



## SER MIANG NG

IOC representative • International Olympic Committee



ORIGINAL TEXT IN ENGLISH

This morning, it is my privilege and pleasure to speak on the theme “Structure of the Olympic Movement” on behalf of the IOC.

### STRUCTURE

The fundamental philosophy and goal of the Olympic Movement is to educate young people through sports, so that they can become better citizens and contribute to mutual understanding and world peace. Over the last 100 years, our Movement has evolved into what President Jacques Rogge calls “the greatest social force for good”.

The Olympic Movement operates within the confines of societal laws and traditions and is very much a part of society. A structure that continues to evolve with the ever-changing political, social and economic landscape is necessary for our Movement to remain relevant and be effective in fulfilling our mission.

The Olympic Charter sets forth and recalls the Fundamental Principles and essential values of Olympism. It also defines the framework for the Olympic Movement as it states the rules, main reciprocity rights and obligations of the constituents and stakeholders of the Movement.

According to the Olympic Charter, the IOC, the International Federations (IFs) and the National Olympic Committees (NOCs) are the three constituents of the Olympic Movement. The athletes, the organising committees, the national associations, sports officials, technical officials, coaches, as well as the other organisations and institutions that are recognised by the IOC are the fundamental elements of our Movement or stakeholders.

The rules and activities of the constituents and stakeholders of the Movement must be in full compliance with the Olympic spirit, its founding principles and rules. As the guardian of the Movement, the IOC works with its constituents and stakeholders and helps to ensure that they comply with the Olympic Charter.

The concerted effort and close collaboration of all constituents and stakeholders build the success of the Olympic Movement.

The IOC, the IFs, the NOCs, the organising committees of the various Olympic Games, athletes and officials bring the Movement and its values to the rest of the world.

### THE AUTONOMY OF THE OLYMPIC MOVEMENT

In order for the constituents and stakeholders of the Olympic Movement to carry out their mission and fulfil their responsibilities effectively, they need to remain autonomous. Autonomy is a means to an end and not an end itself.

Take the NOCs for instance. Rule 28.6 of the Olympic Charter says, “The NOCs must preserve their autonomy and resist all pressures of any kind, including but not limited to political, legal, religious or economic pressures which may prevent them from complying with the Olympic Charter.” Our founding fathers’ foresight on the need to preserve the autonomy of our Movement has withstood the test of time for the last 100 years. However, let me hasten to add that, with the exception of a small number, the relationships of NOCs and their respective governments have been cordial and symbiotic. There are many examples of the NOC working closely with its Ministry of Sports and the Ministry of Education – or the equivalent governmental agencies – in the effort to promote sports and Olympic education to young people.

For NOC autonomy to be enshrined, the government needs to understand and recognise the value of the Olympic Movement and the role of the NOC in contributing towards the development of young people and the good of society.

The IOC will study the feasibility of introducing a United Nations’ declaration to recognise the IOC and Olympic Movement’s contribution to society and world peace. The declaration will also call on UN member states to recognise the autonomy of the constituents and stakeholders of the Olympic Movement.

On a national level, the IOC will work with every NOC that so desires on signing a Protocol between the government, the respective NOC and the IOC. This Protocol will recognise the value of the Olympic Movement and make provisions to protect the autonomy of the NOC so that it can fulfil its mission. The symbiotic relationship shared between the NOC and its government could be covered in this document as well.

To maintain autonomy, the NOC should develop credibility and trust within the country or territory of its operation. This can be done by achieving financial independence, adopting and practising good corporate governance, transparency as well as a universal Code of Ethics.

For its part, the IOC will continue to work with the Association of National Olympic Committees (ANOC) and Continental Olympic Associations to help safeguard the autonomy of the NOCs, where necessary. The IOC may also intervene when needed. The work of the European Olympic Committees with the European Union (EU), the Acapulco Declaration from the third Convention of the Pan-American Olympic Sports Organisation and the Olympic Council of Asia (OCA) Sports Congress are laudable efforts by Continental Olympic Associations to address the issues of autonomy with governments.

The IOC recognises the paramount importance of autonomy to all the constituents and stakeholders, and has organised two seminars on the



Autonomy of the Olympic and Sports Movement in 2006 and 2008. It will endeavour to continue its work in this important area.

