



DESMOS

THE INTERNATIONAL LINK
OF ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN SCOUTS

LE LIEN INTERNATIONAL
DES SCOUTS CHRETIENS ORTHODOXES

DESMOS COMMITTEE MEETING March 6-9, 2014. AMMAN, JORDAN

MINUTES

The Committee Meeting of The International Link of Orthodox Christian Scouts DESMOS was held in the premises of the Orthodox Club in Amman, Jordan, on March 7-8, 2014. The Committee meeting was hosted and organized with the significant support of the Amman Orthodox Scouts Group, which offered complete logistics.

Present:

Marko Petrovic, Desmos President

Vassilis Birtsas, Desmos Vice-President

Maher Sahlieh, Desmos Treasurer

Saeed Daoud, Desmos Committee member

Nicolaos Mitsides, Desmos Committee member

Dusan Masoničić, Desmos Committee member

Georges Abboud, Desmos Secretary General

Christos Papageorgiou, Honorary Desmos Committee member

George Bahow, Honorary Desmos Committee member

Appologies:

Naaman Shahada, Desmos Committee member



The official opening of DESMOS Committee meeting took place on March 8, 2014, in the premises of the Orthodox Club in Amman, Jordan.

The Committee members from Cyprus, Greece, Israel, Jordan, Montenegro, Palestine and Serbia took part at the Meeting, as well as the Secretary General.

Desmos Committee had the pleasure to welcome at the Meeting the guests from Palestine: **Mr. Mahfouz Qahoush**, President of the Palestinian Orthodox Scouts Establishment, and **Mr. George Musleh**, Deputy President of the Palestinian Scouts Organization "Jerusalem District", as well as **Mr. Fawzi A. Shnoudeh**, the President of the Orthodox Club of Amman, and the Amman Orthodox Scouts leaders **Rakan Fakes**, **Emad Bosheh** and **Omar Zabaneh**.



Mahfouz Qahoush



George Musleh



Fawzi A. Shnoudeh



Rakan Fakes



Emad Bosheh



Omar Zabaneh

At the beginning of the Meeting, DESMOS Committee members had the Prayer.
The Prayer was said by Desmos Secretary General, **Georges Abboud**.

P R A Y E R

" أيها الرب وسيد حياتي، اعتقتني من روح البطالة والفضول، وحب الرئاسة والكلام البطال،
وأنعم عليّ أنا عبدك الخاطئ، بروح العفة واتضاع الفكر والصبر والمحبة.
نعم يا ملكي والهي هب لي أن اعرف ذنوبي وعيوبي، وألا أدین إخوتي فانك مبارك إلى الأبد آمين."

O Lord and Master of my life, take from me the spirit of sloth, vain curiosity, lust of power, and idle talk.
But grant unto me, Your servant – the sinner, the spirit of chastity, humility, patience, and love.
Yes, O Lord and King, grant me to see my own transgressions, and not to judge my brother,
for blessed are You unto the ages of ages. Amen.

The proposed Agenda was distributed to all participants of the Meeting.

THE MEETING AGENDA:

The proposed Agenda was as follows:

1. Address of the Desmos President / Facing the forthcoming challenges
[Marko Petrovic](#)
2. Address of the Desmos Vice-President / [Vassilios Birtsas](#)
3. Report of the DESMOS Treasurer / [Maher Sahlieh](#)
4. Report of the Secretary General / [Georges Abboud](#)
5. Minutes of the previous Desmos Committee Meeting / [Marko Petrovic](#)
6. Reports on DESMOS participation at International events:
 - The 14th World Scout Moot, August 8-18, 2013, Canada
 - The 1st World Scout Education Congress, Hong Kong, November 22-24, 2013
[Vassilios Birtsas](#)
 - Report on the meeting of the World Scout Inter-religious Forum, Paris, December 16, 2013
 - Report on the World Scout Inter-religious Dialogue event, Vienna, February 14-20, 2014
[Marko Petrovic](#) - [Georges Abboud](#) / Open discussion
7. The 7th DESMOS Conference, Ljubljana - Slovenia, August 10, 2014.
The 40th World Scout Conference, Ljubljana - Slovenia, August 11-15, 2014.
Introduction: [Marko Petrovic](#) / [Georges Abboud](#)
8. The 23rd World Scout Jamboree, July 28 - August 8, 2015, Kirara-Hama, Yamaguchi, Japan
DESMOS participation at the Faith and Belief Zone. Introduction: [Marko Petrovic](#) / [Vassilios Birtsas](#)

9. Agreed - Realized (Commitments for 2013)
[Marko Petrovic](#) / [Open discussion](#)
10. International events in 2014
 - The 5th Montenegrin (Inter)National Scout Jamboree, Bar, July 11-20, 2014
 - The 9th Serbian (Inter)National Scout Jamboree, Bela Crkva, July 25 - August 4, 2014
Information / presentation: [Marko Petrovic](#) / [Dušan Masonić](#)
 - Other international events (if any) / [contribution of the Committee members](#)
11. Reports on Desmos activities on a national level in particular countries
[Desmos Committee members, representatives of member countries](#)
12. Funding of DESMOS Committee activities
[Marko Petrovic](#) - [Vassilis Birtsas](#) - [Maher Sahlieh](#) / [Open discussion](#)
13. Desmos Newsletter - Do we need it! Do we want it! How to finally move on?
Introduction: [Marko Petrovic](#) - [Vassilis Birtsas](#) / [Open discussion](#)
14. Future events / DESMOS, Faith Organizations in Scouting, Inter-Religious
Introduction: [Marko Petrovic](#) - [Vassilis Birtsas](#) / [Open discussion](#)
15. Various issues / Hosting of the next annual Desmos Committee Meeting in 2015
[Open discussion](#)

The Committee accepted the proposed Agenda.

Ad. 1 - ADDRESS OF DESMOS PRESIDENT / FACING THE FORTHCOMING CHALLENGES

DESMOS President, **Marko Petrovic**, welcomed all to the Committee Meeting and expressed gratitude for personal efforts the Committee members made in order to come to Amman.

The President extended a big THANK YOU to the Amman Orthodox Scouts for accepting to host the event, for offering excellent conditions for work and for providing all logistic and other support.

The President extended special gratitude to the Orthodox Club of Amman for offering its premises, food and logistics.

Marko offered his Address to the Committee in form of the PowerPoint presentation, titled "FROM LARNACA TO AMMAN / FACING THE FORTHCOMING CHALLENGES".



