



DESMOS

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

DESMOS COMMITTEE MEETING SOFIA, BULGARIA, 15-17 April, 2005

M I N U T E S

DESMOS Committee Meeting was held in the premises of the "Sipka" hotel, in Sofia, Bulgaria.

Present:

Ioannis Tzen , Desmos president	Greece
Marko Petrovic , Desmos Vice-president	Serbia-Montenegro
Christos Papageorgiou , Desmos Secretary General	Greece
Maher Sahlieh , Desmos Treasurer	Palestine
George Bahow , Desmos Committee member	Israel
Naaman Shahada , Desmos member-country representative	Israel
Christos Marneros , Desmos Committee member	Cyprus
Ion-Iulian Popescu , Desmos member-country representative	Romania
Dimitrinka Todorova , Desmos member-country representative	Bulgaria
Ivan Kolovos , Desmos member-country representative	Bulgaria

Did not respond to the Invitation:

Irakli Todua , Committee member	Georgia
Ilija Cadijev , co-opted Committee member	Macedonia (FYRO)



The proposed Agenda:

1. Address by DESMOS Chairman, Mr. Ioannis Tzen
2. Address by DESMOS Vice Chairman, Mr. Marko Petrovic
3. Report of the Treasurer, Mr. Maher Sahlieh
4. Report of the Secretary General, Mr. Christos Papageorgiou
5. Report on the Meeting with Ecumenical Patriarch Bartolomew, Ioannis Tzen / Christos Papageorgiou
6. Report on the 2nd Inter-religious World Scout Symposium in Cairo, Mr. Christos Papageorgiou
7. Report on the ICCS Europe/Mediterranean Meeting, Berlin 2004, Mr. Christos Papageorgiou
8. Discussion on the Orthodox Booklet project, Mrs. Dimitrinka Todorova
9. Discussion on the production of information and promotional material for DESMOS (leaflet, calendars, newsletter, badges etc.), Mrs. Dimitrinka Todorova and Mr. Christos Papageorgiou
10. Discussion on the development of DESMOS' website
11. Discussion on joint activities (camps) between Scouts from DESMOS member-countries; also, organizing a symposium for Scout leaders, Mr. George Bahow
12. Common activities on the borders between DESMOS member-countries (Thinking Day), Christos Papageorgiou
13. Presentation of the DESMOS Scout Plan, by Mr. George Bahow. Emphasis on youth generation participation in Scouting activities, meetings, camps, training courses, delegations, etc.
14. DESMOS assistance in relieving people affected by natural disasters, Mr. George Bahow
15. Discussion on future events:
 - Training on Spiritual Dimension in Scouting in Serbia-Montenegro
 - EuroJam, Orthodox mass, workshops on Orthodox iconography and architecture
 - 2nd inter-religious Symposium in Taiwan, 28 April – 1 May, 2006, Title: "Faith and Belief: Scouting in dialogue for Justice and Deeper Understanding"; Preparation Meeting in December 2005
 - World Scout conference, Tunisia, September 2005 / DESMOS Conference, elections for the new DESMOS Committee (2006 – 2009)

was unanimously adopted at the beginning of the Meeting.



Ad. 1 - Address by DESMOS Chairman, Mr Ioannis Tzen

Desmos President, **IOANNIS TZEN**, expressed his thanks to all present Committee members and representatives of Desmos member-countries for coming to the meeting in Bulgaria. On behalf of the Committee he expressed gratitude to Mrs. Dimitrinka Todorova for the efforts in organizing the meeting.

Ioannis Tzen thanked God for recovery of our brother Christos Papageorgiou.

As the most important activity between the two Committee meetings, Ioannis Tzen pointed out the recent visit to the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, which he realized together with DESMOS Secretary General Christos Papageorgiou. Ioannis Tzen emphasized that DESMOS now has an important protector and a friend in the personality of the Ecumenical Patriarch, who promised to assist us in the best possible way by appointing one metropolitan for link with DESMOS on a permanent base.



President Tzen encouraged DESMOS Committee members to keep on working with commitment on DESMOS issues for the benefit of Orthodox youth and expressed his expectations that the Meeting will be fruitful and beneficial for further DESMOS development.

Ad. 2 - Address by DESMOS Vice Chairman, Mr Marko Petrovic

Expressing gratitude to OBS and especially to Mrs. Dimitrinka Todorova for organizing the regular DESMOS Committee meeting, DESMOS Vice President **MARKO PETROVIC** greeted all the Committee members gathered in Sofia in order to discuss important DESMOS issues and face the forthcoming challenges.



Marko Petrovic emphasized the importance of scout events on European and world level in this year, in which DESMOS should take part - EuroJam and the World Scout Conference, pointing out that prior to the World Scout Conference we have the DESMOS Conference, which is extremely important for future work and development of our Link.

The European Scout Jamboree in UK, which programme considers a significant role of faith organizations in Scouting, requires serious DESMOS preparations in order to fully contribute to the quality of the spiritual dimension in Scouting.

The World Scout Conference always represents an extraordinary event since it gathers NSAs delegations from all over the world giving the opportunity for exchange and discussions on different issues.

DESMOS Conference, which by tradition will be held one day prior to WSC, is very important for our Link because of the elections for the new Committee but also because of the strategic decisions we have to bring in order to assure development of DESMOS.

