
Activities of National Olympic Committees for Peace and the Observance of the Olympic Truce

On the occasion of the International Year for a Culture of Peace, the IOC also decided to dedicate Olympic Day, celebrated every year on 23 June, to the culture of peace and the observance of the Olympic Truce. Several National Olympic Committees organized activities to promote the culture of peace and observance of the Olympic Truce in their respective countries. Some of the NOC initiatives are listed below.

ALBANIA

- Two runs for peace (in Vlora and Tirana, two neighbouring cities embroiled in a political conflict with each other) in collaboration with the Italian Sport For All Union, a few weeks before Olympic Day.
- Publication of a brochure entitled “For a culture of peace without violence”.

ANGOLA

- Symbolic walk for peace, held with the support of various youth associations and the national political authorities. This walk through the streets of the capital brought together some 2,000 people of all ages to illustrate the peace-making and social role which sport can play in bringing communities together and promoting understanding and national unity.

ARGENTINA

- June editorial of the official magazine of the Argentine Olympic Committee, ‘Hera Olimpica’ devoted to the culture of peace.
- The 25 June walk in Buenos Aires and the MERCOSUR congress on women and sport in Mendoza at the beginning of July all took place under the theme of peace and the Olympic Truce.
- Broadcast nationally, before the opening of the Sydney Games, of a message from the President of the Argentine Republic, on the culture of peace.

AZERBAIJAN

- Olympic Day run devoted to the culture of peace.

BURUNDI

- Peace walk in the city of Bujumbura.

CAMBODIA

- 2.5 km walk for peace in Phnom Penh, parallel to the Olympic Day Run. Accompanied by a band and watched by around 6,000 spectators lining the route, 500 people took part in this walk, which started at the national Olympic stadium.

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

- Round table in Bangui on the theme ‘Sport and the culture of peace’ for which the opening ceremony took place in the presence of the Prime Minister of the Central African Republic, Anicet-Georges Dologuele.

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

- Three symposiums on the themes “The essential role of peace in the development of modern man and the role that sport can play in this endeavour”, “Sport in international leisure” and “A world without violence through the Olympic Ideal”.
- An Olympic walk for peace organized in Kinshasa.

COSTA RICA

- Peace walk organized on 9 July 2000, where the participants wore a T-shirt bearing the Olympic Truce logo.

DOMINICA

- Olympic Day Run devoted to the culture of peace.

EL SALVADOR

- A cycle of lectures on “Sport for a culture of peace” over three days as part of the Olympic Week celebrations.

GEORGIA

- Olympic Day Run devoted to the culture of peace.

GUINEA BISSAU

- Walk for peace held in all regions of the country, strongly supported by athletes from the basketball, football, handball, volleyball, wrestling, athletics, tennis, boxing and cycling federations. Some 250 children and teenagers took part in the walk in the capital, Bissau. At the end of the day, tribute was paid to the African wrestling champions in the presence of various personalities from politics and sport, including Deputy Prime Minister Faustino Fudut Imbali, and the Secretary of State for Youth, Culture and Sport, Joaquim Baldé.

HONG KONG, CHINA

- Walk for the culture of peace.
- Departure ceremony of the athletes for Sydney, devoted to the culture of peace.

KOREA

- Olympic Day Run in Seoul, devoted to the culture of peace and the Olympic Truce.

LEBANON

- Organization of the third Olympic Week in Beirut on the theme of culture and peace.

LITHUANIA

- Adoption of a resolution on events to celebrate the International Year for a Culture of Peace in November 1999.
- School art competition entitled “Lithuanian athletes building a world in which a peace-loving spirit prevails”.
- Sports festival entitled “Olympic springtime” in Vilnius and Kaunas.
- “Olympic Autumn 2000” sports festival to be held in Siauliai.
- Scientific conference on the theme “The Olympic Movement’s contribution to building a peaceful and better world”.

MAURITIUS

- Mural commissioned by the National Olympic Academy was unveiled in the 'Maryse Justin' athletics stadium in Réduit, which was on the route of the Olympic Day Run. The mural featured doves, an athlete holding the Olympic flame, and the inscription "Education and Sports for a Culture of Peace".

MAURITANIA

- Walk for peace, respect of the Olympic Truce and against poverty and the use of substances harmful to the health of athletes and young people, organized on 23 June from the Olympic stadium in Nouakchott, which gathered a large crowd and members of the government and various ministries, sports personalities and athletes. During the walk, the participants carried olive wreaths. Doves were also released by the Minister for Public Office, Labour, Youth and Sport, Baba Ould Sidi; the National Education Minister, Sghair Ould M'Bareck; the Minister for Trade, the Craft Industry and Tourism, Ahamdy Ould Hamadi; the Secretary of State for Women's Issues, Mintata Mint Hideid; and the secretaries general of, among others, the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation and Public Office.

REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

- Organization of a Physical Education Olympiad for schoolchildren and students in collaboration with the Ministry for Education and Science, on the theme "Sport – a guarantee of peace between nations".
- On 23 June, a message from the President of the Republic, Petru Lucinschi, in which he noted that "The Olympic Movement is the force that strengthens friendship, the force that unifies through its human ideals the most beautiful aspirations, the force that embodies harmony and compatibility, mutual understanding and the hope of nations to have a better life".

