and two high officials of the Scouts of Greece - SHP International Commissioner Costantinos Tsolakidis and the SHP International Committee member Alexandros Modiano. On behalf of the Orthodox Church Desmos was supported with the presence of V. Revd. Constantinos Tsilis, Chancellor of the Orthodox Metropolitanate of Hong Kong & Southeast Asia.

After the 1st Symposium in Valencia the event in Taiwan was the opportunity to continue the work on fostering co-operation and understanding between scouts from various denominations and reinforcing the value of Scouting as an institution promoting inter-religious dialogue. The theme of the Symposium "Together for Harmony and Peace" is particularly significant and reflects the actual needs worldwide. Desmos was represented at the Symposium in a pro-active way and Desmos President had the presentation "*Ethical Foundations of Inter-religious Dialogue*" (integral text of the address in Appendix 1).

- **World Scout Inter-religious Forum**, held in London, UK, 16 - 19 November 2006, was the opportunity to meet and have an exchange on actual issues such as the World Scout Jamboree in 2007 and the Faith and Beliefs Zone foreseen at this event, as well as to set the Action Plan for the forthcoming period until Autumn 2007 and beyond Autumn 2007.

Desmos President, Christos Papageorgiou was elected to be the World Scout Inter-religious Forum representative in the Spiritual Development Task Team.

- **Friends of Desmos** - the will and efforts of a group of eminent Greek scout enthusiasts finally resulted in official establishing of "Friends of Desmos", organization with the aim to support Desmos activities and help the Link further develop for the benefit of orthodox boys and girls in Scouting. The FoD goal is to attract as many as possible new fee-paying members in order to establish a solid fund, which would be used for financing Desmos activities.

Although established quite recently, "Friends of Desmos" in Greece already covered expenses for Desmos representatives at the Taiwan Inter-religious Symposium and London Inter-religious Forum last year. But the FoD role actually reaches beyond, since the reputation of its members guarantees a successful promotion of Scouting and of our Link.

The example of Greece should be followed by other Desmos countries, since it would help in creating much better environment for development of our Link. Therefore, Christos Papageorgiou encouraged Desmos Committee members to make efforts and try to motivate committed people in their countries from both Scouting and the community to establish "Friends of Desmos".

(Letter of support of His All Holiness, Ecumenical Patriarch - Appendix 2)

Ad. 2 - Address by the DESMOS Vice-President, Mr. George Bahow

Desmos Vice-President **George Bahow** expressed his thanks to all Desmos Committee members and guests for coming to the Meeting and especially to Christos Marneros for organizing the event in Cyprus.

George Bahow said the people in the Middle East have passed difficult, frustrating and miserable times during the recent conflict and expressed his hope the conflict would definitely come to an end, since it brought suffering to many people. He emphasized that the support and words of sympathy that Christos Papageorgiou sent him on behalf of Desmos in those hard moments were quite an encouragement.

George Bahow informed the Committee about the engagement of the WOSM Secretary General, Eduardo Missoni, who visited after the conflict both Lebanon and Israel on August 29th, in a mission of peace. Eduardo Missoni wanted to meet people affected by the war and he encouraged the scouts working for the community as well as projects related to rehabilitation and promotion of peace. There was a meeting with leaders from all Israeli scout associations, in Haifa. The meeting was fruitful and through an inclusive discussion it resulted in numerous proposals. One of the conclusion was that all scouts in the Middle East should meet at trainings, seminars, camps or international festivals and thus contribute to strengthening of mutual understanding.



Desmos Vice-President emphasized the importance of Desmos in establishing understanding and cooperation between scouts of different denominations, he pointed out Desmos' vitality despite financial problems, but he insisted on the need to have stable financing as the condition for pro-active engagement. It is essential to work on establishing of the Action Plan and promote Desmos in each of the Desmos countries, since we need the importance of our Link to be recognized.

As one of the activities he had in the previous period, George Bahow also mentioned his participation at the official inauguration of the International Forum of Jewish Scouts (IFJS), held in Jerusalem, on November 2nd, 2006.

Ad. 3 - Address by the DESMOS Treasurer, Mr. Christos Marneros

Desmos Treasurer **Christos Marneros** informed the Committee that the financial situation of Desmos is unfortunately the same as before, meaning that there has been no income in the period since the previous Committee meeting. The only exception is the founding of the "Friends of Desmos" in Greece and FoD contribution in the amount of approximately 4.000,- Euros, which covered all expenses for Desmos participation at the Inter-religious Symposium in Taiwan and Inter-religious Forum in London.

Since we now have a pilot example in Greece, the other Desmos countries should benefit from such experience and try to establish their FoDs. In this regard, it would be helpful to get the founding papers of the Greek FoD to have it as the model.