Marko Petrovic also pointed out that we should start serious preparations for the next World Scout Jamboree to be held in UK at the same location as EuroJam and the celebration of Centenary of Scouting, in spite of the fact that we still have more than two years in front of us. It will be the opportunity to broadly promote DESMOS mission and vision and fully contribute to the significant anniversary - one century of Scouting.

In his address Marko Petrovic reminded that there are still numerous obstacles to DESMOS development, especially in the Balkan region, where most of NSAs are facing internal problems, which consequently influences their contribution to development of DESMOS. He also emphasized the problem of inactive DESMOS member-countries and the need to find the mechanism to motivate them and get them back.

Ad. 3 - Report of the Treasurer, Mr Maher Sahlieh

DESMOS Treasurer, Mr. **MAHER SAHLIEH**, said that until now he actually did not have the opportunity to submit the Treasurer's report, because there was no income whatsoever since the founding of DESMOS.

Maher Sahlieh emphasized the need to assure funding and said that we have to work hard to raise funds. He believes the fund raising is the issue the Committee should seriously work on in the forthcoming period.

Maher actualized once again the idea to establish the Desmos NGO and thus get the access to different funds through nomination of appropriate projects. He reminded the Committee members that the opportunities for DESMOS activities are significantly limited due to absence of any available funds. This issue becomes extremely important for functioning of the DESMOS office, which we do hope would be established in near future.



Ad. 4 - Report of the Secretary General, Mr Christos Papageorgiou

DESMOS Secretary General, Mr. **CHRISTOS PAPAGEORGIU**, thanked Dimitrinka Todorova for the big efforts and the personal commitment in organizing this DESMOS Committee meeting. He greeted the Committee members and especially welcomed new participants, member-countries representatives from Romania and Bulgaria.



Christos explained the health problems he faced for the last couple of months, which kept him from realizing the tasks and thanked all those who were supporting him and giving him strength to overcome the situation. He said he had no idea that he actually has so many friends worldwide.

Secretary General said that, in spite of the fact that we had a very good meeting in Athens last year, we did not realize the tasks as planned. He pointed out that he is nevertheless optimistic because of the fact that DESMOS nowadays have open doors everywhere.

He reminded there were certain events in previous period, which created a positive atmosphere and stressed the importance of the event in Valencia that certainly represents the significant step forward. Desmos is nowadays fully and truly recognized. Our Link is being invited to different important events and our work is highly estimated by other faith organizations and WOSM itself. Yet, it should not be a one-man work, we have to work together and the team results will be even better - Christos said.

Christos Papageorgiou underlined the issue of DESMOS web site as one of the most important things that we must realize in shortest possible period. He said that, besides offering well-known opportunities for presentation of our Link, the web site also represents a sort of a "visit-card" and a ticket for access to possible funding.

Secretary General also pointed out the importance of promotional material in forms of various publications and said that we could learn from the experience of other WOSM faith organizations that have lots of such material, like ICCS and IUIMS. Promotional materials could be used both within NSA and externally and might help us clearly present DESMOS objectives.

Christos said he expects reactions from the Committee members when he sends certain materials by e-mail. Yet, it happens seldom, although our position regarding certain issues may be important. It's

true that the booklet on spiritual dimension designed for WSJ in Thailand was made without our participation and contributions. But now we can say that the efforts we made were fruitful and that we're more closely involved in decision-making, so we are expected to offer our contributions. We can now incorporate our approach, but we have to be active and fully involved, each and every NSA that is a member of DESMOS. The other faith organizations work on team-bases and have excellent teams. As an organization we are much younger, but we have to start with such approach.

Secretary General asked the Committee members to use the materials he is providing, like "Learning to Work Together", "Challenges for the Future of the World" and "Info on World Scout Committee Programme". He said he wants to keep the Committee members informed, but he would also like the Committee members to act. He said he will continue sending material like he did before, but he appeals that the materials on spirituality be used appropriately and be accessible to scouts in NSA.

Regarding the DESMOS NGO issue, **IOANNIS TZEN** said he agrees with Maher about this idea that was mentioned on the previous Committee meeting and said that we must establish the DESMOS NGO in order to have access to funds. We may call it "Friends of DESMOS" for instance, or whatever. But, we have to examine legal aspects of such action, so we need both the opinion of WOSM officials and the advice of lawyers regarding Greek regulations. We are going to have intensive work on this issue in the forthcoming period. Of course, in order to obtain sponsorship, we must be able to demonstrate our efforts and results.

CHRISTOS MARNEROS said that all our efforts in the matter of registration of DESMOS as NGO must be made through and according to the rules and regulations of WOSM.

CHRISTOS PAPAGEORGIU suggested that **Ioannis Tzen** and **Maher Sahlieh** would be the appropriate persons to deal with this issue on behalf of DESMOS and that they should prepare the information for the Committee and present it at the DESMOS Conference in Tunisia.

Ad. 5 - Report on the Meeting with Ecumenical Patriarch Bartolomew

President **IOANNIS TZEN** said that we really need to be more active. He gave the example of the recent visit to Ecumenical Patriarch, when Patriarch Bartholomew said he didn't actually know the importance of DESMOS; he was keen to find out more about our Link, so Christos Papageorgiou provided the detailed information, which impressed the Patriarch, who said he is ready to help and asked us how can he provide help to us.