The key points of the President's presentation were:

- ❖ Persistent Lack of Communication (within the Committee)
- ❖ Approaching DESMOS Conference and elections for the Committee
- ❖ Further growth of the Link
- ❖ Sustainable funding
- ❖ DESMOS position in World Scouting
- ❖ Participation at international events in 2013, 2014 and beyond

The President explained that he used the word 'Challenge' as part of the title of his Address, wishing to indicate that there are very important issues that we should pay due attention in the forthcoming period and that won't be easy to deal with, but absolutely indispensable to cope with, if we want our Link to become stronger and further develop.

The President emphasized the issue of lack of communication within the Committee and reminded that it has already been the topic on almost all our meetings' agendas. He said that once-a-year communication at the Committee meetings is definitely not enough for normal work of the Committee and for better results we would like to achieve, all of us.

The Committee members should be in contact throughout a year, using first of all the E-mail as an excellent means of communication, which is quick, which offers wide range of possibilities and which is practically free of charge, as well as other means of electronic communication, particularly mentioning the use of SKYPE or similar programs, which offer the possibility of having video-conferencing as well.

One of the challenges is certainly the forthcoming 7th DESMOS Conference and the World Scout Conference in Slovenia, and it is something that should mark the period ahead. It requires serious preparations and we all need to be engaged in realization of this task.

The growth of the Link is another challenge we are facing. We do need to extend our Link, especially since there are still continents where DESMOS is not present ... Indeed, the Middle East and the Balkan area were and are the core areas, wherefrom we have the most active member-countries. However, reaching out is something we need and we should achieve.

Also, bringing back all our inactive member-countries is very important and that's another task to be fulfilled in future.

The challenge of sustainable funding is certainly essential for functioning of the Link, that's why this will be also the separate topic on the Agenda of this meeting. We do need to analyze in-depth different options for improving the issue, but in any case it has to be a sustainable solution...

DESMOS Position in world Scouting is something worth stressing upon.

The respectable position of our Link throughout the world of and its Consultative Status with WOSM is the result of a hard work since the founding and the world of Scouting.

DESMOS role and work in Inter-Religious Forum is one of the things that certainly significantly contributed to its positive reputation.

DESMOS was represented at the major world scout events (WS Moot in Canada, WS Education Congress in Hong Kong, Inter-Religious Forum of World Scouting in Paris, World Scout Inter-Religious Dialogue in Vienna), which is also important and which sets us a goal for the future to keep on participating at such events.

Ad. 2 - ADDRESS OF DESMOS VICE-PRESIDENT

DESMOS **Vice-President, Vassilios Birtsas**, expressed a great appreciation to the host association - Amman Orthodox Scouts, for all those who made efforts in organization of the Committee Meeting, and welcomed the Committee members.

Although not willing to repeat what was said in the President's presentation, Vassilios however emphasized the problem of lack of communication as something that hinders the Committee's sustainable work, indicating that it may be quite annoying for those who are active in communication.

Thinking about possible reasons for this problem, Vice-President said we should perhaps think of bringing new people to the Committee, preferably young people with new ideas and skills to communicate efficiently.

Vice-President also said we should all ask ourselves a simple question: "What did I do for DESMOS, not only for my local scout group or for my NSO, but for our Link".

Vice-President said that he expects all the Committee members to think about his words and that the Committee needs to discuss in-depth this issue and other issues mentioned in the President's presentation during the Meeting.

Vassilios said that DESMOS needs dedicated people, that there are many things to do within the Link and that human resources are indispensable element for success.

Ad. 3 - REPORT OF DESMOS TREASURER



DESMOS Treasurer, **Maher Sahlieh**, welcomed all the colleagues from the Committee and thanked them for coming to Amman for the Meeting and expressed special thanks to Jordan host - Amman Orthodox Scouts - for accepting to host the event and for excellent organization.

Starting reporting in his capacity of DESMOS Treasurer, Maher said we should thank to God for keeping DESMOS ongoing in spite of absence of any sustainable funding. Since the founding of the Link, we only had contributions of some associations, some groups and some individuals, but not the sustainable funding, which is indispensable for normal work.

In previous period, DESMOS Committee has already been expressing gratitude a number of times to "Friends of Desmos in Greece" association, which contributed so much to our Link, as well as to individuals who made personal contributions thus enabling realization of certain DESMOS activities.

After the discussion in which, besides Maher, also **Marko, Vassilios** and **Christos** took part, explaining how participation of DESMOS representatives in recent events has been funded. The Committee agreed to formally express special thanks to:

- the **Orthodox Scout Association of Israel**, for supporting with 1.700,-EUR DESMOS activities at the Moot in Canada and partly at the World Scout Educational Congress in Hong Kong
- **Fady Shoucair**, former DESMOS Committee member, for sponsoring part of the expenditures related to DESMOS presence at the World Scout Educational Congress in Hong Kong
- **Georges Abboud**, DESMOS Secretary General, for personal contribution in covering expenses for DESMOS participation at the IRMoWS in Paris and at Inter-Religious Dialogue event in Vienna, as well as for paying the cost of Christos Papageorgiou's airplane ticket for coming to Amman
- **Amman Orthodox Scouts** for covering the cost of airplane ticket for Marko's trip to Amman.

The compensation in the amount of 700,-EUR, which Vassilios Birtsas paid as part of expenditures for participation at the Education Congress in Hong Kong, is still pending, and the Committee needs to find solution to sort it out.

DESMOS Treasurer, Maher Sahlieh, reminded the Committee that it's not just the question of funding money and that we should be aware that persons representing DESMOS at international events or participating at DESMOS Committee meetings and conferences, actually invest their free time, which means absence from home, from job, using personal mobile phones, etc. and that it is to be appreciated as well.

Maher also reminded that in almost all our meetings we have been discussing the funding issue and that we always agreed that the strategy for funding is needed, but so far we didn't manage to find the way to reach the strategy and to find the way out of the difficult financial situation. Therefore, Maher said, we need to set up the funding strategy as soon as possible and suggested to organize a special meeting with funding as the only item on the agenda.

Christos proposed as the first next opportunity to have such meeting - during the forthcoming DESMOS (and World Scout) Conference in Slovenia.

At this point of the Meeting, the President of the Orthodox Club of Amman, in which premises the Committee Meeting was going on, joined the Committee, wishing to address the Committee members and guests.