Contributing to the discussion of Desmos Treasurer, **Christos Papageorgiou** said the aim of the Greek FoD is to have 200 members by the end of 2007, which consequently means the membership income of 10.000,- Euros, which is a useful amount of money.

Christos Marneros suggested that perhaps the assistance of the Ecumenical Patriarch would be precious in this matter, because of all his contacts and relations, and that we should perhaps kindly ask him for help in order to make Desmos stronger and more efficient.



Ad. 4 - Address by the DESMOS Secretary General, Mr. Marko Petrovic

Desmos Secretary General, **Marko Petrovic**, welcomed all the Committee members gathered in Limassol and thanked them for the efforts and funds invested in this trip in order to come to Cyprus, make this meeting possible and contribute to further DESMOS development. Desmos Secretary General expressed warm welcome to the World Scout Committee member Mr. Georges El-Ghorayeb and thanked him for joining Desmos Committee, estimating that his presence at the meeting is a real encouragement for Desmos Committee members. Secretary General also welcomed the Assistant International Commissioner of the Scouts of Greece, Mr. Vassilis Birtsas, who joined in order to take part at the Committee meeting and help Desmos in realization of its forthcoming activities. Marko finally expressed gratitude to the host Association, Cyprus Scout Association, and especially to Christos Marneros and friends that helped the organization of this meeting, emphasizing that we all know such organization is not an easy task.



Desmos Secretary General repeated the most important activities and events in which Desmos took part in the period since the previous meeting, already mentioned by the Desmos President, and emphasized the important events and activities we are facing in near future. He said that 2007, as the year of Centenary of Scouting, is a special year and the opportunity for Desmos to get fully involved in the Centenary celebration, stressing the importance of Desmos' pro-active engagement at the World Scout Jamboree in UK, where our Link - after the success achieved at EuroJam in 2005 - can even reach beyond, certainly with joint efforts of all Committee members, Desmos volunteers and friends ready to help.

Marko also reminded that we have to prepare our Desmos Conference for the next year, which will be preceding - as usual - the World Scout Conference, which will be held in 2008 in Korea. Participation at both events is the priority for Desmos, but also the challenge because of the financial issue we have to resolve, since the trip expenses are quite high and not many delegates from Desmos countries would be able to cope with it. Marko said it's true that the fact the Desmos Conference will be organized prior to the World Scout Conference basically represents a favorable circumstance, but only in case the NSO's include in their delegations the Orthodox members, which unfortunately in very seldom the case. Therefore, we really have to start working on this issue immediately after this Committee meeting, if we want to have enough delegates and successful Conference in Korea.



Desmos Secretary General emphasized the high reputation Desmos gained in previous period working strongly in favor of the inter-religious dialogue with other faith organizations in Scouting and emphasized the importance to continue that way. Such approach confirms Desmos' devotion to the values of the Orthodox Faith and to the values of Scouting.

Desmos Secretary General said one of the very important achievements in previous period is the Desmos web site, which became operational shortly after the previous Committee meeting in Serbia. He pointed out that the web site, which has a good and easy-to-remember domain DESMOS.INFO, is Desmos' window towards all public interested to find out more about our Link, both scout and non-scout world, and underlined the importance of full involvement of all Committee members in order to make it better and richer in information. Marko said that most of the Desmos Committee members were not enough cooperative in the period of web site preparation and didn't react to numerous appeals to join the efforts and assist by sending related materials. The web site segment, which is still empty is "Activities", and it is actually very important segment of our web site. Therefore, Secretary General invited once again the Committee members to be more active and contribute to improvement of Desmos web site.

Ad. 5 - Report on the World Scout Inter-religious Forum, London, November 2006, Mr. Christos Papageorgiou, Desmos President

Desmos President, **Christos Papageorgiou**, gave more details on the World Scout Inter-religious Forum, held in London, UK, 16 - 19 November 2006, presenting the key points of the event and the Action Plan, which as the main objectives has: recruiting new members for the Forum; developing training materials on spiritual dimension; gathering documents and sharing between the faith groups; establishing the Forum's web presence, recruiting the web master and registering the domain name; identifying representatives for future World events; starting planning for the next inter-religious Symposium in 2009; follow up of the 2nd Symposium; establishing electronic communication; developing the communications plan for the Jamboree in order to assure promotion of the inter-religious area (Faith and Beliefs Zone); appointing a representative for the 2011 World Jamboree to liaise with the organizing committee; developing training materials on spiritual development.

The Forum was discussing its vision, aims and methods, and analyzed what is to be done for the next WSIF, as well as targets for the next World Scout Inter-religious Symposium.

Desmos President, Christos Papageorgiou emphasized once again the importance of the fact he was elected to be the World Scout Inter-religious Forum representative in the Spiritual Development Task Team, considering this as the recognition for the work Desmos has done so far.

