Mr Kofi Annan, Secretary-General, United Nations  
Mr Juan Somavia, Director-General, International Labour Organisation  
Mr James Wolfensohn, President, World Bank  

Geneva, 10 June 2003  

UN Secretary-General’s Initiative on Youth Employment  

Your Excellencies,  

I am writing to you on behalf of the “Alliance of Youth CEO’s”, a group composed of the Chief Executive Officers of seven world-wide youth movements and organisations (World Alliance of YMCA’s, World YWCA, World Organisation of the Scout Movement, World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, International Award Association and the International Youth Foundation). Together our organisations reach over 100 million young people, a great majority of them in developing countries.

With this letter our group wishes to express our support for the Secretary-General’s Youth Employment Network, and our willingness to contribute to its success.

As youth movements operating on the grass-roots level in almost all the countries of the world, we are also confronted with the increasing problem of youth unemployment that is affecting the lives of millions of young people. Our organisations provide, through non-formal education, the learning of life skills and the building of a value system; we thereby develop youth that is responsible, committed, autonomous and supportive. Although these qualities are essential for employability, unfortunately they are often not sufficiently recognised by employers, thus reducing the employability of young people.

The initiative on youth employment, launched by the three of you in 2000, is a crucial and urgent matter for the international community, as recognised in the Millennium Development Goals. Your initiative has raised high expectations among the youth movements around the world. The High-Level Panel and its working groups, to which our organisations have contributed, have produced visionary and strategic guidelines for the governments of the world. The work of the Youth Employment Network has created a strategy for a world-wide action in favour of employment for youth. But now we need to move beyond recommendations towards a global mobilisation of governments behind these goals. Our organisations are willing to contribute to this work, each of us in its own way and area of competence.

In concrete terms, we would be pleased to bring our contributions to the upcoming meeting of the High-Level Panel on 1 July 2003 in Geneva. Your deliberations with the members of your High-Level Panel could benefit from the perspectives of young people themselves, and the presence of major youth movements in the debate would show the support that your initiative has among the youth. Our organisations are ready to bring their specific contributions to this world-wide effort to bring productive and decent work for all young people.

Yours sincerely,

Jacques Moreillon  
Secretary General  
World Organization of the Scout Movement