

FERNANDA SOARES

CANDIDATA AO COMITÊ

INTERAMERICANO



AREAS OF INTEREST

1. Valuing Volunteering
2. Valuing Interamerican Networks
3. Training Youth for Leadership Roles

Valuing Volunteering

In the new Strategy for the Scout Movement, approved at the 43rd World Conference in 2024, valuing volunteering emerges as one of the seven fundamental strategic priorities. This pillar reflects Scouting's commitment to recruiting, training, and retaining a growing and more diverse group of motivated and dedicated volunteers, capable of delivering safe and high-quality educational programs through fun, meaningful, and rewarding experiences. I chose this theme as one of the central pillars of my campaign for the Interamerican Scout Committee because, over more than three decades of my Scouting journey, I have witnessed firsthand how the volunteer is the indispensable foundation for the success of our Movement. Without them, Scouting simply does not advance.

The volunteer is fundamental to the implementation of the Scout educational program. It is they—Scouters, leaders, commissioners, and collaborators—who transform the ideals of the Promise and the Law into concrete actions: camps that foster adventure, intergenerational dialogues that inspire youth leadership, and trainings that develop competencies such as adaptability, strategic planning, and interpersonal relations. As highlighted in the Strategy, the focus is on flexible volunteering models that allow for different forms of involvement, times, and work styles, ensuring inclusion, intergenerational dialogue, and youth leadership in recruitment and development processes. Additionally, it emphasizes retention through comprehensive adult lifecycle management, with ongoing learning opportunities, recognition of effort, and care for well-being—understood as a positive state of physical, mental, and emotional comfort that enables active contributions to society.

However, without genuine recognition of these anonymous heroes, the Scout Movement faces enormous challenges in growing. It is impossible to deliver quality programs without trained and motivated volunteers, whose competencies—skills, knowledge, and attitudes demonstrated in everyday behaviors—are recognized not only within Scouting but also in personal and professional life. This reality is especially critical in the Interamerican Region, where nearly all Scout associations deal with challenges such as leader shortages, high turnover, and lack of continuous support. I saw this in my own journey: from coordinating the National Youth Network in Brazil, fostering youth empowerment, to serving as Director-President of the 21st Mangabeiras Scout Group, where, together with my team, we exceeded growth targets by investing in volunteer development and well-being. In the region, where cultural and geographic diversity is significant, these obstacles can hinder the reach of our impact, limiting the involvement of more young people in a world that cries out for ethical and resilient leaders.

It is very difficult to talk about growth without talking about valuing the volunteer. As a candidate from the Scouts of Brazil, I propose that the Interamerican Committee lead regional initiatives to implement the Strategy: creating platforms for sharing best practices in volunteer management, promoting intercultural trainings in essential competencies, and fostering recognition that transfers Scouting learnings beyond our borders. My commitment is to work collaboratively for a region where volunteering is synonymous with internal and external motivation—factors that drive people to act and stay. Together, we will build a stronger, more inclusive, and sustainable Scouting, honoring those who, day after day, build a better world.

Valuing Interamerican Networks

Regional networks represent one of the most powerful tools of Interamerican Scouting to drive direct collaboration between National Scout Organizations (NSOs), allowing the excellence of one nation to directly benefit another. In my journey as International Commissioner and National Director of International Relations for União dos Escoteiros do Brasil, I have proven in practice the transformative impact of this approach: our proximity to the Southern Cone countries has immensely enriched Brazilian Scouting work, exchanging best practices in areas such as youth involvement, regional events, and institutional strengthening. This direct collaboration is not only efficient; it is essential for a Movement that values "learning by doing" and the spirit of brotherhood. I have lived this potential and know that it can be replicated throughout the region, with regional networks acting as the key catalyst to connect local talents and solutions to common challenges.

It was with great joy that I saw the current composition of the Interamerican Scout Committee propose Resolution 2025-D: Revitalization of Regional Networks, to be discussed at the 29th Interamerican Scout Conference in Curaçao. This initiative recognizes the historical role of networks—pioneers in the Interamerican Region since its beginnings—as platforms for sharing best practices and fostering collaboration between NSOs. It addresses real challenges, such as the impact of the pandemic and organizational changes in the World Organization of the Scout Movement, which have limited the full potential of these networks. The resolution emphasizes the need for clear governance, defined mandates, and transparent communication channels, promoting inclusion, resilience, and alignment with regional priorities, such as the Regional Triennial Plan 2025-2028 and the World Triennial Plan 2024-2027. Additionally, it encourages the creation of national networks that connect to the regional ones, strengthening the region's collective capacity and honoring historical resolutions, such as the Marrakech Charter and the Interamerican Networks Policies.