Ad. 6 - Report on the IFJS Forum, Mr. George Bahow, Desmos Vice-President



Desmos Vice-President, **George Bahow**, informed the Committee in details about his participation at the official inauguration of the International Forum of Jewish Scouts (IFJS), which took part in Jerusalem on November 2nd, 2006. Desmos Vice-President said Desmos is highly respected as the Link that sincerely works in favor of understanding and cooperation and the organizers of IFJS took it as a positive example when they were preparing establishing of their link. He said he was warmly welcomed during the opening ceremony as the only guest of honor and he was given the opportunity to address the Forum (George Bahow's address in Appendix 3).

Ad. 7 - Address of the World Scout Committee Member, Georges El-Ghorayeb Presentation of the scout solidarity project "The Rebirth of the Phoenix"

The World Scout Committee member, **Georges El-Ghorayeb**, expressed his thanks for the invitation to take part at the Desmos Committee meeting and said it's a pleasure for him to work with Desmos, since he believes in spiritual development in Scouting and in faith organizations in our Movement, because it gives the meaning to Scouting.

Georges El-Ghorayeb presented to the Desmos Committee members the difficult situation the people of Lebanon and the scouts of Lebanon have been facing last year and the problems they still have. He reminded to the large number of innocent victims and huge devastation of the country, and emphasized the important role of Lebanese scouts in assisting people affected by atrocities of war. He pointed out that, unfortunately, 18 scouts lost their lives and 30 were badly injured and said that he wrote an article on those brave young people that sacrificed their lives while helping the others in need.



Georges El-Ghorayeb said that Lebanese scouting is well-developed and indicated that prior to the war that emerged in 2006 they have had lots of contacts worldwide and very good international relations. After the tragic events of 2006, he had the idea to develop the project, which would arouse the scout solidarity and with a broad international involvement help Lebanese scouts to overcome difficulties in this post-war time, assisting at the same time to Lebanese people through community-oriented activities. Georges El-Ghorayeb suggested the idea to the WOSM Secretary General and thus the project "THE REBIRTH OF THE PHOENIX" was born.

Georges El-Ghorayeb explained in details the project to the Desmos Committee meeting and then performed the video and PowerPoint presentation, which was highly appreciated.

Georges El-Ghorayeb then explained the details of the Project (objectives, identified workshops, venue, dates, details on preparation and accommodation, age of participants, engagement period of minimum 10 days and maximum 30 days, and other conditions for participation like the price of 10\$ per day for the food), and emphasized that the Project is supported by different international institutions and organizations (European Union, UNICEF, HCR, World Health Organization, PNUD, ESCWA, International Red Cross). He invited Desmos to spread the information to all Desmos countries and encourage them to join the project.

Desmos President, Christos Papageorgiou, said the Project is an excellent idea on how to promote in practice the scout solidarity and indicated that the security aspect might be the only eventual hindering issue. He said his proposal to the Desmos Committee is to recommend Desmos member-countries a broad circulation of the Project document and to encourage membership to take part. Christos Papageorgiou said he would be personally interested to take part together with his wife.

Georges El-Ghorayeb assured Desmos Committee members that the security issue is something the Project carefully treats and that Lebanon is now under UN protection. He added that for those not being comfortable with going to the south of the country there will be locations in the middle and in the north of Lebanon, where the Project's activities will go on as well.

Georges El-Ghorayeb gave the Desmos Committee members the hard copy document containing information on the Project, as well as the CD with the presentation and suggested to put the link on the Desmos web site, once the Project's web site is completed.

The World Scout Committee member, **Georges El-Ghorayeb**, took part in all activities together with other Desmos Committee members and followed the complete programme prepared by the host association - Cyprus Scouts Association.

Ad. 8 - Desmos at the 12th European Guide and Scout Conference, Slovenia, May 2007
Introduction: Mr. Marko Petrovic, Desmos Secretary General

Desmos Secretary General, **Marko Petrovic**, informed the Committee about the forthcoming European Scout Conference, which will be held in Portoroz, Slovenia, May 5 - 11, 2007, and about conditions of participation. He said that Desmos was successfully represented at the European Conference in Prague, but for the Prague Conference the faith organizations with consultative status with WOSM were invited as guests not having to pay the Fee, which is not the case now. Furthermore, the Prague Conference programme offered the faith organizations the opportunity for pro-active presence, which is not the case now.

After short discussion, the Committee decided that Desmos would take part at the European Scout Conference in case the European Scout Office covers one or two Fees for Desmos representatives. If so, Desmos would be represented by the President and/or Secretary General. Otherwise, Desmos should rather invest the money in its activities at the World Scout Jamboree, which is much more important as the event giving the opportunity for faith organizations to have a pro-active and creative role.