### GOOD GOVERNANCE AND ETHICS

The second Seminar on the Autonomy of the Olympic Movement and Sports Movement in Lausanne in February 2008 saw the approval of the IOC Code of Ethics and experts' text on Basic Universal Principles of Good Governance of the Olympic Movement. These documents could form the basis for stakeholders in the Movement as they develop their own governance and ethics.

It is crucial for the IOC, IFs and NOCs, as the constituents of the Olympic Movement, to lead by example and adopt and practise good governance and a code of ethics.

The missions of the IFs and NOCs are clearly defined in the Olympic Charter under Rules 25, 26, 28 and 29. The IOC will continue to work very closely with these two important constituents and ensure solidarity, mutual respect and unity in all the efforts to meet the objectives of the Olympic Movement.

I will now touch on the National Federations (NFs) of the respective sports. NFs are the key components of both the IFs and NOCs. NFs of different sports in the same country or territory form the NOC. NFs from the same sport from NOCs worldwide form the IFs. In a way, they are the common denominator of both IFs and NOCs.

Given the importance of their role, the NFs require the same level of autonomy, corporate governance, ethical principles and practices as the IFs and NOCs. While the IOC has no direct dealings with NFs, it has an interest in the development of strong and autonomous NFs, as this would translate into strong IFs and NOCs. The IOC looks towards the IFs and NOCs in the development of NFs.

### IOC MEMBERSHIP

The Olympic Charter requires IOC members to be non-political and independent of any other influences and pressures. The primary role of IOC members is to represent and promote the interest of the IOC and the Olympic Movement in their respective country or in the organisation of the Olympic Movement that they serve. It is of critical importance that IOC members have the freedom of decision and freedom to vote.

Whether as individual members or members linked to specific functions or office, IOC members should place the interests of the IOC and the Olympic Movement above all else. The interests of the IOC and the Movement as a whole always take precedence over the functional interest and guide members in their decisions.

At the moment, the IOC consists of 70 individual members, and 15 members representing active athletes, IFs and NOCs, making a total of 115. This is also in compliance with the Olympic Charter, which stipulates a majority of individual members not linked to any functions and office.

The number as well as the composition of IOC membership has always been a hot topic for discussion. The current membership structure has been in existence for almost 10 years. It has a good balance of independence and representation. Any fine tuning will have to be considered very carefully and with the greatest sensitivity. For example, to

increase membership from one function will inevitably invite a request for a corresponding increase from the other functions; to accommodate the entire request could then swell the number of members to an unacceptable level.

It is necessary for the IOC to review its membership structure periodically in order to stay relevant. The biggest challenge, however, is to recruit outstanding men and women from all over the world with a range of different expertise, knowledge and skills to meet the complexity of organisation, finance, marketing, politics, etc., in addition to sports that will strengthen the IOC and meet the challenges of the ever-changing world.

### THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE OLYMPIC MOVEMENT AND ITS STAKEHOLDERS

Apart from the key constituents and stakeholders of the Olympic Movement, the IOC also works with other organisations in the fight against violence in sports, illegal betting and match-fixing. One important example is the fight against doping with the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) and governments of the world. Going forward, this cooperation could be extended to other areas like educational and cultural programmes, health protection of young people and athletes, and the career development of athletes.

As the global political, economic and social landscape evolves, the Olympic Movement will continually renew itself and develop new forms of cooperation in the areas of medical and scientific research, education and academic communities, sustainable development and social and humanitarian aid.

IOC President Jacques Rogge and Honorary President Juan Antonio Samaranch have forged a strong working relationship with the UN and its various agencies. This relationship should be enhanced to achieve common objectives and goals for our young people and their future. More often than not, there is a lot of synergy between the IOC's humanitarian and sports development efforts and those of the UN and the Red Cross. Hence, a close working relationship and collaboration would allow us to maximise the impact of our initiatives with the same amount of resources.

### CONCLUSION

The vision, values and principles of the Olympic Movement still remain relevant and universal, even in the context of today's globalised, dynamic and ever-changing world. Let us continue to work closely together in our journey in the Olympic Movement for our young people and for our world.