The President of Orthodox Club of Amman, Mr. **Fawzi A. Shnoudeh**, welcomed DESMOS Committee in Jordan and in the Orthodox Club of Amman, expressing expectation that the Committee has good conditions for work.

Mr. Shnoudeh presented to the Committee the history of the Orthodox Club of Amman, which was established back in 1952 and nowadays disposes of a wide range of premises on 31.000 m² of land in Amman neighborhood called Abdoun, and offers plenty of opportunities for its members.

Mr. Shnoudeh explained the policy of the Orthodox Club of Amman, in terms of membership, which is family-based and gathers 2.800 families, but also in terms of further development.

President Shnoudeh also presented the results obtained in different sports, emphasizing swimming and table tennis, where AOC took the Kingdom's Championship.

Closing his address, the President of Orthodox Club of Amman, Mr. Fawzi A. Shnoudeh, wished to the Committee a pleasant stay in the Orthodox Club and a fruitful Meeting.



Ad. 4 - REPORT OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL



DESMOS Secretary General, **Georges Abboud**, firstly expressed gratitude to Amman Orthodox Scouts for hosting the Committee Meeting, on behalf of SNO association and on his behalf.

Georges stressed upon Communication, Funding and Management, which are, in his opinion, three major issues for the Link in this moment.

Regarding insufficient communication, Georges Abboud said that one annual Committee meeting is probably enough, but the communication between the Committee members may be and should be maintained throughout a year and that the available means of communication nowadays make it quite easy. He mentioned as an example the use of WhatsApp group, which is free of charge and available to all persons using cell phones.

Regarding the funding issue, Georges Abboud agreed that it's a serious problem but emphasized the need to find the solution, at least for the minimum funding that could keep us going on.

The last point Georges Abboud wanted to emphasize was the presence and support of orthodox priests at DESMOS and international events. Georges gave the example of some other faith organizations in Scouting, which usually have presence and support of their priests.

Ad. 5 - MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS COMMITTEE MEETING

The President reminded that the Minutes of the previous Committee Meeting, held in Cyprus, has been circulated to all Committee members by e-mail quite some time prior to this Meeting, so everybody had the opportunity to read and prepare remarks/comments, if any.

The Committee members did not have any remarks/comments, so the Minutes of the previous Committee Meeting was adopted unanimously.

COFFEE BREAK

Ad. 6 - REPORT ON DESMOS PARTICIPATION AT INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

THE 14TH SCOUT MOOT, CANADA

Vice-President, **Vassilis Birtsas**, prepared a detailed presentation on the 14th World Scout Moot and shared it with the Committee.

Vassilios, who was representing DESMOS at the event, explained that the Moot, which is the scout event for age section 18-25, was held in a scout camp in the forest, situated 17.5 km north of the capital Ottawa. He said that organizers expected more participants but there were 2.500 participants from 83 countries.



Vassilios said that, although the FaB Zone was supposed

to be part of the Moot Programme, it actually wasn't the part of the Programme, at least not the obligatory part of the Programme. However, the FaB Zone was properly organized. There was a forest of reflection, there were workshops. ICCS had its workshop, the Protestants too, but DESMOS was actually the only faith organization in Scouting that had a workshop throughout the event. There was a "Human Library", with the idea to have one person from all faith organizations acting as the book, which the participants could be "lend" in order to offer responses to various questions related to particular religion. There was



also a silent area, where people could go and pray. There was also a camp-fire in the evenings in FaB Zone, specially dedicated to spirituality in Scouting. During the Festival Day the Indians who were there presented the water-ceremony explaining how the bless the water.

DESMOS workshop was called "The Image of God in Nature", where participants were asked to contribute to the topic by discussing relevant extracts from the Holy Gospel, Old and New Testament. The participants afterwards gave photos that – in their opinion – represent the above mentioned topic. The compilation of these photos can be found in the following video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T28N7yYHHHs>. Our Link also had the Icons Exhibition and promotional materials (leaflets, stickers).



Apart from the activities on the Moot itself, during the event Vassilios had meetings with Canadian Orthodox Church officials.

Vassilios also met the World Scout Bureau member, Peter Illig, and discussed the possibilities of nomination an appropriate DESMOS project for the Messengers of Peace programme.

Vice-President also had contacts with Scouts of Canada, exploring possibility of their membership in our Link, which in this moment appears not to be achievable, since the NSO of Canada is not a member of any faith organization in Scouting and, for the time being, refuses to join any of FOiS, but it's worth further efforts.

WORLD SCOUT EDUCATION CONGRESS in HONG KONG



DESMOS Vice-President, Vassilios Birtsas, informed the Committee members about the 1st World Scout Education Congress, which was held in Hong Kong.

Vassilis explained that the event is the first of a kind, even though in 2007 there was a World Scout Scientific Congress in Geneva, which had a similar topics on the agenda, but was mainly oriented towards society and social impact of Scouting.

The 1st World Scout Education Congress, organized by the World Organization of the Scout Movement (WOSM), took place from 22-24 November 2013 in Hong Kong. The theme of the Congress was "Scouting: Education for Life". The delegates were Chief Commissioners, International Commissioners, Youth Programme Commissioners, National Adult Resources Commissioners and key decision-makers of National Scout Organizations (NSOs) from around the World.



The Congress brought people together to share, discuss and debate the experiences and expertise in Youth Programme and Adult Resources from over 100 countries and territories where Scouting exists. The event was enriched with inputs from experts in the theory of education and from representatives of other youth organizations offering educational programmes, to give their perspectives.

The Congress was not only physically attended, but there was the coverage on the internet - through social networks, there was a live streaming almost throughout the entire event. There were multiple presentations at the same time, so participants could decide which topic they wanted to follow.

There were more than 450 participants present and over 1500 who were following the event on-line.

The event's web site was visited 66.375 times and the inter-action in social media was significant: 16.079.



The Congress treated a number of important topics, such as: Scouts and the Society, Impact of Scouting, Fundamental Principles of Scouting, Scout Values, Youth Programme, Diversity in Scouting, Youth Involvement, Image of Scouting, Leadership in Scouting, the Adults we Want, Scouting and Community,

Social Media, Education and Educational Systems, Life Skills, Volunteering.

There were two presentation related to Faith and Religion. One was "Scouting including all spiritual forms" and the other was "Faith and Scouting - Challenges and Benefits". DESMOS representative took part in both presentations, in a pro-active manner.

