

Background

The World Scout Parliamentary Union (WSPU)

1. Introduction¹

The World Scout Parliamentary Union (WSPU) is an independent association which unites scout-oriented parliamentarians from all over the world and brings them into closer contact with the world scout movement (WSPU Constitution, Articles 1-2).

The main purpose of the WSPU is to strengthen the national scout organizations, at the national level, and support world scouting at the international level, through the work of parliamentarians. It also aims to encourage the establishment of the National Scout Parliamentary Association (NSPA) under the parliamentary framework, with a firm belief in the effectiveness of non-formal education.

The WSPU came into existence when 60 parliamentarians from 22 countries across 5 continents gathered for the Constituent Assembly in Seoul, the Republic of Korea, in 1991. As its objectives are fully shared by the World Scout Committee, the WSPU was granted a consultative status therefrom.

The WSPU is growing rapidly, with the increasing number of parliaments establishing the NSPAs to support scouting initiatives and legislation relating to the youth. It wishes specifically to provide scout movement with access to law-makers involved in empowering the youth and solving problems for them as well as the communities in which they live.

2. Rationale and Commitment²

Parliamentarians can help the scout movement achieve its objectives because:-

- They make laws that shape the future, especially laws concerning the youth in general and laws concerning issues of interest to scouting in particular – such as child protection, environment, health, and taxes levied on non-profit organizations.

- They can have an influence on the executive, either personally or officially.

- They have a good network of contact at both the national and the international levels.

When laws concerning the youth and the aforesaid issues are discussed, parliamentarians can:-

- Support their fellow parliamentarians to understand the benefits of scouting in preparing the youth to become responsible citizens.

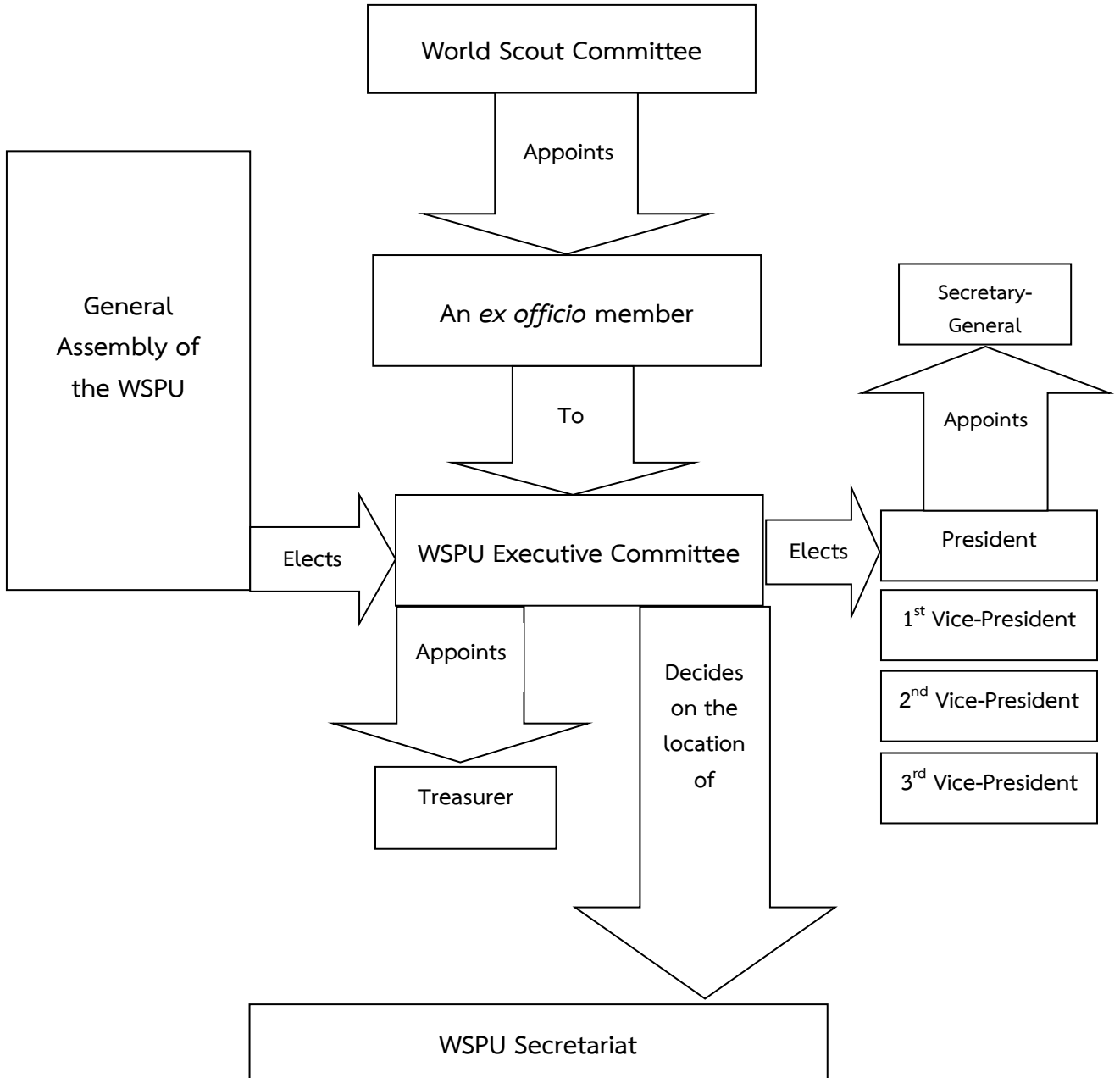
- Explain the benefits of scout movement in solving youth problems.

