

Closing remarks at the IPACS High Level Meeting **To be delivered by IOC Member Pierre-Olivier Beckers-Vieujant**

I would like to convey the greetings of the President of the International Olympic Committee, Thomas Bach, whom I have the honour to represent. He remembers very well the last meeting of the Steering Committee which took place in Lausanne last June. Unfortunately, he could not be here with us today, so he asked me to address you on his behalf.

Our thanks and gratitude go to the government of the United Kingdom for hosting this first High-Level event of the International Partnership Against Corruption in Sport. This meeting, bringing together so many stakeholders from governments, intergovernmental organisations, law enforcement agencies and sport organisations, is itself an illustration that supporting sports integrity is a team effort.

All sport organisations stand for the values of sport: excellence, respect and fair-play. Sport organisations are therefore by definition values-based organisations. As such, we have a special responsibility, one might say a double-duty, to uphold the integrity and credibility of sport.

As the role and relevance of sport in society continues to grow, so do the expectations of the public vis-à-vis the integrity of sports organisations. We know that our ability to make a difference in the world rests on our integrity and credibility. This is why strengthening the credibility and integrity of sport is a key pillar of Olympic Agenda 2020, the strategic roadmap for the Olympic Movement.

As Mr Ban Ki-moon, former Secretary General of the United Nations and Chair of the IOC Ethics Commission, has highlighted on many occasions, “the sport is a unique vehicle for peace, but it can only be efficient if it has credibility”. We must fight to eliminate all the risks that discredit the Sports Movement.

The Olympic Charter is the codification of the Fundamental principles of Olympism, according to which the sports organisations shall have rights and obligations of autonomy, including in particular the responsibility for ensuring the respect of good governance principles.

Nevertheless, we know that good governance rules do not make us immune to corruption. No organisation in this world is immune in this respect. It is a reality that criminal activities affect all areas of society: politics, business, and also sport. Our challenge is to act quickly and effectively when misconduct occurs. This is crucial to protecting our integrity and therefore our credibility.

For this reason, sports organisations have to take serious measures against the risk of corruption.

But we cannot do so alone. By their nature, sport organisations do not have the mandate nor the capacity to fight criminal activities. This authority lies with the governments and law enforcement agencies. This is why fighting crime and corruption must be a team effort. We are convinced that we can only make progress in partnership.

We also know that to be effective in the fight against corruption, we need the expertise of our partners. For this reason, the IOC convened the International Forum for Sports Integrity in 2015 and a second in edition in 2017, to lay the groundwork for the cooperation between sport organisations and governmental organisation in the fight against corruption.

In 2015, the problem of corruption in sport was raised through the perspective of the fight against the manipulation of competitions. The IOC supported the Council of Europe's Convention on the Manipulation of Sports Competitions. This Convention is a unique instrument in international law and a cornerstone of the joint policy between sports organisations, governments, police and sports betting actors.

Two years later, in 2017, the Olympic Movement stakeholders agreed on the need to undertake action in order to mitigate and eventually eliminate the risk of corruption in all of its aspects.

In this context, our cooperation with international organisations plays a central role. Strengthening partnership with governments and intergovernmental organisations is the key motivation behind the IOC's support for the International Partnership Against Corruption in Sport, which was launched at the last IFSI meeting in 2017.

With IPACS, we have exactly the kind of multistakeholder partnership in place that allows us all to work together in an effective and pragmatic way while avoiding unnecessary bureaucracy. This cooperation leverages the expertise and authority of each of the partners, while respecting each other's respective areas of responsibility.

This afternoon, we had the opportunity to follow with great interest the first outcomes of the work that the IPACS Task Forces conducted during 2018. And we are looking forward to following the next steps of this coordinated effort to produce pragmatic tools and to tackle corruption in sport at its very roots.

We shall thank the intergovernmental organisations – UNODC, OECD and Council of Europe – for providing their sound knowledge and expertise in terms of corruption and recognise their effort to facilitate the exchanges between governments and sports organisations. It is pivotal that these three intergovernmental organisations support this partnership with determination, in particular by integrating it in their latest resolutions and declarations.

The Olympic Movement is grateful also to the critical support of the governments which are already participating in the partnership, and we would like to especially thank the United Kingdom for the organisation of this meeting. We are looking forward to seeing more governments joining this initiative and we are confident that governments will realise that this partnership between sports and governments will be beneficial for all.

Finally, I would like to highlight that IPACS has received the support of the entire sports movement both at the last IFSI meeting in 2017 and again at the Olympism in Action Forum this past October. This support is also reflected in the fact that all global sport organisations are now members of IPACS. With IPACS we have a strong foundation to build on. I hope that in this spirit of partnership and cooperation, we will further deepen the support of sport for IPACS.