The overall impression on "Duty to God" is that it would take to long to discuss it and make a new approach.



DESMOS was the only Faith Organization in Scouting, which was officially represented at the Congress in Hong-Kong and our Link got the Certificate of Participation.

Vassilios said that, apart from taking part in the Congress programme, he had the opportunity to meet the Metropolitan of Hong-Kong and South-East Asia, Father Nektarios (Tsilis), to whom he presented our Link and its aims and objectives.

Vassilios also met in Hong Kong the Chief Commissioner of Uganda Scouts, as well as World Scout Committee member from Japan, Mari Nakano, with whom he discussed the issue of the next WS Jamboree and the Faith and Belief Zone.

MEETING OF THE INTER-RELIGIOUS FORUM of WORLD SCOUTING PARIS, DECEMBER 16, 2013.

DESMOS President, **Marko Petrovic**, reported on the IFoWS Meeting.



The Meeting was held in Paris, on December 16, 2013, in the premises of 'Scouts et Guides de France' association, as a regular annual meeting of this body which DESMOS makes part of.

Consultative Status, Strengthening the unity of Faith organizations, emphasizing our actions and coordinate them in the context of some ideas to change the Duty to God (following some ideas on how to attract and retain more young people, who are not so familiar with the faith issues ... UK-alternative Promise). I repeated at the Meeting a well known DESMOS position that we should be very careful concerning the Fundamentals of Scouting. The point is that Duty to God is the first of the three basic principles. Changing the Fundamentals of Scouting would mean serious changing of the Movement ...

The issue of how to strengthen the activities of IRFoWS and have more impact on Scouting. One of the ideas was to improve the visual of faith organizations and there was a concrete proposal for the new logo, but also the proposal to adapt individual emblems of faith organizations and to have the representatives of faith organizations to wear it during the IRFoWS events (T-shirts and scarves ...)

Christos: the real problem of the IRFoWS is not the dress code, it's the concrete actions we could do together, but we are in favour of it.

The discussions on the Consultative Status - R. Cociancich was commenting that he understands the CS in the way that the faith organizations should be asked for some opinion/contributions/proposals regarding spirituality in Scouting.

DESMOS, actually had one particular proposal for the World Scout Bureau, concerning the CS and I was ready to present it during the Meeting. Since there was no time due to a very tough agenda, it remains to send it in writing to WSB. Vassilis prepared the text of our proposal.

The first proposal concerns the Part 'C' of the WOSM document "**CS Definition and Scope, Criteria, Rights and Obligations, Procedures**", which speaks about Rights, Privileges and Obligations of faith organizations with CS, under paragraph no. 3. DESMOS proposal is yellow highlighted.

§ 3 Invitation to the Conference>

It will be invited as an observer to the World Scout Conference and other world scout events. This invitation includes the possibility to send up to two representatives to attend the Conference and other world scout events as guest.

The second proposal concerns the Part D of the WOSM Document, and it refers to the paragraph 4. DESMOS proposal is yellow highlighted:

> § 4 Process and probationary period A one-year probationary period is required before granting of consultative status **for the first time**. This period of time will allow both parties (World Scout Committee and candidate organization), to agree on the legitimacy of the candidacy.

The Committee accepted that this proposal be communicated in writing to the World Scout Bureau.

Regarding social events during the IRFoWS Meeting in Paris - the host association SGdF invited all participants of the Meeting to the special event - Welcoming of the Peace Light of Bethlehem, which was organized in Paris. The final ceremony was held at the **Cathedral of Notre Dame**, with around 3.500 scouts inside the Church.



WORLD SCOUT INTER-RELIGIOUS DIALOGUE EVENT
VIENNA, FEBRUARY 14-20, 2014.

DESMOS President, **Marko Petrovic**, reported to the Committee and presented the Vienna WSIRD event. Vice-President **Vassilios Birtsas**, and Secretary General **Georges Abboud**, who also took part at the event, contributed to the presentation as well.

The event was organized by the World Scout Bureau in cooperation with the KAICIID Dialogue Centre, February 20th - 23rd, at the KAICIID Dialogue Centre in Vienna, Austria.

World Scout
Interreligious
Dialogue



KAICIID is an independent, autonomous, international organization facilitating dialogue and cooperation. Recognising the importance of dialogue, three countries comprising the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Republic of Austria and the Kingdom of Spain, with the Holy See as a Founding Observer, signed an Agreement for the establishment of the Centre on 13th October 2011. Hence, Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue forms a cornerstone of KAICIID's mandate, on which KAICIID's programmes are built.

In 2013, our work was centred on the representation of 'Others', followers of different religions and people of different cultures, in Interreligious and Intercultural Education. To this end, we organised four regional conferences, drawing together religious leaders, policy makers, and experts in education from Europe, Africa, Asia and the Americas. Participants at each regional conference contributed their expertise on the diverse best practices and successful models, as well as challenges in the field. The year's work culminated in the KAICIID Global Forum in November 2013 in Vienna, Austria. It brought together experts and thought leaders from all over the world, resulting in the establishment of a first-of-



its-kind network in interreligious and intercultural education.

At the Global Forum in November 2013 in Vienna, Austria, KAICIID and WOSM signed a formal cooperation agreement aimed at building greater mutual cooperation in advancing interreligious dialogue in particular.

The fact that four representatives of the World Scout Bureau, including the WOSM Secretary General, participated at the World Scout Inter-Religious Dialogue event, confirms the importance the WSB assigned to this issue.

Aim of the Event

The aim of the event - **to bring together** representatives of existing religious groups that are members in the World Scout Interreligious Forum, Scout experts in the regions who are interested in supporting the Spiritual development of Scouting, Dialogue Best Practices representatives and external experts in this field.

The purpose of the event - **to strengthen the interreligious dialogue within Scouting.**

The Objectives of the Event

1. Sharing Best Practices on Intercultural and Interreligious Dialogue within Scouting.
2. Training of participants on Intercultural and Interreligious Dialogue
3. Develop some action steps for integrating these concepts into the interreligious activities in Scout Events, globally, regionally and nationally.
4. Reviewing common issues relating to the Spiritual Dimension in Scouting.

The Programme of the World Scout Inter-Religious Dialogue was jointly designed by both WOSM and KAICIID, and included interreligious and intercultural dialogue training, varied dialogical activities as well as sharing of different experiences, challenges and best practices as well as various religious meditations and prayers.