We said we need to have premises in Athens for DESMOS Head Office as one of the conditions for normal work. We also asked him to use his influence and lobby for us at the Government's bodies. We are aware that there are many new buildings in Athens after the Olympics and we believe that with support of the Patriarch something might be done. The Patriarch promised us he will send the letter to the Greek Government and we are quite optimistic about it. We are speaking about Athens as possible location for the Office since in that case we can do something about it.

President Tzen also said that together with the Secretary General he will prepare letters for big companies, which the Patriarch will sign. The signature of the Patriarch is very important, it opens the doors and makes this action quite promising in regard to fund-raising.

Our meeting with Ecumenical Patriarch was very fruitful. The point we made in our discussions with him was that the development of DESMOS would enable us to attract more orthodox youth involved in Scouting. Our activities in the forthcoming period should be also oriented towards areas that we consider as large resources for our future membership. We have already established contact with the person in charge for all orthodox churches in USA, Father Carloutsos. We intend to do the same in case of Australia with Archbishop Stylianos.

CHRISTOS PAPAGEORGIU said we have to urge our members to be active and not only to bear the label of DESMOS. The Head Office in Athens will help us better coordinate all our activities. Christos reminded that we have numerous tasks in front of us. He said that one of the important activities could be realizing of the idea of Orthodox Scouts Jamboree. The President Jean Tzen

explained that DESMOS was offered one terrain in the South-East of Greece for the Orthodox Scouts Jamboree and said we would invite participants from other WOSM faith organizations, to prove our openness and our will to cooperate with others.

CHRISTOS MARNEROS pointed out that it would be good to have a sort of note indicating that the Ecumenical Patriarch is supporting DESMOS.

Marneros explained that in Cyprus they have lots of different initiatives for children and young people and parents are sometimes confused when deciding whether to send their children to certain organization.



CHRISTOS PAPAGEORGIU explained that we have to develop our proceeding with the Ecumenical Patriarch step by step. His actions must be carefully planned in order to make the churches understand and accept it.

We are going to send the message to the World Scout Committee as well.

Christos Papageorgiou informed that the Greeks from all over the world would take part in the All-Greek- Jamboree, which will be held in Cyprus.

Secretary General reminded that DESMOS prepared meditations for the World Scout Conference in Thessaloniki and organized the Scout Own. “We did it very good, we had success and we are now welcome to do it again” – said Christos.

Christos Papageorgiou underlined that the important fact about the meeting with the Ecumenical Patriarch was that he invited the DESMOS representatives to stay and have lunch and coffee together, which is considered as a great privilege. In conversation held afterwards the Ecumenical Patriarch asked that the Metropolitan of Sasimon, GENNAVIOS, should be informed about DESMOS, because he - as a theologian – can be consulted about the materials realized by DESMOS and analyze if these are consistent with our orthodox faith and help DESMOS with advice. Therefore the Secretary General have already sent to the Metropolitan relevant materials including DESMOS Statute.

The Patriarch was also asked to accept DESMOS participation in all activities under patronage of the Ecumenical Patriarch, especially emphasizing on youth issues and environmental activities. We believe it would be important for DESMOS.

The Patriarch asked President Tzen and Christos Papageorgiou to send him the memo on the meeting, which was done. Christos Papageorgiou asked President Ioannis to read the letter.

A proposition has been made that the 3rd Interreligious Forum in 2007 would be organized in Constantinople or in Athens or in Geneva, and be hosted by the Orthodox. The response is now expected.

Ad. 6 - Report on the 2nd Inter-religious World Scout Symposium in Cairo

DESMOS Secretary General **CHRISTOS PAPAGEORGIU** informed the Committee members about inter-religious activities in previous period starting with the first meeting held in Sattahip, Thailand, prior to the World Scout Jamboree, and further on the meeting in Seville, Spain, which brought us to the 1st Inter-religious Symposium in Valencia, Spain, followed by the event in Cairo.

Christos Papageorgiou informed about the meeting related to the 2nd Inter-religious Symposium, planned to be held in Taiwan in December this year. DESMOS position for the meeting in Taiwan

would be that we need to promote spiritual dimension through practice, considering it much more beneficial for young people than staying exclusively within the theory.

THE REPORT

Athens, 30 December 2004

Dear Friends,

I am glad to report that I had the honor of attending the World Scout Inter-religious Forum Meeting in Cairo, Egypt. The meeting was hosted by IUMS, the International Union of Muslim Scouts, and was held at the Cairo International Scout Centre, from 17 to 20 December 2004.

The meeting was attended by 19 representatives of Religious Scout Links, as well as by 3 representatives of the World Scout Bureau. The religious links that were represented were:

- *Anglican*
- *Conference of Christianity in Guiding and Scouting (CCGS)*
- *International Catholic Conference of Scouting (ICCS)*
- *International Jewish Link (IJL)*
- *International Link of Orthodox Christian Scouts (DESMOS)*
- *International Union of Muslim Scouts (IUMS)*
- *Won Buddhism, Korea*
- *Won Buddhism, USA*
- *Won Buddhism, France*
- *World Buddhist Scout Brotherhood (WBSB), Taiwan*
- *World Buddhist Scout Brotherhood (WBSB), Thailand*

The schedule was divided in four sessions. The first session opened the proceedings, and included a welcome speech by the Arab Scout Regional Director, a greeting by the Chairman of the IUMS, a message by the World Organisation of the Scout Movement's Secretary General, a presentation of the programme and objectives of the meeting, and a speech by the Deputy of the Minister of Youth.