Ad. 9 - Desmos at the World Scout Jamboree, UK, July-August 2007
Desmos contribution to celebration of the Centenary of Scouting
Introduction: Christos Papageorgiou, Desmos President /
Marko Petrovic, Desmos Secretary General

In his introduction for this item, Desmos President Christos Papageorgiou reminded to the successful Desmos participation at the EuroJam in 2005, when Desmos workshop had 1200 participants and when 800 wooden plates have been painted by young people, boys and girls from different countries, as well as some 400 paper drawings. The EuroJam workshop was a precious experience for Desmos and it proved that young people can be attracted with appropriate ideas, even if the tent was not big enough to welcome all interested scouts and offer them more space to take part and be creative, since there were only four tables and six chairs. The youngsters, however, didn't mind to sit on the ground in their will to join the workshop and make themselves a small contribution to the spiritual dimension of the Jamboree.

Christos said the estimation is that we shall have around 2.500 scouts at Desmos stand, and the organizers are ready to offer us the material for the workshop for such number of participants.

The organizers decided to encourage Desmos volunteers to take part and help Desmos activities at the Jamboree, so they reduced the Fee to only 110,-GBP, which is really a good price. They were quite cooperative regarding the registration deadline too, but we now have to be efficient and agree on this meeting about the Desmos team for WSJ, since we need to send the names until February 15, 2007. The proposal is to have the team of seven people - Christos Papageorgiou, his wife Maria, and Vassilis Birtsas from Greece; Zoran Petrovic and another volunteer from Serbia; one volunteer from Palestine and one from Lebanon. The team will have the only duty to work on the Desmos stand, to run the Desmos Workshop and to take part in all activities related to Desmos presence at the World Scout Jamboree in UK.

Both Desmos President and Secretary General insisted that the deadline for names be respected.

Christos Papageorgiou explained the WSJ calendar and the technical details related to the Jamboree programme. He informed the Committee about the idea to make the façade of the Desmos tent in the image of the orthodox church, indicating that we have to decide what church will it be and suggesting that we may choose for instance one of the churches from the Holy Land. Then, we have approximately two months to technically realize the idea. He invited the Committee members to send to him and Vassilis Birtsas by e-mail the front-look photos of several churches in shortest possible delay, in order to have enough time for preparatory work.

The idea is to arrange the interior of the Desmos tent with an exhibition, which would present "The History of Orthodoxy". The texts following the photographs should be translated in two official WOSM languages (English and French), as well as in Arabic and Russian (or Balkan languages). In order to do that we have to think about volunteers ready to work on translation. The atmosphere would be

much better if we could also provide the Byzantine music inside the tent, so we should all think how to realize it.

The Desmos Workshop would be realized on 8-10 tables and with three or four essential themes. The alternative activity might be a rosary handicraft, which one volunteer from Serbia is ready to run.

We plan to make the new Desmos leaflet, especially for the occasion of the Centenary and we intend to print 3.000 copies, having in mind the number of scouts that will most probably visit the Desmos stand. Therefore, the Committee members are invited to send to Christos Papageorgiou and Vassilis Birtsas the photographs from the activities in their countries or from joint activities with some other Desmos country.

Desmos President explained that behind the Desmos tent there will be another smaller tent as the place for prayers. It should be appropriately decorated, so the Committee members are invited to send their ideas and proposals.

There will be a Liturgy during WSJ. The Metropolitan of Great Britain will be present and it would be good if we could assure the presence and participation of the chorus of nuns that took part at the EuroJam in 2005. The Committee member Zoran Petrovic accepted to help in communication and contact in this matter.

It is important to prepare the appropriate letter for all the national contingents, informing about the Liturgy.

On the occasion of August 1, the Scouting Sunrise Day, there will be presentations on the main stage and Desmos should organize five boys and five girls to sing. The Committee member from Serbia **Zoran Petrovic** accepted the responsibility to organize that with the Serbian National Contingent. In order to get technical details and instructions, Zoran should get in touch with Phil Pearson immediately after the Committee meeting (phil.pearson@scouting2007.org).



The Committee member from Lebanon, **Georges Abboud**, suggested it would be very good and effective if we could provide the PC projector and display the Desmos tent exhibition on the lap-top, along with the appropriate Byzantine music. He said he will think about it and try to find the possibility to provide the device.



The conclusion regarding this item of the Agenda was that Desmos participation at the World Scout Jamboree in UK is very important and that all the Committee members should make efforts to help it work well, since it will be the opportunity for Desmos promotion to the broadest possible public and at the same time Desmos contribution to celebration of the Centenary of Scouting.