The Learning Objectives of the training during the workshop were as follows:

1. To discuss the history of interreligious and intercultural dialogue;
2. To share best practices on dialogue in Scouting today;
3. To identify needs and share dialogue skills;
4. To experience and actively take part in dialogue with the group;
5. To share and learn about each other's ideas for further cooperation between KAICIID and WOSM.

The event was very well organized. The Programme was realized through presentations and through workshops, and offered participants a great amount of information and inputs related to the topic of the event. One of the presentations was about the Messengers of Peace project, presented by a young Orthodox leader who belongs to the Orthodox Scouts Association of Israel, **Isa Hishmeh** from Jaffa.

KAICIID provided high quality trainers - **Professor Dr. Patrice Brodeur**, Director of Research in KAICIID Dialogue Centre, and **Professor Dr. Mohammed Abu-Nimer**, both of them recognized experts on conflict-resolution, dialogue, peace-building and development.

DESMOS representatives had the opportunity to meet **Scott Teare**, WOSM Secretary General, and the WSB members: **Peter Illig**, **Hany Abdulmonem** and **Srinath Tirumale Venugopal**, and to discuss with them various issues DESMOS is concerned about.

DESMOS representatives also tried to contact His Eminence **Arsenius (Kardamakis)**, the Metropolitan of the Metropolis of Austria and Exarch of Hungary and Central Europe, but he was unfortunately on a trip out of Austria.

Ad. 7 - THE 7TH DESMOS CONFERENCE / THE 40TH WORLD SCOUT CONFERENCE

DESMOS President, **Marko Petrovic**, reminded the Committee about the need to organize the 7th DESMOS Conference during the year 2014, and indicated that DESMOS conferences have always been organized one day prior to WOSM conferences, with the idea to economize on expenditures by using the presence of some delegates for the WSC, except in case of the WSC in Brazil, when the Committee decided not to have DESMOS Conference in Brazil, but in Belgrade, considering extremely high amount of money needed to cover expenditures for trip to Brazil.

Marko presented to the Committee the facts related to Slovenia and the prospective expenditures (geographical facts, the cost of the Conference room, the cost of the coffee-break serving).

Regarding the expenditures, Marko informed that the host association - NSO of Slovenia - already gave the preliminary offer: 250,-EUR for the Conference room, including the PC projector and audio-system; 2,-EUR or

4,-EUR per person for the coffee break, depending whether they will serve only coffee and water or coffee, water, juice and snacks.

Secretary General, **Georges Abboud**, informed the Committee that his Association is ready to cover the expenditures for the Conference (the cost of the Conference room and the cost of the coffee-break serving) up to the amount of € 500,-. The Committee expressed a big THANK YOU to the Association S.N.O. from Lebanon and to Georges Abboud personally.



The Committee accepted the suggested date and time for the Conference - **The 7th DESMOS Conference will be held on August 10, 2014, 17h-21h.**

It was also agreed that Marko would try to assure the presence and Key-Note presentation of the Metropolitan of the Serbian Orthodox Church.

The Committee agreed that it would be appropriate to adapt the theme of the 7th DESMOS Conference with the theme of the forthcoming World Scout Conference.

The Committee agreed that the Invitation for the Conference should be prepared and sent out to all DESMOS member-countries as soon as possible, as well as the Call for nominations for the elections of the new Committee. The deadline for nominations shall be the end of June 2014.

It was emphasized that the member-countries should nominate for the Committee the people ready to accept the challenge and serve The Link with enthusiasm and commitment.

The Committee concluded that two Committee members are stepping down after six-year term - Naaman Shahada from Israel and Maher Sahlieh from Palestine. Regarding Nicolaos Mitsides from Cyprus, who was co-opted after Roxana Boltasu's resignation, the Committee decided that he might be nominated again, if the NSO of Cyprus decides so, since we already had a similar case in the past and proceeded accordingly.

Vice-President, **Vassilios Birtsas**, reminded that after the 6th DESMOS Conference in Belgrade, the Committee decided to suggest to the next DESMOS Conference to adopt amendment to the Statute in terms of limiting the number of Proxies for one member-country to maximum 2 (two).

The President, **Marko Petrovic**, suggested to prepare and propose to the next DESMOS Conference the amendment to the Statute introducing the position of the Honorary President, explaining that DESMOS has the candidate for such position who did so much since the very idea of establishing the Link until present day and who became a sort of an iconic personality being identified with DESMOS throughout the world of Scouting - former Secretary General, Committee member, Vice-President and President - CHRISTOS PAPAGEORGIOU. The Committee agreed with the discussions of Vassilios and Marko and delegated the task of preparation of the said amendments to the President and Vice-President.

The Committee also agreed to discuss in the forthcoming period, by e-mail exchange, the issue of the Conference Agenda.

Marko informed the Committee that DESMOS has the Invitation to attend the 40th World Scout Conference in the capacity of special guest and that the World Scout Bureau will cover the WOSM Conference Fee for one representative from DESMOS.

In line with the approach in this matter that DESMOS had before, the Committee agreed that **the President should represent DESMOS at the WOSM Conference and in case the second person with covered Fee would be invited, it should be the Secretary General. In case the President would not be able to attend, the Vice-President would replace him.**

At the end of this topic of the Agenda, DESMOS Treasurer, **Maher Sahlieh**, informed the Committee that at the forthcoming World Scout Conference in Slovenia the NSO of Palestine will request the full-capacity membership in WOSM, and asked for support.

The Committee agreed that all member-countries should support this action, not only by voting in favor of such decision, but also by lobbying accordingly at as many as possible NSO's using all available contacts.

Ad. 8 - THE 23RD WORLD SCOUT JAMBOREE - JAPAN



The President updated the Committee about the preparations for the 23rd World Scout Jamboree in Japan, using the PPT presentation about the Faith and Belief Zone, obtained from Japanese representatives during the IRFoWS Meeting in Paris, last December.

Unfortunately, there is still a number of unclear issues and a number of concrete questions without a proper answer.



The Japanese are quite late with FaB solutions and this is the conclusion of all faith organizations in Scouting. The Secretary General, Georges Abboud, offered to run DESMOS Workshop at Faith and Belief Zone in Japan. The Committee agreed to follow the development, acquire updated info and act accordingly.

Ad. 9 - AGREED - REALIZED (COMMITMENTS FOR 2013)

The Committee analyzed the commitments accepted at the previous Committee Meeting and concluded that the main reason for non-completion of the tasks was the lack of funding.