The keynote speaker was Sheikh Fawzi El Zefzaf, President of the Permanent Committee of Al-Azhar Al-Sharif for Dialogue on Religions. His speech on Peace and Islam was followed by a question and answer session about his presentation.

The second session followed up from the 1st World Scout Interreligious Symposium which was held in Valencia, Spain, in November 2003. After a photo and video presentation of the Symposium, there was a debate on the outcomes and challenges that derived from the Symposium. While most participants thought it had been a rare opportunity for communication and for creating cooperation channels, Jean Cassaigneau in particular emphasized the importance of turning the knowledge and ideas from such meetings into practice within everyday Scouting activities.

In a discussion entitled 'Sharing Experience', all religious links presented their aims and objectives, and offered an outline of their past and future activities. DESMOS noted the Seminar held in Cyprus and the Committee meeting which took place in Athens, as well as the future activities planned for 2005:

- *DESMOS Committee meeting in April 2005 in Sofia, Bulgaria*
- *Another seminar on the spiritual dimension of Scouting to be hosted by the Scouts of Serbia-Montenegro as our Vice-Chairman Mr. Marko Petrovic has promised (the exact date will soon be confirmed)*
- *DESMOS conference during the World Scout Conference in Tunis*
- *Active participation of DESMOS in the European Jamboree 'EuroJam' (DESMOS will organize a workshop on iconography and religious architecture. More details will be discussed next April in our committee meeting.)*
- *We hope to organize a meeting for all Christian members in Athens*
- *We also hope that the working group will have completed the creation of a booklet, as planned during the last committee meeting, in time for the conference in Tunis.*

Similar presentations were given by the other religious links' representatives, and it was very interesting to exchange our experiences about planning and implementing scout activities. It was also an opportunity to gather printed material from other organizations, particularly the IUMS and ICCS. The experiences and practices that are adopted by other links, were very interesting and useful, and we must discuss them in detail during our next committee meeting in Sofia.

An important discussion covered the conditions that need to be met by scouting links for obtaining consultative status with WOSM. Until now, ICCS, IUMS and DESMOS were the only links to have consultative status. This will help grow the family of religious scouting links and broaden our cooperation.

The second session concluded with a presentation by Jean Cassaigneau and Dominique Benard on WOSM's strategy and the 2007 centenary. Jean Cassaigneau stated that we must find a way to stimulate the cooperation between the limited number of associations. He expanded on the proceedings of the First Interreligious Scout Symposium which was held in Valencia, and presented its highlights and resolutions to the Parliamentary Scout Union in Cairo. The three links that have consultative status will contribute to the World Conference in Tunis by presenting and evaluating the activities that have taken place in the last three years.

Hany Abdul Monem discussed the 2007 World Jamboree. The presentation was accompanied by a short film, and there was an initial discussion of the religious activities and the prayer valley during the Jamboree.

The third session began with an evaluation of the interreligious activities at the 12th World Scout Moot 2004 in Taiwan. The discussion benefited from the participation of four Egyptian Rovers that had attended the Moot and from a video of the Moot. It was generally thought that the event was very powerful and moving, as it was proof of the results that can be achieved by consensus and cooperation. However, many mistakes and omissions were identified, which we will try to avoid in future activities.

Rev. Jonathan How outlined the main aims and activities of the 2005 European Jamboree. A video and powerpoint presentation of the Jamboree tradition introduced details about the religious dimension of the event, and several points were discussed. DESMOS committee members have already received information on EuroJam, which I forwarded by email one month ago. The issue will be more analytically discussed during our next committee meeting.

Dominique Benard talked about improvements that need to be made to the 'Explorers of the Invisible' booklet. DESMOS is a member of the working group for that purpose.

Sunday morning included a visit to Old Cairo's places of religious interest, and the fourth and concluding session was held in the afternoon. There was a detailed presentation of the preparations for the Interreligious Forum during the 37th World Scout Conference in Tunis, as well as for the 2nd World Scout Interreligious Symposium which will be held in Taiwan from 28 April to 1 May 2006.

After a long debate and a large number of ideas, it was agreed that the Symposium's title will be 'Faith and Belief: Scouting in Dialogue for Justice and Deeper Understanding'. All the details of the Symposium will be confirmed during the meeting of the Interreligious Forum, on 2-5 December 2005 in Taiwan. At least one representative of each link must participate.

Dear friends, this was a short indication of the issues that were treated in the Interreligious Forum in Cairo. As you can see, there are always plenty of challenges and subjects to think about. Such events are an opportunity for comparing and learning from other religious links, and it is, I believe, vital to stay in close and constant cooperation with other links and with WOSM. Through this kind of interaction and spiritual stimulation we can become more effective in realizing our goals, and in helping orthodox children around the world.

I will inform you about the proceedings in more detail during our next committee meeting. The full minutes of the Forum are being prepared by the World Scout Bureau, and I will forward them to you via email as soon as they reach me. I will also try to obtain the full text of the presentations given, the visual presentations about Valencia, the Moot in Taiwan and EuroJam, and I will give each member a copy of the WOSM Strategic Planning Kit.