Ad. 10 - Discussion on Desmos promotional materials

The Committee member **Zoran Petrovic**, informed the Committee on steps undertaken so far regarding the production of the Desmos flag and Desmos badges. He said both items will be ready in time for the World Scout Jamboree.

The question was raised regarding the Desmos calendar, which realization was previously accepted by Desmos PR and International Relations Commissioner **Maher Sahlieh**. Since Maher could not manage it in previous period **Zoran Petrovic** offered to produce it in Serbia for a small amount of money of up to 100,-USD for 3.000-5.000 calendars. The Committee agreed that the offer is good and that we should find the way to pay it. The World Scout Committee member Georges El-Ghorayeb offered his personal contribution of 100,-USD.

Desmos Committee is grateful to Georges El-Ghorayeb for his generous contribution.

Ad. 11 - Discussion on the activities foreseen in the forthcoming period

- **Common activities on the borders between Desmos country-members (Thinking Day)**

The Committee agreed that each association in Desmos member-countries should try to organize at least a small event together with associations in neighboring Desmos countries. For instance: Palestine and Israel; Serbia and Croatia, etc. The Committee members should work on the issue in the countries they come from.

- **Desmos activities on bilateral basis**

Desmos Secretary General Marko Petrovic said that the experience of last summer, when a group of Palestinian scouts took part at the National Jamboree in Serbia is an excellent example of bilateral cooperation between the Desmos countries.

Desmos PR and International Relations Commissioner Maher Sahlieh said his association is ready to send 10 leaders to Serbia for a Woodbadge training, which will be another example of bilateral cooperation between Desmos countries.

The Committee encourages other Desmos countries to intensify mutual cooperation and use every opportunity to have joint activities.

- **Training on Spiritual Dimension in Serbia**

Desmos Secretary General **Marko Petrovic**, and Desmos Committee member **Zoran Petrovic** informed the Committee about the progress on the matter of Training on Spiritual Dimension in Serbia-Montenegro. Marko and Zoran confirmed that there are two quite certain options regarding the venue of the Training, one of which is the Monastery Mileseva, where the previous Committee meeting was organized. The **Episcope Filaret** himself confirmed the doors of the Monastery are open for Desmos members and said that Desmos is welcomed to organize the event in Mileseva Monastery. The other option is the Holy complex of Soko Grad, in Western Serbia, close to the border with Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Marko and Zoran will decide on the venue, prepare the invitation for a four-day training and send it to all the Desmos countries. The term of the Training will be July 1st, 2007.

In the meantime, the Committee should work jointly on the Training programme and it can be done through e-mail exchange.

Ad. 12 - Open discussion

Desmos PR and International Relations Commissioner **Maher Sahlieh** informed the Committee about his contacts in Jordan and efforts made in order to bring the Jordanian Orthodox Scouts back to Desmos, after several years of inactivity. Maher said that in spite of the promise the Jordanians gave him that they will send someone to join the Desmos Committee in Cyprus and take part at the meeting, nobody appeared. (Maher's Report in Appendix 4).



Desmos Treasurer **Christos Marneros** suggested that we should move the term of the annual Committee meetings for spring time, indicating that quite often, especially in continental countries, the weather may be very cold in January and February and it can influence the normal traffic between countries.

Regarding the next Committee meeting, Desmos PR and International Relations Commissioner **Maher Sahlieh** said he would try to arrange it with the Jordanians, since it would be the opportunity to finally link them with Desmos.

Desmos Committee member **Zoran Petrovic** said there might be the possibility to organize it in Herzegovina part of Bosnia-Herzegovina, in Trebinje, not far from Dubrovnik (Croatia), which has excellent connections with most of the cities in Europe and beyond.

Desmos President **Christos Papageorgiou** suggested we should perhaps try to organize it in Macedonia (FYRO), for instance in Ohrid Scout Centre.

Maher Sahlieh said he would like to thank once again to the Cyprus Scout Association and especially to Christos Marneros for hosting this meeting. Maher pointed out he is glad to see Desmos progressing and achieving the goals. Maher also suggested that we accept the practice to have on each Desmos Committee meeting the evaluation of realization of the tasks accepted on the previous ones.

Desmos Vice-President **George Bahow** informed the Desmos Committee that he was decorated for his work in Scouting by the Israeli Scout Federation with one of the highest decorations in Israel. Desmos President **Christos Papageorgiou** said it's excellent news since it's at the same time the recognition of Desmos' work. Christos said it would be nice if the NSOs would give Desmos recognition, and that the Committee members should suggest it to their associations.

Desmos Secretary General **Marko Petrovic** emphasized once again the importance of good communication within the Committee and invited the Committee members to use the opportunities offered by e-mail communication as the cheapest and quickest way for efficient exchange.