The Committee agreed that the visit to His All Holiness the Ecumenical Patriarch remains the priority. The Committee concluded that, in case of a visit to His All Holiness, we should use such opportunity and ask for support in terms of presence of the Church official(s) at the WS Jamboree in Japan.

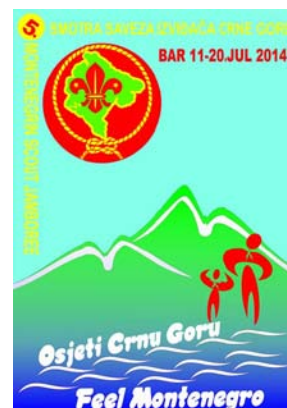
Ad. 10 - INTERNATIONAL EVENTS IN 2014

THE 5TH MONTENEGRIN NATIONAL SCOUT JAMBOREE

The Committee member from Montenegro, **Dusan Masonicic**, presented the 5th National Scout Jamboree in Montenegro, to be held in the town of Bar, at the Adriatic Sea coast, in the period July 11-20, 2014, and which is labeled "Feel Montenegro". The Jamboree will be dedicated to scout friendship, scout activities and competitions, excursions both on the sea and throughout Montenegro. The organizers promise a lot of challenges, adventures, concerts, amusement programmes, special programmes for cubs and brownies, but also for adults in Scouting, and all that enriched with inevitable daily entertainment on the sea shore.

Dušan also presented his country - Montenegro - as the country of wild beauty, as well as the host town of Bar, its beauty and its historical background.

Dušan invited the Committee members to spread the information about the event in their associations and promised to all those who decide to take part an interesting event and a lot of fun.



THE 9TH SERBIAN NATIONAL SCOUT JAMBOREE

The second presentation was done by DESMOS President, **Marko Petrovic**, who presented the 9th Serbian National Scout Jamboree, scheduled for the period July 25 - August 4, 2014, in Bela Crkva, Serbia.



The motto of the Jamboree is "One Idea, One dream, One Goal".

Besides offering basic information about the venue itself and the programme planned for the Jamboree, Marko also presented the facts about Serbia and about Bela Crkva as the host town.

Marko cordially invited DESMOS Committee members to spread the info about the 9th Serbian National Scout Jamboree in their countries and to encourage their scouts to come to Serbia and share a wonderful scout experience with scouts from Serbia and a number of other countries.

Ad. 11 - REPORTS ON DESMOS ACTIVITIES ON A NATIONAL LEVEL IN PARTICULAR COUNTRIES

SERBIA

Marko Petrović - besides the Jamboree, in Serbia there are activities on the local level (camps, community projects, partnerships from different countries (especially UK Scouts), summer programme for scout groups. At the Jamboree, there will probably be a sort of FaB Vojvodina is a multi-national environment



MONTENEGRO

Dusan Masonićić - besides the Jamboree, only the usual local activities and a sort of an encounter for veteran scouts for the old scouts from the Balkan region. At the Jamboree site there will be a sub-camp for the veterans, although they can't take part in the Jamboree scout programme. Dusan also informed the Committee about the Church situation in Montenegro - two Orthodox churches (a recognized autokefhal one Serbian Orthodox Church, and the so-called Montenegrin Orthodox Church).



PALESTINE

Maher Sahlieh - informed the Committee that Salkim Zeidan became the NSO's International Commissioner. The video-presentation on the history and activities of Orthodox Scouts of Palestine was offered to the Committee. The Committee members **Maher** and **Mahfouz** explained the video content and offered a lot of additional information and comments.



CYPRUS

Nikkos Mitsides from Cyprus - Informed about the ceremony of celebration of 100 Years of the Scouts of Cyprus (in 2013) and about the central event that took place in the Theater in Nicosia.....During the previous Committee Meeting in Cyprus, the Committee had the opportunity to enjoy in one part of the Centenary activities. Nikos prepared the video-presentation on history and activities of Scouts of Cyprus and shared it with the Committee.



ISRAEL

George Bahow from Israel - Communicated the greetings of the Committee member from Israel, Mr. Naaman Shahada and explained his absence, which was due to important obligations. G. Bahow then presented different activities carried on in his association during the last one-year period (scout activities, scout camps, scout parades, training courses, meetings, important encounters).

He informed the Committee that his Association welcomed a number of Islamic scout groups as well as Coptic scouts. G. Bahow mentioned the visit of the scouts from Serbia



GREECE

Vassilios Birtsas from Greece - Informed the Committee that on the Founder's Day, Christos Papageorgiou was decorated with the highest SHP decoration, The Silver Phoenix, for all he did for Scouting in Greece and worldwide, as well as for DESMOS during his long and fruitful scout life.

The focus of the Scouts of Greece in previous period was on social cooperation and community support, first of due to the difficult situation in the country and lots of problems large number of Greeks, including scouts, is facing. The scouts organized different campaigns - blood donations, collecting of clothes and food, supporting churches and monasteries, cooking for poor people, free of charge private lessons for school-age children, assisting people in the area of Kefalonia after the earth-quake. Greek scouts also launched the initiative "Be scout for one day" enabling anyone who would like to find out what's the feeling of being a scout, with the idea to attract new members. They also organized social pharmacies, social groceries for poor people.

Vassilios informed the Committee that SHP scouts also participated, together with the Church of Greece, in distribution of the Holy Light from Jerusalem throughout Greece.



JORDAN

Saeed Daoud from Jordan offered to the Committee the presentation on the events - Mother's Day with a small party (mothers of scouts, scouts), Easter event (the eggs festival), Church event (open day for Easter for the kids and their families), Bazaar that is prepared annually in July, Annual Camp at De Been Monastery, where the scouts learn cooking, training sessions (joint training with S.N.O., special thanks to George Abboud), Annual Christmas event with the charity packages to be distributed to poor children and families (community care).



Ad. 12 - FUNDING OF DESMOS COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

Maher Sahlieh emphasized that we first of all need a sustainable funding to go on. The key issue is the commitment and we need to find the strategy for funding. The second issue is funding of churches (nowadays is difficult to get support in cash money). Maher suggested a special, short meeting of 2h, with only this item on the agenda, which could be held in Slovenia, provided that we come there well prepared.