I would personally like to extend my thanks to the Scouts of Greece for covering the travel expenses for the meeting in Cairo, and for their moral support to the efforts of DESMOS.

Finally, following today's correspondence with our President, Jean Tzen, he confirmed that a meeting with the Ecumenical Patriarch will be scheduled for February 2005, and that our contact with the Archbishop of America lies along a very promising path.

I hope that the New Year will bring everyone health, prosperity and enthusiasm about our efforts and activities.

Yours in Scouting,



*Christos Papageorgiou
DESMOS Secretary General.*

Ad. 7 - Report on the ICCS Europe/Mediterranean Meeting, Berlin 2004

DESMOS Secretary General **CHRISTOS PAPAGEORGIU** informed the Committee members about his participation at the ICCS Europe/Mediterranean Meeting in Berlin, emphasizing the significance of the fact that ICCS not only invited him as DESMOS Secretary General to take part at the Event but also paid all expenses.

“They were quite satisfied with my participation and my contributions, especially with my proposal concerning the way the leaders should be trained”.

They invited DESMOS to take part at their next meeting in Lebanon.

ICCS is a financially strong organization, but this is more than that, it's about the confidence resulting in good relations that we managed to establish in previous period.

THE REPORT:

Athens, 29 November 2004

Dear Friends,

It is my pleasure to inform you about the honor made to DESMOS and myself personally, of being invited to the ICCS-EM Seminar/Council in Berlin, Germany, on November 11-14, 2004.

It is the first time that the ICCS-EM (International Catholic Conference of Scouting – Europe / Mediterranean) has invited DESMOS to attend its proceedings. Other religious Scouting organizations were also invited, however, participants only included Muslim Scouts, a representative of Sikh Association UK, and DESMOS. The meeting was held in the Catholic German Frauenbund Haus in Berlin and accommodation was offered by the Berlin Youth Hostel.

The meeting included an exhibition by the participating associations, where printed material could be obtained. As a result, I have gathered a selection of leaflets and books on the duty to God through Scouting, which I will inform you about in our next committee meeting.

An ‘international evening’ was held prior to the main proceedings. It was a great opportunity for cultural exchange in general, but more specifically, it was the beginning of a meaningful acquaintance and discussion of the different approaches between different religions and associations.

The official opening was in the morning of Friday November 12, where the main presentation was entitled "Breaking Down Barriers" by Dr Ansgar Koschel. In his speech, Dr Koschel referred to the efforts that have been made in various countries of eliminating barriers, literally as well as metaphorically, especially between children of different faiths. The presentation commemorated the fall of the Berlin Wall and included slides and visual material. I hope I can obtain a transcript of the speech, which I will then send to all committee members.

The next day's main event was the round table meeting on the subject of "Faith in Scouting". The discussion included representatives from Sikh UK and Muslim Scouts, as well as the Catholic Scout representatives and, of course, DESMOS. The aim of the round table was to help understand the work of various denominational associations in Scouting, their methods, their educational system and their dynamism of faith in their Scout activities. The discussion offered participants the chance to realize and discuss the challenges of co-existence in a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic and multi-denominational global society, and discover our common goals.

Following the presentations by the four different faith links, many questions by the participants were discussed and the round table had a total duration of over an hour. On the whole, it was a very interesting and very rewarding experience, and, most importantly, it was a particular success for DESMOS. As everyone agreed, our Link's presentation (which I am sending as an attachment) was received with great enthusiasm, as it addressed a number of issues and proposed courses of action towards realizing the spiritual dimension of Scouting. My experience from participating in this event was very substantial, and will help our Link in becoming more versatile and efficient.

I hope that DESMOS can reach the point where it will organize such an event in one of our member countries, where we will have the chance to show the same warmth and hospitality that was given to us by the ICCS-EM.

I would also like to thank the Scouts of Greece for financially supporting the participation of DESMOS in the meeting by covering travel expenses.

I am certain that these activities will continue to flourish and bring different faith links closer together by bringing down the barriers that have kept us apart.

I wish everyone the best. Next time I will be reporting on the 2nd Inter-religious Scout Meeting that will be held in Cairo in December, on the subject of the religious activities of the Euro-Jamboree of 2005 and the 2nd Inter-religious Scout Symposium in 2006.

Yours in Scouting,



*Christos Papageorgiou
DESMOS Secretary General.*

Ad. 8 - Discussion on the Orthodox Booklet project

DIMITRINKA TODOROVA, member-country representative from Bulgaria, presented the Orthodox Booklet project that she was working on between the two DESMOS Committee meetings. She explained the general idea and the concept and introduced the draft material.

Desmos Committee believes this is a very important issue for DESMOS, and highly appreciating Didi's efforts done so far decides that the work on the booklet be continued and intensified.



The Committee asked **Ion-Iulian Popescu** from Romania and **Ivan Kolovos** from Bulgaria to assist Didi in order to complete the project in shortest possible delay.



The team should use the DESMOS Statute and other existing relevant materials.

Other Committee members are invited to give their contributions regarding the elements that the Team should focus on in order to present in the Booklet what is essential for DESMOS.

The material is to be completed and presented to the Committee within 2 (two) months.

Ad. 9 - Discussion on the production of information and promotional material for DESMOS

CHRISTOS PAPAGEORGIU said that we need a leaflet as a simple and clear presentation of DESMOS. The publicity is important, it brings transparency throughout the world and makes us closer to the public and our future members, but it may also bring financial support.