Marko expressed special thanks to **Vassilis Birtsas** for his engagement at this meeting and for readiness for full involvement in Desmos activities in the forthcoming period, emphasizing that Desmos really needs such committed people.



The World Scout Committee member **Georges El-Ghorayeb** expressed his thanks for the invitation to take part at the Desmos Committee meeting. He wished Desmos good luck and success in its mission and confirmed that Desmos will have his full support in future.

The Committee expressed marriage congratulations to the Committee member Lazar Apostolov, wishing him and his wife all the happiness.

The Committee expressed sincere wishes for fast recovery and good health in future to the Desmos Deputy Secretary General Naaman Shahada.

The working part of the Desmos Committee meeting was then closed.

During the visit to the national Scout Centre "Kornos", all the participants of the Desmos Committee meeting had the opportunity to lunch with the officials of the Cyprus Scout Association, as well as with the Vice-Chairman of the European Scout Region, **Marios Christou**.

Desmos President and Desmos Secretary General had the opportunity to discuss in brief the actual Desmos issues with Marios Christou, who also wished Desmos success in its future work and promised his support.



During the visit to Nicosia, after the Liturgy that the participants of the Desmos Committee meeting took part at, the Archbishop of Cyprus, Mr. Chrysostomos II, received the Desmos delegation and spent some time in cordial conversation. The President of Desmos, Christos Papageorgiou, explained to the Archbishop the Desmos vision and objectives of the Link and offered him a small present in memory of the Desmos Committee meeting in Cyprus.

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

The host association - The Cyprus Scout Association - did its best to enable Desmos Committee members visit as much as possible in a short period of free time.

The first day the Committee members had the opportunity to visit Larnaca and its numerous wonderful spots. The next day the visit was organized to the Archeological site and the beautiful Monastery of St. Neophytos in Pafos district. We had the opportunity to visit the entire Monastery complex and had the meeting with the Monastery Prior. On Sunday, the Committee members visited Nicosia, took part at the morning Liturgy in the Church of St. Demetrios. After the Liturgy the Committee had a fruitful meeting with the Archbishop of the Independent Orthodox Church of Cyprus, Mr. Chrysostomos II, The Committee members then visited the Wall separating the part under administration of the Government of the Republic of Cyprus and the part under Turkish occupation and walked the streets of this beautiful town. Finally, Desmos Committee members visited "Kornos" National Scout Centre and the wonderful church within the Centre's complex including the exhibition prepared in the Church's premises. This church is the copy of the original at Lysi village, situated in the occupied part of Cyprus. The Church was despoiled by Turks and the fresco (Holy Icons) were stolen and sold in the USA.



Visit to the Archeological site and the Monastery of St. Neophytos in Pafos district



Visit to Nicosia - participation at the Liturgy in the Church of St. Demetrios and walking the streets of Nicosia



Visit to the Church and religious exhibition - Kornos Scout Centre

DESMOS COMMITTEE MEMBERS ARE GRATEFUL TO THE CYPRUS SCOUT ASSOCIATION FOR WARM HOSPITALITY AND WONDERFUL TIME IN CYPRUS!



Limassol

THE ADDRESS OF THE DESMOS PRESIDENT CHRISTOS PAPAGEORGIOU
AT THE 2ND INTER-RELIGIOUS SYMPOSIUM IN TAIWAN

"Ethical Foundations of Inter-Religious Dialogue"

Fo Guang Shan Temple, Kaoshiung, Taiwan 5-8 May 2006

Dear Scout friends,

It's an immense pleasure for me to participate on behalf of DESMOS in this seminal Interreligious Symposium, and be surrounded by so many Scout-friends that sense the crucial importance of the agenda: "Together for Harmony and Peace".

We have tasked ourselves the goal to reinforce the value of Scouting as a movement promoting Interreligious Contact and Dialogue, and I am more than confident that upon the main points of the issue we are all, more or less, agreed. In my address I would like to express briefly some considerations and concerns that have occupied me with regard to these three main trends that have brought us here these days; I mean of course, Dialogue, Religiosity and Scouting. Instead of speaking in a general manner, I would prefer both to assess the distinctive value of these elements, as well as reflect on whether our strong will and effort to practically establish their union can really be offered unshakable and concise foundations.

Allow me to begin by expressing some initial concerns with regard to taking Dialogue as an unconditional and uncompromising starting-point. To my view, Dialogue has two principal merits. First, it is the safest path towards Truth. Without dialogue, beliefs and opinions remain sterile and no truth gets either objective or able to be communicated. The second merit of Dialogue has to do with its practical consequences. The very process of Dialogue goes in principle against fanaticism. Dialogue can only be sustained in an open-minded atmosphere and thus necessarily leads to tolerance and peace.