Christos Papageorgiou said that the best would be to delegate the task of preparing proposal for such thematic meeting to DESMOS Treasurer, Maher Sahlieh, who's the right person to do the job, because of his professional expertise on that field and because we trust he would perform the task successfully. Christos said Maher should chose people who would work together with him.

Marko agreed with Christos. Marko emphasized that this is a very complex issue, which requires a professional knowledge and true commitment and said we're all confident that Maher is able to fulfill the task together with the team he would create.



Maier said the first step could be to have a small meeting of himself, George Abboud and George Bahow, since they are geographically close to each other and they could easily realize a one-day trip. They could prepare the strategy and develop some ideas on how to sort out this serious and important issue.

Saeed reminded that each country could pay an annual fee, like 200,-EUR per year.

Marko reminded that the membership fee is clearly defined in our Statute. Marko also reminded to the discussion on the same issue during the Conference in Belgrade, when Jaakko suggested that this constitutional issue be carefully examined and probably re-phrased.

Rakan Fakes said it's important to define the minimum amount needed per year for maintaining the Committee activities, since it would make Maier job easier.

Christos / Maier - The strategy plan for three years would be the best starting point to develop tools for fundraising.

The Committee concuded that the initial information, with indicated priorities, should be provided by Marko, Vassilios and Christos and sent to Maier, in order to enable him carry on the work.

Maier accepted the challenge and expressed his readiness to coordinate work on this issue and to prepare the proposal for the thematic meeting in Slovenia.

Ad. 13 - DESMOS NEWSLETTER - Do we need it! do we want it! how to finally move on?

Marko said that DESMOS NewsLetter used to be a regular topic on almost all our Committee meetings, and that we need to discuss it also in this meeting, in order to try to make a step forward on this field.



Saeed Daoud and **Rakan Fakes** from Jordan informed the Committee about the initiative and concrete result of Amman Orthodox Scouts, who created a DESMOS FaceBook page and explained that it is now possible to upload and download different contents related to the events in DESMOS countries, which keeps us all informed.....

After a discussion in which took part Chistos, Vassilis, Saeed, Rakan, Marko the Committee agreed the following.

In the context of the Amman Orthodox Scouts' initiative with DESMOS FaceBook page, the situation is in a way changed, since this modern way of communication offers lots of opportunities ...

However, we should keep the News Letter anyway, and we can used materials existing on the FaceBook page for its easier preparation.

The NewsLetter prepared as the PDF document could be widely distributed, electronically, and only a limited number of copies could be printed and sent to certain addresses, like to the World Bureau, ...

Ad. 14 - FUTURE EVENTS / DESMOS, FAITH ORGANIZATIONS IN SCOUTING, INTER-RELIGIOUS

Already covered earlier during this meeting.

Ad. 15 - VARIOUS ISSUES / HOSTING OF THE NEXT ANNUAL DESMOS COMMITTEE MEETING IN 2015

Maier was developing the idea to have the next Committee meeting in Palestine video-conferencing with those who perhaps cannot come due to political reasons (George Abbaoud, George Bahow)

It was agreed hat this issue should be decided in Slovenia.

DESMOS COMMITTEE EXPRESSES GRATITUDE

To His Eminence Benedict, the Metropolitan of Philadelphia-Amman,

To the Head of "Our Lady Ever - Virgin Mary" Monastery, Dibbeen,

Archimandrite Christoforos Atallah

To the Orthodox Club of Amman and its President, Mr. Fawzi A. Shnoudeh

and to AMMAN ORTHODOX SCOUTS

FOR WARM HOSPITALITY AND WONDERFUL TIME IN JORDAN,

AND FOR EXCELLENT ORGANIZATION OF THE DESMOS COMMITTEE MEETING!

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

The working part of the annual DESMOS Committee Meeting took part in the premises of the Orthodox Club of Amman.

Besides the working part of the Meeting, DESMOS Committee members had the opportunity to enjoy in a rich additional programme prepared by the host Association - **Amman Orthodox Scouts**, which celebrates in this year 2014 the great anniversary, **50 years** since the founding of the Association.

Thursday, March 6, 2014.

The first day, which in principle is reserved for arrivals, was a pleasant experience for the Committee members who had the opportunity to feel warm welcome, being met at the airport and transferred to the excellent hotel chosen by the hosts.

In the evening, the Committee members were offered a welcome diner in **Hatotta restaurant** in Amman, where they could enjoy a traditional food and drinks of Jordan. It was a relaxing time, when the Committee members could have an informal exchange on different issues in a nice atmosphere, and it was actually a sort of a warming up for the forthcoming busy programme.



Friday, March 7, 2014.

On Friday morning, the Committee members gathered in the Hotel lobby and started the trip towards northern part of Jordan, in order to visit the "**Our Lady Ever - Virgin Mary**" Monastery, in **Dibbeen**. The Monastery is placed in a wonderful Dibbeen forest area, in Northern part of Jordan.



The entire forest of Dibbeen extends over an area of 60 km², varying in altitude from 500m to 1000m above sea level. The forest is spread over steep to very steep slopes of limestone or chalky limestone rock types. The physical and age structure of the forest as a whole is remarkably varied with trees of widely different ages and sizes and a distinct under-canopy in many areas. This variety is aided by the presence of wadis, which provide different aspects, moisture levels and soil conditions throughout the forest.

Dibbeen Forest Reserve extends over 8.5 km² of mountainous terrain, covering an area of pristine pine-oak habitat (*Pinus halipensis-Quercus calliprinos*). These Aleppo pines are some of the oldest and largest in the Kingdom, and are the defining characteristic of this landscape, representing the south-eastern geographical limit of this forest type. Dibbeen is the driest part of the world in which the Aleppo pines are known to grow naturally, with an average rainfall of around 400mm per year.



Reaching the Monastery location, on a beautiful sunny day, the Committee members were really thrilled to step into the holy surrounding of the Monastery of **"Our Lady Ever - Virgin Mary"**, where the Head of the Monastery, **Archimandrite Christoforos Atallah**, received DESMOS delegation and offered a very warm welcome.

The experience lived in a holy environment of this exceptionally nice Monastery, was an extraordinary inspiration for DESMOS Committee members facing the demanding Meeting agenda foreseen for the next day.



The Committee members had a very pleasant conversation with Head of the Monastery, Archimandrite Christoforos Atallah, who was happy to hear the facts about the Link, its history, aims and objectives, mission and vision, membership, activities and plans for the future.