It would be good to incorporate contributions of member-countries and the photo and dedication message of the Ecumenical Patriarch. We must stress upon the activities – we can put, for example, cross-border activities like the ones we had on the Greece/Bulgarian border on the Thinking Day) - and include DESMOS events, but not all of it – just DESMOS Conferences for instance.

MAHER SAHLIEH said that the idea to include in leaflet cross-border activities is good since the international activities and networking may give us access to funding.

The Committee agreed that Ion-Iulian from Romania would work on technical aspect of the leaflet and Christos Papageorgiou and the Committee members should provide information to be included in the leaflet.

Regarding the DESMOS small calendar – **Ivan Kolovos** from Bulgaria and **Ion-Iulian** from Romania accepted to prepare the electronic design and present a model to the Committee members for approval and **Maher Sahlieh** accepted to arrange printing.

The Committee members agreed that it should be a two-year calendar, in order to have more economic approach and cover both 2006 and 2007.

The Committee also agreed that we should have at least one DESMOS publication per year.

Ion-Iulian Popescu underlined the importance of registering and copyright protect of the DESMOS name and logo, as well as other materials. Unfortunately, these actions require funds as well.

Another proposal for the committee coming from the Romanian representative was to have a flag for DESMOS. Christos Papageorgiou said that he will consult the WOSM standards, but as a general idea, the flag shall be the same color as the DESMOS logo's background color, and will have the DESMOS logo on it. The subject remains open for discussions.



Naaman Shahada presented to the participants the first DESMOS badge, which was highly appreciated. It was decided that each NSA will decide the dimension of the badge and the placement on the scout uniform. It also was decided that all NSAs members of DESMOS are free to make their own badges with the DESMOS logo, as long as these badges are made in respect of the the DESMOS logo (color and text).

Christos Papageorgiou said that we should consider in the near future realizing a Visual Identity for DESMOS.



CHRISTOS MARNEROS commented the issue of DESMOS badge sample, produced in Israel and presented by Naaman Shahada. He said that the badge size is very big and such big sizes are not preferred on the uniform.

Christos Papageorgiou pointed out that the colors used in this case are not the original DESMOS colors and **Naaman Shahada** explained that with the small size of the badge it would be difficult to have the full name of the Link on it.

There has been an exchange of opinions between the Committee members and finally it was agreed as follows:

- Each NSA, DESMOS member, is free to make the badge in preferable size
- The words "International Link of Orthodox Christian Scouts DESMOS" should be written in English, in capital letters, and the symbol of DESMOS as well as its colors should be exactly the same as these presented on the DESMOS Memo, i.e. the official DESMOS colors.

Ad. 10 - Discussion on the development of DESMOS' website

The Committee agreed on the importance of DESMOS web site on previous Committee session in Athens, when during the meeting with SHP representatives President of the Scouts of Greece, Mr. Christos Lygeros, promised us support.

Unfortunately, nothing was done in the meantime and the need to have the web site in shortest possible delay becomes more and more evident.

The Committee therefore decided to intensify work and appointed the task force for this job:

Ion-Iulian Popescu

Ivan Kolovos

Marko Petrovic

will work on this issue on both the technical aspects and the content of the web site.

- Marko will get in contact with SHP regarding the promised financial support for web site hosting. Marko will also contact Fady Shoucair who designed and established the initial DESMOS web site and connect him with Ion-Iulian Popescu and Ivan Kolovos;
- Ivan will reserve the domain;
- The Team will work together with other Committee members in order to define what is essential and should be pointed out at the web site (DESMOS logo, basic facts, the consultative status with WOSM, languages, different materials);
- Ion-Iulian and Ivan will prepare the web site design;
- Feedback of the Committee members – finalizing.

Deadline for the task: as soon as possible.

Ad. 11 - Discussion on joint activities between Scouts from DESMOS member-countries; organizing a symposium for Scout leaders, Mr George Bahow

GEORGE BAHOW said that DESMOS must grow up and one of the ways to achieve it is to gather young people, orthodox scouts, and offer them joint activities with their brothers and sisters from other DESMOS countries. George Bahow pointed out that it is not enough to have meetings and he also said we should not wait eternally for the money to come. George Bahow emphasized that the camps are the activities that may be considered as essential and that we have to do our best to realize such activities as much as possible in the forthcoming period.



MAHER SAHLIEH said that the focus should be on two issues: joint activities (camps) in order to give young people the opportunity to live the adventure together and experience international friendship meeting their orthodox brothers and sisters from other countries and symposiums / forums in order to enable young people to plan.

DIMITRINKA TODOROVA said that such activities are important for a scout life. Young people should grow up with Scouting, they have to make contacts, exchange with their peers and plan together.



NAAMAN SHAHADA, Desmos member-country representative, Secretary General of the Orthodox Scouts of Israel, agreed with George Bahow, Maher Sahlieh and Dimitrinka Todorova, saying that the experience that he gained through his engagement in Scouting confirms the importance of joint activities.

Joint activities, first of all camps, especially the international ones, give the opportunity to scouts to get to know each other, to exchange their ideas and experience and really live the international dimension of Scouting.

CHRISTOS MARNEROS said that the point is whether the national associations would accept to finance such events.