This revitalization is urgent because, in the Interamerican Region, the cultural and geographic diversity of more than 30 NSOs offers a treasure trove of expertise—from innovations in Scout education in the Caribbean to sustainability strategies in South America—that, if shared directly, can accelerate the Movement's growth and resilience. Without this collaboration, we lose opportunities for peer learning and partnerships that build a more adaptable and inclusive Scouting.

As a candidate from the Scouts of Brazil, I propose prioritizing the implementation of this resolution: evaluating current networks to identify priority needs; updating their Terms of Reference with clear expectations for annual meetings, communication platforms, and expected outcomes; developing digital tools to document ideas and facilitate thematic exchanges; and defining inclusive processes for formation, adherence, and leadership, ensuring broad representation and diversity of perspectives.

If elected for the 2025-2028 term, I will make it a point to focus on these actions, acting as a bridge so that NSOs engage actively—nominating qualified representatives, promoting the networks internally, and fostering partnerships that encourage mutual learning and exchange of practices.

Together, we will revitalize regional networks for a more united and innovative Interamerican Scouting—where each NSO contributes and benefits, building a better world. This is the essence of our global brotherhood.

Training Youth for Leadership Roles

In the Strategy for the Scout Movement, approved at the 43rd World Conference in Egypt in 2024, one of the impact statements is precisely "a world shaped by young people." This visionary pillar affirms that Scouting will work to create a world forged by young people who are barrier breakers, bridge builders, informed decision-makers, and active, responsible citizens, empowered by core competencies and values developed through our Educational Method.

I chose this platform as the third axis of my campaign because I am a fierce advocate for training young people to exercise leadership. It is not enough to open the doors to youth participation; we need, simultaneously, to open up opportunities so that they are truly prepared to lead. Otherwise, those doors will close due to lack of confidence and tools, frustrating the transformative potential of youth.

The Strategy's goal is clear and inspiring: to form young people capable of removing barriers that prevent full personal and others' development; building connections in communities as actors in intergenerational, intercultural, and inter-religious exchanges; making personal decisions and having their voices heard in decision-making, planning, and operational processes; fostering values as active global citizens, understanding local challenges with a worldwide perspective; and, above all, being willing and able to assume leadership roles and seize opportunities. Here, "young people" encompasses boys and girls in Scouting's educational programs, from 5 to 26 years old, focusing on holistic development from childhood to early adulthood.



Concepts such as "barrier breakers"—individuals who challenge obstacles for a more inclusive society—and "bridge builders"—fosterers of connections and empathy between diverse groups—resonate with the essence of Scouting. Youth leadership, in this context, is a sustained and long-term process through which young people acquire competencies and agency to identify strengths and weaknesses, guide their lives, lead actions, and influence positive changes in institutions and communities.

My trajectory reinforces this conviction. As Coordinator of the National Youth Network of Escoteiros do Brasil and Youth Advisor to the World Scout Committee, I worked tirelessly to empower young people, creating safe spaces for intergenerational dialogue and development of competencies such as adaptability, mentoring, and character building. In these roles, I saw how dynamic programs—that offer peer networks for mutual learning, partnerships with local and international organizations for civic engagement, and clear pathways to leadership roles—transform beneficiaries into agents of change.

I view with great optimism established initiatives in the Interamerican Region, such as the International Leadership Training (ILT), which is widely disseminated and stabilized, training young people for global advocacy and representation in forums. Similarly, national leadership trainings are models of excellence, promoting Scout values and life competencies.

However, to realize the Strategy's vision—encouraging intergenerational collaboration that values the collective wisdom, creativity, and energy of young people and adults; ensuring that young people are the face of the Movement at global events; and removing barriers that limit their positive impact—we need to expand these initiatives. This means increasing the frequency, geographic and digital availability, and publicity of these events, making them accessible to more NSOs and young people from diverse contexts. In the Interamerican Region, with its rich cultural tapestry, this expansion will foster active citizens motivated to participate, decide, and commit to community causes, aligning with the World Youth Involvement Policy and the Youth Leadership in Decision-Making Framework.

If elected to the Interamerican Scout Committee, I commit to prioritizing regional actions that deliver dynamic educational programs, inform about decision-making opportunities, and create clear pathways for leadership, in partnership with the Regional Office and NSOs. Together, we will empower young people with resources, support, and safe spaces, ensuring that Scouting not only opens doors but keeps them wide open for a world shaped by them.