DESMOS delegation took part at the service in the Monastery Church and had the opportunity to visit the Monastery complex and enjoy in its beauty.

The Committee members were also kindly offered refreshments and food and, after a wonderful time spent in such a beautiful part of Jordan, left the Monastery with the blessing of Archimandrite Christofors Atallah.

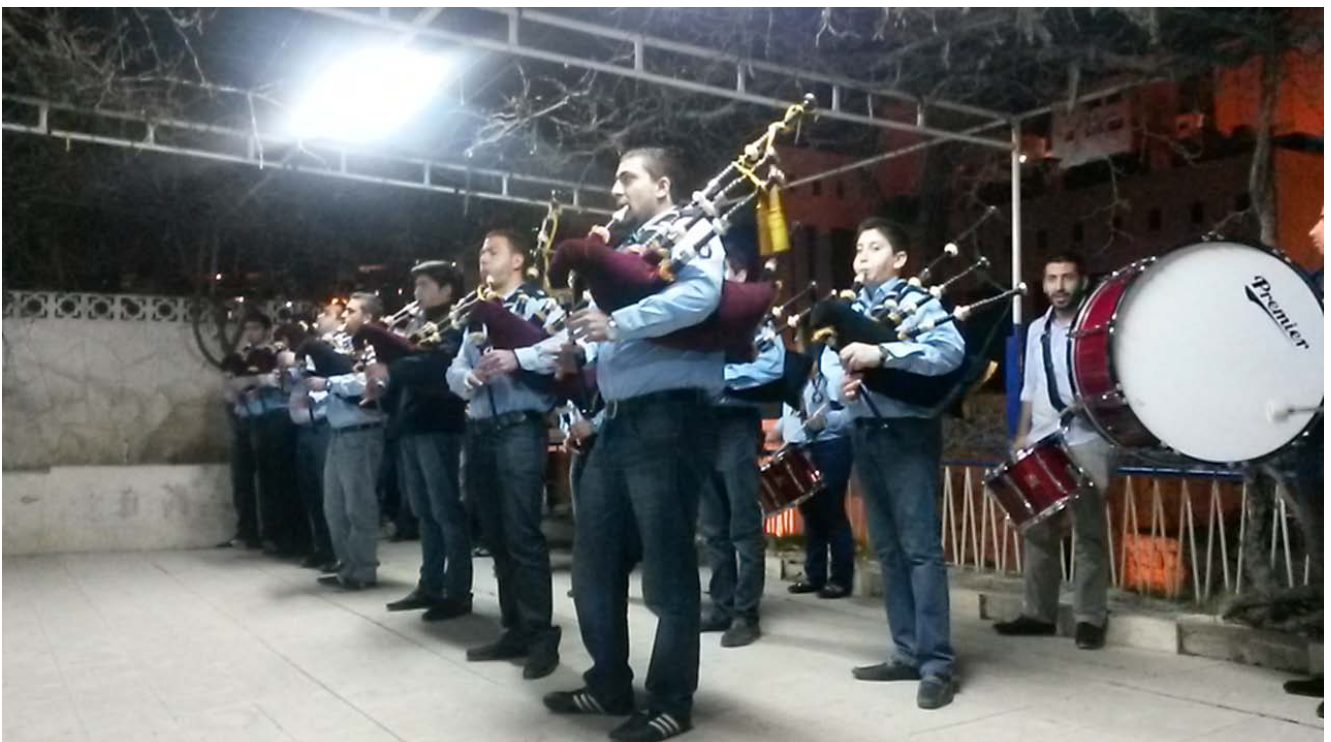
On the way back from the Monastery, the Committee members were offered a typical Jordanian lunch in a beautiful restaurant in Jerash.



On a wonderful, sunny afternoon, the Committee members enjoyed in nice atmosphere of the restaurant, in beautiful view on the surrounding area and in excellent food.



In the evening, the Committee members visited the premises of the Amman Orthodox Scouts Group, in Amman central area. That was an extraordinary experience. First of all because of a very, very warm welcome prepared by scouts and their pipe-band, which played a welcome music for DESMOS Committee members.



The evening spent with scouts and their leaders was quite inspirational and memorable.

Firstly, DESMOS Committee members had a meeting with the Amman Orthodox Scouts Group leadership, in the AOS premises. It was a pleasant, spontaneous conversation, in which the AOS President informed DESMOS Committee members about relevant facts and presented their plans for the future, and DESMOS Committee members presented the facts about the Link and its activities.



Then the encounter continued outdoors, in a nice yard, where all who were present made a circle ...



The scouts initiated an informal conversation with the Committee members, asking for more information about the Link, its mission and activities. Young leaders were interested in projects that could possibly be realized within the framework of DESMOS, they even shared some of their ideas with the Committee members.



The encounter was enriched with presence of both the former and the actual **President of Amman Orthodox Scouts Group**, as well as with presence of the distinguished guests: Mr. **Emile Amin Ghoury**, businessman and Mr. **Fawzi A. Shnoudeh**, President of the Orthodox Club of Amman, who both significantly support Amman Orthodox Scouts Group.



Emile Amin Ghoury



Fawzi A. Shnoudeh



The Presidents



DESMOS Committee members had also the pleasure to get acquaintance of Mr. **Fuad El Karsheh**, the well known journalist at Ro'ya and Roya TV.

Saturday, March 8, 2014.

After the whole-day Committee Meeting and a hard work done, the hosts organized the encounter with **His Eminence Benedict, the Metropolitan of Philadelphia-Amman**, who received DESMOS delegation and expressed interest in our Link's contribution in developing spirituality and religiosity at young people from scout associations in DESMOS member-countries, and in making Orthodoxy closer to their hearts.



The Committee members presented DESMOS facts to His Eminence, offering more details about the Link's history, its philosophy, as well as a short overview of the most important activities.

The next destination was the **Metropolitan Chapel of Saint Nektarios**.

The Committee members had the opportunity to make a short visit to this nice Chapel.

The closure of a very-rich-in-programme day was in a relaxing atmosphere of a typical restaurant in the old down town of Amman. The Committee members enjoyed nice Jordanian music and excellent food, having an informal exchange and summarizing the impressions after a very busy day.



THE COMMITTEE EXPRESSES
A BIG THANK YOU
TO AMMAN ORTHODOX SCOUTS
FOR AN EXCELLENT PROGRAMME
AND WARM WELCOME
THROUGHOUT THE STAY IN
JORDAN