MARKO PETROVIC reminded that it is something that we have been repeating quite frequently. The problem of NSA readiness to fully participate and give their support is evident.

CHRISTOS PAPAGEORGIU agrees that the problem exists but he said we need the national associations to support DESMOS activities. But, we have the situation that certain NSA are simply not involved and there are always the same ones: Georgia, Moldova, Jordan, Republic Srpska ... We now have this problem with Macedonia (FYRO). We have to find the way to keep on even if certain persons leave the Committee.

Secretary General explained the Committee members all problems related to communication and (non)involvement of certain national associations.

In July 2005 we shall have the opportunity to present DESMOS, its objectives and activities during the Jamboree of Greek Diaspora in Cyprus. It will be the chance to attract new members to join our Link. But, on the other hand, we should not wait to have for instance 20 countries participating at some event. We can also have some low-cost activities with smaller number of participating associations, like in the case of the cross-border event that we have on the Greek/Bulgarian border for the last Thinking Day. We have to be realistic in our approach.

ION-IULIAN POPESCU said that we need to share the efforts. While one country is hosting the Committee, the others should host the joint activities like the camps. We have to organize at least one joint camp before we get engaged in preparations of the Orthodox Jamboree in 2008.

CHRISTOS PAPAGEORGIU agreed and raised the question – where and when we could organize the first camp?

The location should be easy to access for most of the countries, so perhaps it might be organized in Ohrid, in Macedonia (FYRO), where they also have excellent infrastructure. Christos suggested that Marko Petrovic gets in contact with Tashe Pasinecki who is running the Ohrid Scout Camp and examine the possibility of organizing a DESMOS international camp, which Marko accepted with pleasure.

Ad. 12 - Common activities on the borders between DESMOS member-countries

In our effort to bring the world's children closer together and to create a youth of peace and love without barriers of race or religion, we propose to all DESMOS members to celebrate next year's Thinking Day in as many places on the borders as they can with their neighbors. You could prepare a programme that links the Thinking Day with culture or whatever else can bring them closer together. I believe that this is a good idea for an activity promoting communication and cooperation with our neighbors.

Ad. 13 - Presentation of the DESMOS Scout Plan, by Mr. GEORGE BAHOW

Emphasize on youth generation's participation in Scouting activities, meetings, camps, training courses, delegations, etc.

- We must give the Youth a better life, more productive and more fruitful;
- Young boys and girls are the reason for which everything in Scouting is done, and we must decide on what ground we promote the most fundamental principles in Scouting;
- I suggest that we must revise back the booklet which was sent to all of us by brother Christos on 22nd of October 2004. Christos wrote many interesting and important notes that deal with the Youth generation;
- I think that DESMOS should confirm a strategic plan for all common activities;
- The Youth generation must establish the partnership relations between groups and associations;
- DESMOS can build up a real useful contact and friendship between all members of DESMOS in the whole world;
- We must propose reasonable programs to encourage the Youth generation's participation in the joint activities. Let us stress on: meetings, camps, mutual delegations, training courses (the same as in Cyprus), symposiums for leaders;
- The House of DESMOS is all the associations that are members of the Link. All these associations must do their best and contribute in order to protect this House and help for existing;
- All those associations must finance the common activities;
- We must start now to arrange our activities;
- Let us begin with the leaders: Symposium?
What about the training course in Serbia-Montenegro?
- I promise that our Association in Israel should host many common activities while the political situation must be improved;
- Regarding the Seminar held in Cyprus: what about the questionnaire that Mr. Maher should prepare?
- In order to implement all projects: we must be ready for all challenges of the day's problems and have the true desire to come over them.



Secretary General CHRISTOS PAPAGEORGIU added that the Committee members should take part in events whenever possible. He also said that the proposals should be done by NSAs and DESMOS is there to support.

Ad. 14 - DESMOS assistance in relieving people affected by natural disasters

GEORGE BAHOW:

The main objectives of the Link are to develop and to promote the spirit of brotherhood and warm relations and cooperation among scouts of the Orthodox faith.

We have learned that scouts are good factor for whole people in the whole world. Scouts should be an actual active to help people who are hit by natural disasters such as: earthquakes, water flows, diseases, etc.

People everywhere expect that scouts may do their duties and those duties are fundamental principles.

Our link DESMOS must have an active turn to deal with all national and international events.

How can we do that ?

- The Committee should decide immediately that we are ready to help;

- The Committee should decide what kind of help the scout associations can execute;
- The Committee will send all information to all the DESMOS members to implement the decision of DESMOS;
- I think that this human activity will assist in relieving people hit by natural disasters whenever and wherever they are.

MARKO PETROVIC: Tsunami catastrophe is the best example on needs of people affected by natural disasters. We have to prepare the paper as a frame for our action and we should decide about it on the DESMOS Conference.

But, we have to analyze the case of Tsunami in South-East Asia and the position of the World Scout Committee, as well as the rules and procedures that WSC established in regard to that catastrophe. We must respect the framework established by the World Scout Committee and build up our strategy for such situations on the base of that framework. I will send the Committee members the rules and procedures related to Tsunami disaster and then we can work together on the paper for our Conference.

Ad. 15 – Discussion on future events

- **Training on Spiritual Dimension in Serbia-Montenegro**

Desmos Vice-president, **MARKO PETROVIC**, informed the Committee about the steps undertaken so far and about problems and still existing uncertainty in regard to realization of this event.