¹ Note: Adapted from “Aim,” by the World Scout Parliamentary Union, 2011, retrieved from <http://www.wspu.info/about/aim.php?PHPSESSID=4dc48c989c43b38002ede4b3c7e650ff>.

² Note: Adapted from Ibid.

- Obtain material assistance for scout movement from both the governments and other agencies.
- Provide scouts with access to decision-makers who can strengthen scout movement.
- Propose incorporating scouting values into national long-term policies.

3. Organizational Structure³



³ Note: Adapted from “Structure,” by the World Scout Parliamentary Union, 2011, retrieved from <http://www.wspu.info/about/structure.php>. A summary under this section is made from the WSPU Constitution.

3.1 General Assembly

- The General Assembly is the supreme body of the WSPU.
- It meets every 3 years, or as the executive committee decides (WSPU Constitution, Article 6(2)).
- It elects 5 to 12 members of the executive committee from different countries (WSPU Constitution, Article 7(1)).

3.2 Executive Committee

- The Executive Committee consists of 5 to 12 members elected by the General Assembly and an additional member designated by the World Scout Committee (WSPU Constitution, Article 7(1)). The Executive Committee elects a president and up to 3 vice-presidents of the organization. According to Article 8(2) of the WSPU Constitution, which was amended at the 8th WSPU General Assembly in 2016, “[t]he Executive Committee can appoint a Treasurer, and the President can appoint a Secretary General.”

- It meets once a year to implement the decisions of the General Assembly and make a decision on important organizational matters including its meeting program, meeting agenda and preparation for the next General Assembly.

- Members of the Executive Committee serve between the General Assemblies. With the exception of the President and the Vice-presidents, their terms in the executive committee are renewable once (WSPU Constitution, Article 7(2)).

- Members of the Executive Committee must be active parliamentarians. In the case where they lose their parliamentary mandates, they can keep their positions within the Executive Committee until the end of their terms, but cannot stand for re-election to the said committee (WSPU Constitution, Article 7(3)).

- The WSPU President is responsible for representing the organization in the external affairs.

3.3 Secretariat

- The secretariat is an administrative organ for which the WSPU Secretary-General is responsible. It was first established in Warsaw, the Republic of Poland, in 1997, and then relocated to Seoul, the Republic of Korea in 2010.

- In general, its responsibility is to provide support to the missions of the WSPU including its training, publication and public relations.

4. Membership

Members of the WSPU are National Scout Parliamentary Associations (NSPAs) which have been accepted by the General Assembly (WSPU Constitution, Article 3). Currently, the WSPU is composed of NSPAs from 100 countries/territories as its members.

References

Constitution of the World Scout Parliamentary Union.

World Scout Parliamentary Union. (2011). *Aim*. Retrieved from <http://www.wspu.info/about/aim.php?PHPSESSID=4dc48c989c43b38002ede4b3c7e650ff>

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