PAKISTAN

- Walk for peace organized in Lahore with 2,000 participants.
- Message from the President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Muhammad Rafique Tarar, in which he wished all the participants "*every success in their pursuit of excellence through the sporting spirit*".

PALESTINE

- Launch of an appeal to the peace-loving people of Palestine and of the entire world.

RWANDA

- Olympic Week held in Butare, capital of the southern region of the country, which focused on the culture of peace and combating discrimination and the exclusion of people suffering from AIDS. The messages promoted during this Week were essentially the culture of peace, the fight against AIDS and inclusion of those with the disease: "sport for the culture of peace"; "the NOC of Rwanda calls on all Rwandan athletes to combat discrimination and the exclusion of people with AIDS"; "AIDS: talking about it is not enough; we must act together".
- Organization of a conference on Olympism.
- Organization of sports competitions in tennis, chess, swimming, table tennis, handball, karate, basketball, volleyball, football, athletics and boxing. At the prize-giving ceremony, attended by numerous personalities from politics and sport, the Minister of Territorial Administration, representing the government, recalled that "*Sport has another, more social than individual purpose. It unites, overcoming differences and breaking down cultural, ethnic and racial barriers. From this perspective, sport is very useful to our society, which has long been marked by separatist political ideologies. ... This social purpose of sport goes beyond the national context to become a valuable instrument of understanding between peoples. This is why, immediately after the war, when the country was struggling to recover from the agonies of war, we firmly supported the*

holding of international sports encounters in our country. Because the hoped-for result, namely communion with other peoples, was worth far more than the effort expended. After all, sport is a valuable means of fostering a true culture of peace. This is why we unreservedly support respect for the Olympic Truce, and call on the Rwandan sports movement to promote the culture of peace and fair play. Long live Sport! Long live Peace! Long live understanding between peoples!

SAINT KITTS AND NEVIS

- The joint IOC-UN message was read out by Olympian Tamara Wigley-Brudy, which was thought-provoking and highly symbolic.
- Message from the Minister for culture, youth and sports, Jacinth Henry-Martin, on the occasion of Olympic Day.

SLOVAKIA

- Three cities of Slovakia, Trencin, Liptovsky, Mikulas and Dolny Ohaj welcomed a total of 678 walkers for peace, at the NOC initiative. In Trencin, 62 participants joined their Czech counterparts at the Czech-Slovak border.

SLOVENIA

- Organization of various symbolic activities on the theme of peace and observance of the Olympic Truce, among which the reading of the joint message from the IOC and the United Nations, an IOC public service broadcast entitled “Celebrate Humanity”.
- Presentation of the “Peace Flag Project” sponsored by the United Nations ‘Cyberschoolbus’, in cooperation with the United Nations Postal Administration and the IOC. This project invites schoolchildren from around the world to design a flag representing their vision of world peace. Young Mateja Prunk, at the age of 12, became the first Slovene artist to see her work reproduced on a United Nations stamp, which was issued on 15 September 2000 to mark the opening of the Games of the XXVII Olympiad in Sydney.

SUDAN

- The President of the Republic of the Sudan, Omar Hassan Ahmad Al-Bashir, issued a decree pardoning everyone who had borne arms, and calling for a cease-fire to enable war victims to return to their homes.
- Olympic Day was dedicated to peace, under the theme “No sport without peace”. It took place in one of the country’s poorest communities, Omdurman, where many displaced people live.
- The NOC distributed food to the children of the community.

SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC

- Olympic Day dedicated to peace, which was organized in September, and included galas of swimming and gymnastics that gathered more than 1,000 young participants, and a cycling race.

TOGO

- Peace walk in Notsé, gathering all the participants at the Olympic Day Run.
- The President of the Republic of Togo, Gnassingbé Eyadema, also the current president of the Organization of African Unity, read a message on the culture of peace and the Olympic Truce to the nation.

CHINESE TAIPEI

- Olympic Day Run devoted to the culture of peace.

TURKMENISTAN

- Seminars on “Sport as a factor of world culture” and “Observance of the Olympic Truce” were organized for young athletes in the Olympic schools, students and teachers of the National Institute of Sport and Tourism, and athletes in the national Olympic team.

UGANDA

- Walk for peace in Jinja (80 km from Kampala) with 2,000 people.
- Organization of a 2 km race against poverty, AIDS and drug abuse, in Kampala, which attracted 500 participants.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

- Signature of a cooperation agreement between the American NOC and the Cuban NOC. The first discussions between the two parties were held during the IOC round table in San José.
- Olympic Day was celebrated in Colorado Springs (Colorado) where 125 young people joined in a run under the slogan “Peace through sport”, and in San Diego (California), at the Olympic Training Centre, the President of the United States, Bill Clinton, addressed over a thousand people.

VANUATU

Walk for peace through Port Vila, which included the Head of State, John Bennett Bani; the First Lady, Charity Bani; Prime Minister Barak Tame Sope and his wife Mildred Sope; the speaker of the Parliament; and various government ministers. At the finish line in the capital's Central Park, the Head of State read out the joint message from the IOC and the United Nations, while in his speech the Prime Minister emphasized the theme of peace and unity. Runners in the Sydney Games Olympic Torch Relay also took part in the walk, and a banner carrying a message of peace in pidgin English was produced for the occasion.