

### **3<sup>rd</sup> International Forum on Sport for Peace and Development**

Jacques Rogge  
Opening Session  
New York, 5 June 2013

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Dear Secretary General,  
Ministers,  
Excellencies,  
Members of the Olympic Family,  
Distinguished delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to start by thanking Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon; Wilfried Lemke, the Special Adviser on Sport for Development and Peace; and everyone at the United Nations who has worked so hard to ensure the success of this meeting.

I also want to thank our friends at the U.S. Olympic Committee, especially Chairman Larry Probst and CEO Scott Blackmun, who were instrumental in making this Forum happen.

The USOC and the United States have a special place in the Olympic Movement that goes well beyond Team USA's remarkable record of achievement.

We have come a long way since the IOC hosted the first International Forum on Sport for Peace and Development in 2009.

Our hope from the outset was that these gatherings would encourage wider use of sport as a tool for peace and development. That has happened.

As we meet here today, sport is at work for peace and development in countries around the world.

Collaboration in this area has increased dramatically and involves a wide range of committed partners — National Olympic Committees; International and National Federations; other sports organisations; athletes; coaches; UN agencies; UN Member States and governmental authorities; educational institutions; and countless other organisations and individuals within and outside the world of sport.

All of you are partners in this effort or you would not be here, and I thank you for that. The collaboration and the partnerships that have developed over the past decade provide encouraging evidence of the progress we have made in “Creating the Common Vision”, which is the theme of this Forum.

A good portion of the credit for that progress goes to the Secretary-General, the recent recipient of the Seoul Peace Prize, an award that has its roots in the 1988 Seoul Olympic Games.

Mr Secretary-General, congratulations on a richly deserved honour, and thank you for your support for the Olympic Movement.

I am very pleased that another city in your home nation, PyeongChang, will welcome the world to the Olympic Winter Games in 2018.

The relationship between the IOC and the UN goes back many years.

Our organisations have two very different roles in society, but we share some core values. As the Secretary-General said in his keynote address to the 2009 Olympic Congress in Copenhagen: “Olympic principles are United Nations principles.”

A series of milestone events over the years have highlighted that alignment of values while strengthening the ties between our organisations.

In 1978, UNESCO described sport and physical activity as a “fundamental right for all.”

Our founding document, the Olympic Charter, describes the practice of sport as a fundamental human right.

In 1993, UN General Assembly Resolution 48/10 formally recognised the Olympic Movement’s role in promoting “a peaceful and better world” and established a partnership with the UN to promote the International Year of Sport the following year.

Our Charter says that the IOC’s role includes partnering with other organisations to promote peace and “place sport at the service of humanity”.

In 2001, the UN Secretary-General appointed the first Special Adviser on Sport for Development and Peace, another important step on our path of collaboration.

The ultimate recognition of the role of sport in promoting peace and development came in 2009, when the IOC was granted UN Observer status by Member States.

The IOC's work in this area is measured not by resolutions, appointments and meetings such as this one, but by what happens in the real world, in places like Lusaka, Zambia, where we opened our first Olympic Youth Development Centre in 2010.

This facility, supported by the Zambian government, the National Olympic Committee of Zambia and six International Federations, offers training for athletes in six sports, as well as educational programmes, health services and activities for the entire community.

Work on a second Olympic Youth Development Centre is under way in Haiti.

In the Osire refugee settlement in central Namibia, we launched a three-year initiative with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees to engage young people through sport to reduce teenage pregnancies, HIV/AIDS and drug abuse.

AIDS awareness and prevention is woven throughout the IOC's activities.

We conduct education campaigns at the Olympic Games and Youth Olympic Games; sponsor workshops with National Olympic Committees; and distribute HIV/AIDS prevention toolkits in seven languages in partnership with UNAIDS.

In Gatumba, Burundi, near the border with the Democratic Republic of Congo and the site of a horrendous 2004 massacre, we opened a new Youth Sport Centre in 2011 in cooperation with UN Office on Sport for Development and Peace, UNDP and the Government of Burundi.

The centre eases ethnic tensions and delivers other benefits by providing athletic facilities and educational programmes to more than 10,000 young people.

Other IOC projects are global in scope. The Olympafrica organisation has built more than 40 community based sport sport centres that offer the values of sports to many young people.

The Youth Olympic Games, inaugurated in Singapore in 2010, combine high-level athletic competition with cultural and education programmes, including educational booths of UN agencies.

Participants return to their home communities as ambassadors for sport and the Olympic values.

After successful summer and winter editions in Singapore and Innsbruck, we are looking forward to the 2014 Youth Olympic Games in Nanjing, China, and the 2016 Winter Youth Olympic Games in Lillehammer, Norway.

The dedicated efforts of National Olympic Committees and their partners in countries around the world have accelerated the spread of Olympic Day celebrations on or around June 23 that encourage physical activity by people of all ages and abilities.

Many more millions of people have become part of Olympic Day via our social media platforms and share how they are getting active on this occasion.

We have indeed come a long way, but we have much more to do.

We have only begun to tap the full potential of sport as a tool for peace and development.

Sport will certainly play a role in fulfilling the Sustainable Development Goals, just as it is doing with the Millennium Development Goals.

We can do more with sport to counter alarming increases in obesity, diabetes and other non-communicable diseases that are closely linked to inactivity.

We can do more to build on the progress we have made against HIV/AIDS.

We can and we must do much more to help the world's young people lead healthier and more fulfilling lives.

The IOC welcomes the UN Youth Strategy as developed by the Secretary-General and the appointment of the Special Envoy for Youth.

These developments are in-keeping with the IOC's focus on young people and the role of sport in youth development, and are in line with the UN sustainability youth theme, "The Future We Want".

As I have often said, sport cannot solve all of the world's problems. It is not a panacea for all the ills that afflict society.

But it can be an effective tool for education, gender equality, conflict prevention and resolution, economic development and better health.

It can provide hope in the face of despair, joy amid sorrow and a sense of purpose to those who have lost their way.

Let us leave here more determined than ever to put sport to work for peace and development.

Rather than saying more, I would like now to share with you a video clip which shows a sample of the IOC's and UN's activities in support of peace and development...[play video]

Thank you.