



**BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA**

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Wayne M. Perry  
International Commissioner

**Date:** October 17, 2007

**To:** Members of the World Scout Committee

**From:** Wayne M. Perry  
International Commissioner

**Subject:** **Recent Decision of the Boy Scouts of America**

I am writing you today in my capacity as the International Commissioner of the Boy Scouts of America (BSA) to inform you of an irrevocable decision the BSA made at its National Officers Meeting last night with respect to our participation in the World Organization of the Scout Movement (WOSM). This decision was made after a very careful review of numerous issues that have evolved since early 2004. We are fully aware of the impact this decision will have on the BSA and WOSM; however, it has been determined that no other course of action is available to take.

Let me begin by expressing how proud the BSA is of our long involvement in world Scouting. The BSA's support and participation in WOSM has enabled us to use our resources to aid the Scouting movement throughout the world. The movement has in turn enhanced the richness of the BSA's Scouting program. We sincerely believe we have helped make a difference and hopefully look forward to doing so again soon.

Perhaps a brief summary of our financial commitment to world Scouting can help frame the issues at hand. The most recent audited financial statements of the World Scout Bureau (WSB) dated September 5, 2007, shows that the BSA contributed 39.04 percent of the fees collected by the WSB. This 39.04 percent the BSA contributed does not include the some \$2.5 million (USD) that the BSA, its donors, and its benefactors made in special grants to the WSB, its regional offices, and selected National Scout Organizations (NSOs) during this past year. Nor does the amount in fees paid include the large sums that were donated to the World Scout Foundation (WSF) by BSA Scouters, which were made as a result of the direct encouragement of the BSA. Additionally, the BSA continued to make program support materials available to selected NSOs at no cost.

The financial commitment made by the BSA outlined above also does not include the extensive time and financial commitments made by so many BSA volunteers and professionals who willingly attend and participate in the various task force and committee meetings of WOSM at the world, regional, or NSO level. BSA volunteers both give their time and pay their own way to these meetings (BSA volunteers do not receive travel or expense reimbursement from WOSM or the BSA). They do this out of a deep and personal commitment to WOSM.

Clearly, the BSA is by far the largest single financial contributor to WOSM of any member NSO, and we have an obligation to be certain these combined resources are utilized properly. Therein lies the core issue.

In return for these commitments, the BSA asks that the funds we provide to the WSB are (1) spent with a view of supporting the NSOs – especially NSOs in lesser developed countries – to grow and deliver a quality Scouting program to a maximum number of youth and (2) spent in an efficient manner with appropriate and transparent financial controls. The BSA has reluctantly come to the conclusion that under the current processes and leadership of the WSB, neither of these two goals has been nor will be achieved.

Therefore, the BSA has decided that it will suspend the payment of any and all funds (fees, grants, and task force support) to the WSB and its regional offices until the current Secretary General is replaced and appropriate processes instituted to restore the WSB to what we believe is its core mission in aiding NSOs to grow and deliver a quality Scouting program. (The BSA will continue to provide direct support to selected NSOs.)

Decisions of the WSB seem to be made with little regard to their effect on often-struggling NSOs. The WSB has focused on other priorities such as the “World Scout Scientific Congress” and its proposed new \$14 million “World Scout Center” building in Geneva, but it has not completed its 2007/2008 budget for at least three months into the current fiscal year (which is better than last year’s budget, which was finalized five months into the fiscal year).

The recently disclosed multimillion-dollar WSB investment in the Picarquin Training and Events Center (dubbed a “World Scout Center”) has adversely impacted the Interamerica Region Office and the NSOs it is charged to serve. Scout use at the Picarquin Training and Events Center represents only 7 percent of the use (on a revenue basis) of the center. The recently released report on Picarquin by the WOSM Audit Committee discloses that Picarquin’s “ongoing operations result in a significant annual loss to the Interamerica Region” and that “a profit will not be feasible under the current financial structure of Picarquin.” We disagree with the Secretary General’s belief that “Picarquin makes money” and disagree with the desire to construct a hotel on the site (with the area around the site being rezoned as a proposed gambling center) as a way of salvaging his decisions.

The recently proposed “tax” of 7.5 percent on the income from future world Scout jamboree fees as a means of raising money would make it more difficult for youth to attend future jamborees. There also appears to be no need for the WSB’s effort to license World Scout Centers. The impact these two items will have on struggling NSOs is likely negative at best.

We at the BSA are not at a loss for opportunities for using our resources. The BSA has many places to utilize its resources to further the Scouting movement. We have a renewed focus on serving disadvantaged youth in the USA and around the world, which can effectively utilize the dollars we have previously contributed to the WSB. Despite these competing needs, the BSA would like nothing more than to resume the financial support for WOSM. Under current conditions, it is just not possible for us to be responsible stewards of the funds we have been entrusted with by the generous supporters of the BSA to entrust any further monies to the WSB.

We have thought hard and appreciate the magnitude of our decision. If the situation is not resolved, the BSA would be suspended from WOSM late next year for nonpayment of fees and thus would not be eligible to attend the upcoming world Scout jamboree in Sweden, the world Scout conference in Brazil, or other WOSM-sanctioned events. If this were to be the case, our Scouts and leaders would surely miss the opportunity for a wonderful interaction with Scouts and leaders from around the world; however, in light of the legal and practical circumstances faced by charitable organizations in the USA today, we have no other choice.

Like others that share these concerns, we look forward to working together with our fellow NSOs to bring the WSB back on track. We welcome the sharing of ideas on how to achieve this task, but we hope you understand that new leadership at the WSB is a prerequisite to the restoration of funding by the BSA.

Cc: BSA National Officers  
BSA Treasury Division