



THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE OLYMPIC MOVEMENT AND ITS STAKEHOLDERS

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Sport, by its origin and essence, its value for humanity and its recognised prestige, is the result of an ample and complex framework of relations between the people and institutions that organise, practise, promote, manage and finance it.

But, in addition, it has links and alliances, and collaborates, through the International Olympic Committee (IOC), with 21 programmes of the United Nations and non-governmental organisations, as well as with other philanthropic foundations linked to justice and social welfare.

Sport and Olympism have proven their great value as agents of social transformation and as recognised authoritative actors in promoting peace, development, care as well as in protecting the environment, and promoting the values of sport for health, education and human rights. To do this it is necessary for National Olympic Committees (NOCs), and all members of our Movement, to take actions that help expand, strengthen and consolidate common efforts to achieve a better and fairer world, train our young people and cultivate and promote these values to make irreversible the principles that support the Olympic Ideal.

The Olympic Ideal reaches its highest expression in the practice of sport, which is based on relations of collaboration, solidarity, fair play, friendship and the moral and ethical standards clearly set out in the Olympic Charter.

The results of our Olympic Congress should go in the direction of unity and integration set forth in its guidelines, and present in one form or another, with their own identity, in the five issues included on the agenda of this Congress.

The XIII Olympic Congress is a consequence of that broad concept of integration put into practice by the IOC, which has enabled the participation of broader social sectors, the general public, individuals, sport-related entities and, of course, the members of the Olympic family and its partners.

Sport as a social activity is a source, result and reflection of personal and institutional relationships taking place throughout society, so it is essential to have a clear and precise definition, with shared values among all the actors of sport, locally, nationally and internationally. Coaches, athletes, directors, governments, sponsors and partners have their own specific areas of work, which must be accomplished and respected; only coordinated action can achieve the objectives of sport.

Conflicts or crisis periods in the lateral or multilateral relations among Olympic sports organisations and their environment occur fairly frequently, motivated by personal interests, political or economic reasons, unrelated to the principles and values that sport promotes and develops.

This phenomenon creates a question: Who benefits from this type of problem and who is harmed? Unfortunately, the answer is clear: it does not benefit anyone and harms sport and its main protagonist, the athlete.

Let me share with you some brief reflections from a viewpoint that may be useful in addressing such situations in the future.

- Undoubtedly, the framework of juridical, legal and inter-institutional relations in which the activities of sport are developed must be well defined and well accepted by all, at all levels. And this on the basis of mutual respect and recognition of the jurisdiction of the parties involved.
- Absolute purity and transparency in the development of any kind of sports relations, in which, of course, I include the management of financial resources, is an essential requirement.
- Moral and ethical principles that have always accompanied, and will permanently have to accompany, sport should prevail over any political, economic and financial consideration.
- Sport, and athletes in particular, must constitute a permanent example to be imitated by children and young people. Its motivational strength is incalculable and therefore any act, behaviour or statement, which harm or attack such high objectives are unacceptable and self-defeating.
- National federation-club relationships are the foundation on which relationships are built in each country. The strength and vitality of such entities will depend, to a large extent, on the consistency or fragility of the relationships that we are able to build. To strengthen and expand this type of relationship is an obligation which those of us who are involved in sport cannot avoid.
- We should not look for problems and difficulties in others; we must submit our conduct to permanent, rigorous analysis, which allows us to identify the difficulties in order to face them and stress the virtues to be cultivated.
- Perhaps the most controversial issue today is the relationship between NOCs and governments. Much has been said about it, and we have advanced only little. The Pan American Sports Organisation (PASO) and Latin America have recently commenced an important new stage in this area, the essence of which is expressed in a



conceptual and practical way in the “Acapulco Declaration” adopted in October last year.

- We must burn in our minds and our hearts that the heritage of sport is unique, not exclusive to certain members of society, and with no boundaries of individuals and institutions. There should be no room for sectarian and individualistic attitudes.
- If we have the strong determination to promote sport nationally and internationally, and I am sure that we do, we are forced – I repeat – we are forced to work together with governments, to collaborate and develop joint actions that advocate the most broad development of sport as a necessary and urgent social choice, mainly focused towards children and young people without excluding any age or social group.
- Today, in an increasingly interdependent and globalised world, it is impossible to promote sport and achieve effective Olympic education if management of government authorities and the Olympic sport of each country are not integrated in a common and single effort.
- The systematic practice of sport, the organisation of competitions, the conduct of sporting events, the fight against doping, the creation of infrastructures, training of human resources, and the application of science and technology, are, among others, issues which require the assistance of all to develop them with efficiency and quality, always recognising and respecting each other.

Let us make every effort and use all our intelligence, so that relations with governments can be a factor of change and the core around which all the positive forces in sport and its development revolve.

The call for the participants in this XIII Olympic Congress is for unity, integration, collaboration and joint efforts among all persons and institutions related to the promotion and development of sport, with the fostering of human values that lead to a better, fairer and more peaceful world.

Let us be consistent with this major commitment we have made to sport and to the youth of the world.