My main concern with the notion of Dialogue is that I find it difficult to affiliate both its merits with the idea of inter-religious relations in itself. I hope you will all agree that the aversion of fanaticism and the advent of tolerance and peace spring from dialogue because of the ideal of truth, i.e. Dialogue's first merit. People engage in dialogue because of their will for truth. Consequently, this renders them tolerant and respectful of other people's beliefs. But what about religious beliefs? In an inter-religious dialogue of global scale (please note my emphasis on the word global), the last thing that could be put forth would be to discuss whose dogma or religion is 'more true'. Dialogue is inevitably led here in a stumbling-point. In a secular dialogue, people discuss in order to find the truth. But any religious person has already found the truth. What kind of dialogue with a deep and substantive religious content can find its way among people that are deeply immersed in the certain and unquestionable truths of extremely different religious beliefs?

Having this in mind, one gets even more puzzled when viewing that the only remaining option is that of promoting dialogue simply because of its useful consequences. On the one hand, I find it too ill advised or even cynical to adhere to the view that dialogue is to be promoted simply because it turns people less fanatic. This somewhat implies that one should retain the effect while forgetting the essential cause and inspiration of dialogue, which is the finding of truth. On the other hand, I find this idea of promoting inter-religious dialogue because of its peace-making effects, impossible in itself. If the contrariety of the deep religious beliefs is ruled-out as a potential subject-matter of inter-religious dialogue, what is there to be called 'inter-religious', in a dialogue that does not touch upon religious issues? The disappointing conclusion that might be drawn is that the only 'inter-religious' component in such a dialogue would be the diversity of its members, not the content of the dialogue itself.

Now, I should like to make altogether clear that I present these thoughts only because of my will to surmount them, thus clearing all skeptical suspicion with regard to the profound project we're setting forth in this Symposium. And it is with the second and third parts of the above-mentioned triad, i.e. Religiosity and Scouting that a triumphant way-out of the impasse is provided.

Foremost, one only needs to convert the element of religious beliefs into that of 'religious activity' in order to see clearly, that religious differences and dialogue can form the part of a beautiful union. In an Interreligious

dialogue we do not come to discuss our doctrines. We come in order to find a way into the truth of our ethical activity towards God and towards Humanity. We do not come to abstractly define what is Good. We come in a dialogue of religious activities for the very sake of the truth and goodness of these activities. We form ethical members of a non-doctrinal dialogue. Allow me at this point to remind you of the ensuing dialogue among spiritual leaders of most of the existing religions and doctrines. These leaders certainly do not come together to discuss whose dogma is true and whose is not, but to discuss ethical issues of global concern. Similarly, we could follow them by reflecting on how can the diversity of our religious practices be thus interwoven, so as to bring truly good effects for everybody.

I deeply hold the view that Scouting can become the ideal form of this kind of Interreligious Dialogue and given the agenda and course of this Symposium, I have good reasons to be optimistic about its future outcomes. Scouting is itself grounded in spiritual principles. Given its educational trend, it can use all its powers to render young people sensitive on the great diversity of dogmas. This is of itself a way out of initial and life-persisting fanaticism. In my address I have tried to alert you on the implicit danger for the young scout to experience the ever-unsettled difference of religious beliefs as a source of disappointment for the finding of rational ground for inter-religious activities. Based as it is in universally cherished principles, scouting can coordinate the diversity of spiritual backgrounds towards an ethically defined realization of its high values.

Christos Papageorgiou DESMOS President

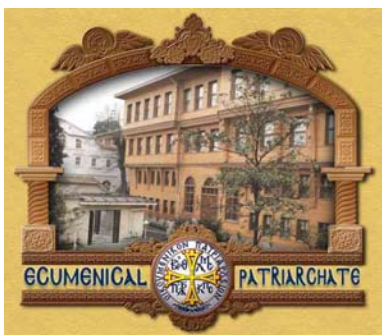
**Message of His All Holiness
The Patriarch of Constantinople and New Rome and Ecumenical Patriarch
Bartholomeos I
on the occasion of the Formation of the "FRIENDS OF DESMOS ASSOCIATION"**



"To Honourable Mr. Christos Papageorgiou, President of the International Link of Orthodox Scouts DESMOS, dear son of our Mediocrity, praying for grace, blessing and mercy by our Most Merciful God.



With paternal joy and right satisfaction, observing from the Seat of the Mother Church of Christ, the Holy Centre of Orthodoxy, the entirety of actions of the International Link of Orthodox Scouts DESMOS, we have recently received the news of the formation of the benevolent Association "Friends of DESMOS", whose aim is the moral and material support of its significant mission, as your Link offers in many ways, towards the exposure of our Orthodox Faith through Scouting all around the world.