Marko said that it would not be a problem to organize such event in Serbia-Montenegro from the point of view of organization, appropriate venue and logistics. But, the point is to organize the event free of charge for participants, having in mind that transportation expenses are already quite high. That's what I've been trying all this time – Marko said.

On the other hand, the amount needed is around 7.000 - 8.000 EUR, which is a lot of money and it's not easy to assure such support. So far, several options failed since the sponsors that initially promised their support could not finally realize it.

However, I did not abandon this idea and I now have some other options to try. I will have some important meetings with the people from Serbian Orthodox Church in the forthcoming period and I do hope we shall find the way to realize this important event – Marko said.

Marko Petrovic said he will keep DESMOS Committee members informed, but he also said he expects the prompt feedback from the Committee members when and if this event comes close to realization.

- **EuroJam, Orthodox mass, workshops on orthodox iconography and architecture**

Desmos Secretary General **CHRISTOS PAPAGEIRGIU** informed the Committee about DESMOS role at the forthcoming EuroJam event, which is to be held in UK by the end of July this year. Christos said that he is in contact with the Metropolitan of Britain in order to assure involvement and support of the Orthodox Church.

Christos explained that the participants will have the opportunity to fill with color the outlined drawings of various orthodox churches and monasteries and to keep afterwards their work as a souvenir. DESMOS and the EuroJam organizer will provide necessary material for this activity (paper with outlined drawings, colors).

The comment of the Committee members was that the activities expected during the EuroJam event will be quite intensive and that it would be difficult for Christos Papageorgiou to cope with it alone. The Committee suggested that **Ion-Iulian Popescu** joins Christos at EuroJam and Christos said he would try to assure that the complete expenditures for Ion-Iulian be covered by the organizer.

- **2nd Interreligious Symposium in Taiwan, 28 April – 1 May 2006**

Title: "Faith and belief: Scouting in Dialogue for Justice and Deeper Understanding"

Preparatory meeting – in December 2005

(this item was covered earlier in the meeting agenda)

- **World Scout Conference, Tunisia, September 2005**

Secretary General informed the Committee members that the regular World Scout Conference will be held in Tunisia, starting on September 5, 2005. DESMOS should be present at the Conference as it was present at the last two conferences (in Durban and in Thessaloniki)

- **DESMOS Conference, elections for the new Committee (2006-2009)**

Secretary General informed the Committee members that, prior to the World Scout Conference in Tunisia, we shall have our DESMOS Conference, which is planned for September 4, 2005 at the same venue where WSC will be held.

We need to prepare ourselves for our Conference, since among other important items on the agenda we shall also have the elections for the new Committee.

CHRISTOS PAPAGEORGIU said it is a pity that certain Committee members' mandate will stop by the end of this year and suggested that we should try to find the way to engage them in the future period. Not so many people are ready to invest their time and efforts in volunteer work, so we need the committed people and we have to keep them fully engaged in DESMOS activities.

In contacts with national scout associations in the forthcoming period we shall find out which DESMOS member-countries plan to have delegations at the World Scout Conference and which of them are ready to take part in our Conference. Thus, we shall have the info on number of delegations at the DESMOS Conference.

Secretary General will prepare material for the DESMOS Conference in cooperation and with assistance of the Committee members.

At the end of the Committee Meeting the President and the Secretary General prepared the note, which was signed by all present Committee members. The note and the remembrance plate of this Committee Meeting will be sent by the President Ioannis Tzen to Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, as soon as possible.

The DESMOS Committee members had the privilege and the pleasure to welcome at the Committee Meeting in Sofia the member of the Bulgarian Parliament, Mrs. DONKA DONCEVA, who took part in one segment of the Meeting. Mrs. Donceva was briefed by DESMOS President and Secretary General about DESMOS, its objectives and activities and seemed to be quite interested for our Link.



Mrs. Donceva accepted to have lunch together with the Committee members, which was the opportunity for additional exchange on Youth issues.

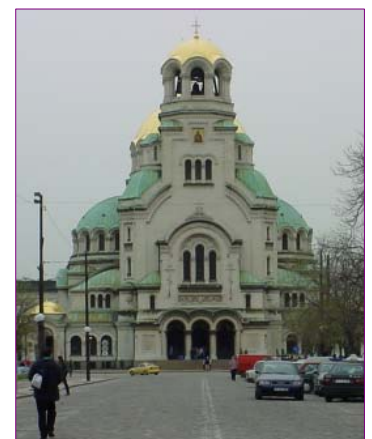
During the Committee Meeting in Sofia, the Committee members had social activities as well. The sightseeing of Sofia was organized by our Bulgarian hosts and we had the pleasure to enjoy the reception in the Greek Embassy in Sofia as guests of his Excellency Ambassador _____.

On Sunday morning the Committee members took part in mass in the Orthodox Church "Sveta Nedelja".

The Committee members visited several other churches in Sofia as well as **Alexandar Nevsky** Patriarchal Cathedral (a Memorial Church build with the efforts of the whole Bulgarian people in memory of the thousands Russian, Bulgarian, Ukrainian, Moldavian, Finnish and Romanian soldiers who, from 1877 to 1878, laid their lives for the liberation of Bulgaria from the Ottoman Empire).



“SVETA NEDELJA”



“ALEXANDAR NEVSKY”