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**IMPLEMENTATION OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION 60/251
OF 15 MARCH 2006 ENTITLED “HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL”**

Joint written statement* submitted by World Organization of the Scout Movement (WOSM), a non-governmental organization in general consultative status, and World Alliance of Young Men's Christian Associations (YMCA), a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[27 February 2007]

* This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s).

Right to Education

The World Alliance of YMCAs and the World Organization of the Scout Movement are both international youth organizations with a combined membership of 73 million members in more than 156 countries. Committed to work for the education and empowerment of children and young people to give them opportunities to develop to their fullest potential, the YMCA and World Scouting are deeply concerned about the ongoing violations of the rights of children and young people, especially with regard to education.

In spite of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, 855 million children and young people still have no access to formal education because of discrimination, poverty, child labour, armed conflicts and many other abuses of human rights. A shocking 12.7% of the world's 15-24 year olds are illiterate and 61.5% of these are female.¹ As a result, these children and young people are more likely to experience further indignities and suffering including unemployment, poverty, poor health and premature death.

It is clear that the formal education system does not work for all children and young people, either in the North or the South. This is especially true in the case of marginalised children and young people, and of girls. However it is the experience of many youth organizations that non-formal education is a very effective way of offering a holistic approach to learning, using creative, innovative methods. Non-formal education complements the education offered by the school and the family. Many youth organizations offer volunteering programmes, peer education initiatives and community organising development programmes which are often run in community centres, YMCAs, Scout camps and village halls. These "learning by doing" approaches to education are not only helping young people out of poverty and into work but, at the same time, are developing their life skills and are drawing them into civil engagement.

As a result of working with young people, especially marginalised young people, in communities around the world, the YMCA and the Scout Movement call for state parties and civil society to take urgent action to ensure that:

- Governments recognise that current education policies that are built only around formal education systems are failing the educational needs of millions of children and young people.
- Governments recognise the added value of non-formal education systems and their approaches in their education policies.
- Governments cooperate with NGOs to deliver non-formal education. Research shows that government-run non-formal education programmes are more likely to succeed if they have NGO collaboration.²
- Policies and strategies are designed to promote the education of the girl child, taking into account creative methods of non-formal education.

¹ UNESCO Institute for Statistics, Sept 2006.

² A Study into Collaboration for Increasing Coverage of the Provision of Adult Literacy in Botswana by Juma E. Nyirenda 1997

The YMCA and the Scouts are mobilising young people at local, national and international levels to address these issues and welcome further efforts to develop practical strategies and tools to ensure that every child enjoys the right to education.
