

PRESS RELEASE

Background information

Scouts

Münster/Westphalia, January 17, 2018 - As the world's largest youth movement, Scouting aims to contribute to the peace-oriented development of young people so that they can become involved in society as responsible citizens. The movement sees itself as international and independent of religion and politics. It is open to all. The most important principles are democracy, community and team spirit, living together as equals, tolerance towards others, respect for the environment and active commitment to the protection of nature. With these globally shared values, Scouting builds on the ideals of its founder, Lord Robert Baden-Powell, according to which all people - regardless of origin, skin color, faith or property - can live together in peace. For this reason, the Scouts, represented by the Rings of German Scout Associations, are being awarded the 2018 International Prize of the Peace of Westphalia.

Since its foundation in 1907, scouting has developed into the largest youth movement in the world with around 50 million members. The first scout camp was organized by Baden-Powell, a British general, on Brownsea Island in England. Initially, the focus was clearly on "adventures" outdoors in nature, but over the years the various values such as solidarity, tolerance and international understanding became increasingly important.

Today, the Scouts make a lasting contribution to peace through practicing democracy and international encounters.

Founder Lord Robert Baden-Powell once said: "A difficulty ceases to be a difficulty as soon as you smile at it and tackle it." The challenge for the Scouts to create peace in the world is therefore to work for it continuously and not to lose sight of the goal despite all obstacles. As an example of this, scouts have been distributing the Light of Peace from Bethlehem to "all people of good will" during Advent for over 20 years.

In Germany, the Ringe deutscher Pfadfinderinnen- und Pfadfinderverbände (Rings of German Scout Associations) bundle the common interests of their member associations with around 220,000 members. The "female" ring includes the Pfadfinderinnenschaft St. Georg (PSG), the Verband Christlicher Pfadfinderinnen und Pfadfinder (VCP) and the Bund der Pfadfinderinnen und Pfadfinder (BdP). The "male" ring includes the Deutsche Pfadfinderschaft Sankt Georg (DPSG), the VCP and the BdP. The German rings are embedded in the structures of the two world organizations - the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts and the World Organization of the Scout Movement.