

## *SCIMUS: An Ethical Affirmation*

### *Guidelines for the Development Partnership*

“SCIMUS” is Latin and means “We know.” SCIMUS is a guiding principle for persons and organizations with a rational, fact-oriented way of thinking, who search for solutions to the problems of peaceful coexistence on our planet out of their own insights.

To reach rational decisions it is important to first experience facts on the ground in order to grasp the situation—in the original sense of the word.

In the guest country of a developmental partnership one often experiences the good will of the people, but one soon recognizes the impotence of those who mean well. Therefore one important objective must be to find a common path which will enable these people to realize their goals.

#### **The SCIMUS-Vision:**

**“Balanced nations in a balanced community of nations.”**

A “balanced nation” means that all the people of this nation have the same claim to self-determination, independence and freedom. The same rights and obligations apply to the financially powerful as well as the financially powerless.

In a balanced nation:

- no one needs to go hungry;
- every person has access to basic medical care;
- every person has access to education;
- every person has the inalienable right to human dignity;
- protecting the environment receives special attention.

The emergence of balanced nations will improve our world today. Many small initiatives can contribute to reaching this goal.

A “balanced community of nations,” for SCIMUS, means that states strengthen their collaboration, reduce their differences through peaceful dialogue, and attempt to dismantle social tensions together.

#### **Knowledge – Understanding – Action**

Creating such a balance between nations can improve the situation in the world today because

we know . . .

- that half of the world’s people live on less than \$2 USD per day;

- that, according to statistics of the World Bank, 1.3 billion people live below the poverty line on less than \$1.25 USD per day;
- that 1.8 billion people are undernourished, 825 million people are starving, and a child dies from hunger every 15 seconds;
- that the average life expectancy in, for instance, Zambia is less than 40 years, and in Namibia it is less than 50 years;
- that every fifth child in Zambia dies before it reaches the age of five.

We understand . . .

- that the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from the powerful industrialized nations of the Northern Hemisphere are destroying the ozone layer over the Southern Hemisphere;
- that the HIV-AIDS epidemic that has been reduced to a chronic disease in Europe still poses a key problem for disadvantaged countries: HIV-AIDS can be controlled, at considerable cost, but in these countries the disease remains fatal, as it always has, because the financial means are lacking;
- that the tremendous medical advances that we benefit from in Europe do not reach broad areas of our planet;
- that infections which by our standards are commonplace, like an inflamed appendix, are often fatal elsewhere.

We work actively in that . . .

- with all our energy, we bring aid to the needy;
- we feel a responsibility for the elimination of the inequalities;
- we are always looking for new allies;
- through our support in partnership, we sustainably enable people to solve their problems themselves.

### **We abide by these principles**

- We are, in regard to politics and religion, absolutely neutral.
- We feel we are not obligated to the politics of any country or to any sponsor and are not the extended arm of diplomacy or of a religion. We are only obligated to our target group.
- We do not proselytize.
- Our collaboration is person-to-person, face-to-face.
- Working in partnership, for us, means: we work in teams that consist of experienced professional specialists from both the donor and the guest countries.

Harmony among the work teams is of the greatest importance to us. Attitudes of superiority and arrogance among those from the donor countries toward their colleagues from the guest country are counterproductive, offensive, and will not be tolerated.

- In no case is it permissible to work without a work permit or to try out insufficiently tested procedures. Persons without sufficient professional qualifications may not take part in aid missions.
- The private initiators must always coordinate their efforts in conjunction with the governments, agencies and universities of the guest country. In this way the efforts of the private initiatives can align themselves meaningfully with the overall plan of the guest countries, and together they can find a niche in which the supporters can participate efficiently.
- When a government determines that it no longer needs the help offered, the private initiative has reached its objective and will leave the country in friendship.

With tolerance, compassion, understanding, and forgiveness for the mistakes of others, we are looking everywhere in the world for like-minded people and will carry our ideas onward with them.

We are convinced that working together and not against one another must be the trend of the future.

The former prime minister and president of Israel, and Nobel Peace Prize laureate Shimon Peres once said about the Israeli-Palestinian peace activist [Abie Nathan](#):

***“A government always just wants things calm; that’s just how it is. But Abie showed us: Peace has to be achieved through people and not through governments. Through individuals and not through majorities.”***

We too, as individuals, want to contribute to this.

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