With paternal praise for your new and much beneficial pursuit, we strongly commend and bestow upon all members involved with our fervent Patriarchal wishes and blessings.

May the plentiful Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all, dear children in our Lord."

*Bartholomeos I
Patriarch of Constantinople and new Rome
and Ecumenical Patriarch*

**THE ADDRESS OF DESMOS VICE-PRESIDENT GEORGE BAHOW
ON THE OCCASION OF THE OFFICIAL INAUGURATION OF
THE INTERNATIONAL FORUM OF JEWISH SCOUTS**

Dear brothers and sisters,

On behalf of the International link of Orthodox Christian scouts "Desmos", Allow me to greet the participants of this important event.

I am very glad to represent the Desmos in this official inauguration of the International forum of the Jewish scouts.

Desmos was born in June 1997, at the Holy site of the Pentely Monastery of Athens in Greece. This link is an autonomous body of scouts of the Orthodox Christian faith, who belong to National member organizations of the world organization of the scout movement.

Its founding expressed our sincere desire to contribute to the spiritual development of Orthodox Christian scouts by helping them to sense the importance of the Duty to God and to understand the essentials of B-P's spiritual vision.

The vision of Desmos is to become itself a basis of mutual understanding for all scouts associations that include Orthodox scouts. We hold the belief that Orthodoxy, offers a universal conception of God and creation that can guide us in our personal journey towards what is True and what is God.

Therefore, we find in Orthodoxy a genuine inspiration to work, and we believe that it actually answers to the spiritual needs of the youth generation.

Most importantly, however, we totally respect the fact that the Duty to God is amenable to various interpretations and thus passionately promote tolerance among all scouts, and especially among those that come from entirely different spiritual backgrounds.

Desmos, strongly encourages inter-religious dialogue and contact. Tolerance, understanding and co-operation is our vision for today's world, and the message we seek to convey to believers of all religions.

Dear brothers and sisters,

We are proud to be the members of the Great world scout family. Some years ago, we started working with our brothers and sisters from other WOSM faith organizations on development of the inter-religious dialogue in scouting, and we would like to invite you to join us in spreading the idea of peace, tolerance, understanding and co-operation.

On the occasion of the official inauguration of the International forum of the Jewish scouts, in the spirit of the world wide scout brotherhood, I would like on behalf of Desmos to pass you the message of peace and our sincere wishes for the successful start and development of cooperation between Jewish scouts world wide as well as for your fruitful cooperation with other faith organizations within the world organizations of the scouts movement.

Our sincere greetings for all of you and may God bless you.

George Bahow, DESMOS Vice-President

THE REPORT OF THE DESMOS PR
AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMMISSIONER MAHER SAHLIEH

***Dear President,
The International Link of Orthodox Christian Scouts.
Dear Committee members,
Dear Brothers,***

Since the date of appointing me as an International Relations Commissioner to the Link, I am trying to have the maximum in good relations between the Link members and especially in our region, the Middle East, raising an objective of cooperation and collaboration among Desmos members Palestine, Israel and Jordan. As most of you know the relations between the Palestinian Orthodox scouts, and Israeli Orthodox scouts in a good manner, regarding contacts and some common visits trying to have some common activities in the near future, the only problem was in getting in contacts with Jordanians, but finally and recently I succeeded to get in touch with them. On December last year, I have been visiting Jordan and I tried a lot to have contacts with our brothers the scouts, as Dr. Odeh Kawas was in charge with me to execute this mission in success, and finally we made it.

What I understood from them in our meeting that they had some internal problems, which they come over, by new elections with new board members, which they tried to restructure their organization with new board members.

Before leaving Palestine, and after lot of trials they do promise me that they are sending scout board member to attend our meeting, which is suppose to be here today, asking them through the whole week to give me the travel information in order to arrange him the accommodation etc. but unfortunately with no reply, I tried lot of times to contact them by phone, as always there is no respond, finally I contacted their offices and homes wherever I have the telephone numbers, once only they get back to me saying that they are still trying to have Visa for Cyprus for the person who is going to attend, which from day one I informed and instructed them to do so, as you see nobody shows up.

About the common activities among the Link members in the last period of time, beside the meetings and visits, among the members we as Palestinian Orthodox Organization contributed to the following activities:

- 1- International Jamboree which was held in Serbia last summer, fifteen scouts with three leaders from our Organization contributed which was very successful.*
- 2- We had a common Camp for leadership training in the area of Beit Lehem, also last summer, attended by the whole scout's leaders of Palestinian Orthodox Organization.*
- 3- All of the Organization members contributed in Olive picking campaign, in Palestine assisting the local community, in the olive season.*

Thank you and God bless our Link.

Maher Sahlieh, DESMOS PR and International Relations Commissioner