

Partnership

*Intervention of the Secretary General Eduardo Missoni
at the Bangalore meeting February 26th, 2005*

Partnership is nowadays one of the most trendy key-words in the international arena.

In the Millennium Declaration adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in September 2000, for example, partnership is indicated as one of the "Millennium Development Goals".

Since the adoption of the Marrakech Charter by the World Scout Conference in 1996 (Oslo), the idea of Partnership has become familiar also in World Scouting, recognising the need for: *“men and women capable of acting in partnership for a world “without borders”, in the name of justice, solidarity and peace”*.

However, the idea of partnership, as in the case of other fashionable and inspiring concepts (i.e. development, globalisation, governance, etc.), the same word may be subject to many different interpretations and its undefined use may eventually be misleading.

The Marrakech Charter very clearly indicated the criteria for partnerships to be established between Scout Associations and between Scout associations and other local, national or international governmental or non-governmental organisations.

Among others it is useful to underline the need to build the partnership upon the principles of *“equality, autonomy, reciprocity and fraternity”*. These imply that a real partnership can be established only among *equals*, in other words, groups and organizations who share same ideals and purposes. This is obviously the case in partnerships between Scouts, but may not be so in relations with groups external to the Scout Movement.

It is especially in this second case that Scout groups and associations should carefully appraise the characteristics of any potential “partner”, whether non-profit or profit, public or private, This should not prevent collaboration and various degrees of interaction, but full awareness will ensure a more responsible approach to it.

In some cases the distance between our ideals and purposes and those of our “counterpart” may be evident, as for example in the case of a relationship with business organisations. In that case it is vital, in order to safeguard the good name of Scouting and for a responsible interaction to ensure that the company responds to ethics criteria acceptable to us and shows evidence of an adequate level of social responsibility. The concept, clearly expressed in the Marrakech Charter of a “Partnership Contract” goes exactly in the direction of establishing the rules of the game.

The definitions of these rules and the production of appropriate tools for the implementation of Partnerships is one of the purposes of our meeting in Bangalore, starting from the lessons we have learned through experience.

Let's not forget Our final goal: to build a better, peaceful world. As you remember BP told us that: *“In a big movement for a big object there is no room for little personal efforts; we have to sink minor ideas and link arms in a big “combine” to deal effectively with the whole. Co-operation is the only way if we mean to win success”*.

Partnership may well be another word for co-operation.