



L'Organisation pour la Paix par le Sport
Under the Patronage of Prince Albert II of Monaco



The XVI Mediterranean Games: an appeal for Peace through Sport

Peace and Sport and the International Committee for the Mediterranean Games get together to promote inter-cultural dialogue in the Mediterranean Basin

Pescara, 16 June 2009 - On 26 June, when the 3,300 athletes representing their countries parade at the Opening Ceremony of the XVI Mediterranean Games, they will launch a passionate appeal for peace and dialogue throughout the world.

To strengthen this message, the International Committee of Mediterranean Games (ICMG) is working in association with "Peace and Sport, L'Organisation pour la Paix par le Sport" for the first time. The aim of this new partnership is to remind people that, above and beyond sporting competition, the 2009 Games in Pescara will be a symbol of what sport can do to strengthen the dialogue between nations and build foundations for sustainable peace.

Tensions caused by diversity

The Mediterranean Basin contains a unique mix of religions, cultures and political systems. This diversity has often led to conflicts with much bloodshed. Many bilateral and domestic tensions still exist in the region.

In this sometimes volatile geopolitical space, every 4 years the Mediterranean Games bring peace and fraternal dialogue. States which are sometimes opposed on political and military grounds move closer together through sport for this occasion. Since its inception in 1961, ICMG has been the only stable decision-making body in the region where no fewer than 23 countries border each other peacefully, thanks to the universal language of sport.

Peace and Sport is working together with ICMG in order to accentuate this aspect of the Mediterranean Games. Based in the Principality of Monaco under the High Patronage of H.S.H. Prince Albert II of Monaco, the organization works to reconcile divided communities by establishing communication and dialogue through sport. It intervenes to help vulnerable nations overcome their political, ethnic, religious and social differences.

Amar Addadi, Chairman of ICMG, explains the origin of the relationship with Peace and Sport:

"For over 50 years, the Mediterranean Games have been a symbol of brotherhood, solidarity and tolerance through sport, in a fragile part of the world. Sport fosters understanding, mutual respect and reconciliation between human beings. We are moving in this direction, constantly encouraging dialogue between participating athletes and nations. We are pleased to start a partnership with Peace and Sport, with whom we share the same values. This combination strengthens our ambition and allows our message to resonate even more strongly throughout the Mediterranean Basin."

Athletes on board

This message of hope will first of all be transmitted through athletes since Peace and Sport will be present in the Mediterranean Village to raise awareness amongst participating champions.

Please contact Peace and Sport for further information
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Joel Bouzou, President and Founder of Peace and Sport, himself an Olympian and Modern Pentathlon World Champion, explains:

"Gestures of fair play and solidarity amongst athletes during competitions are far more effective than speeches in persuading divided communities to overcome their differences. They are sources of inspiration for young people throughout the world. Convincing athletes to promote peace through sport enables hope to be given to children who have been made vulnerable by conflict, poverty and lack of social cohesion. The Mediterranean Games are a symbolic competition spanning three continents and watched by as many as 450 million people. We are delighted with our partnership with the ICMG so we can convey the message that sport can and should contribute to bringing people together and peace. "

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About Peace and Sport

"Peace and Sport, L'Organisation pour la Paix par le Sport" is a neutral and apolitical international initiative.

Peace and Sport puts sport and its structuring values at the heart of development projects conducted within communities in crisis around the world. Operating in post-conflict zones, extremely poor areas or areas lacking social cohesion, Peace and Sport makes sport a vehicle for tolerance, respect, sharing and citizenship at the service of sustainable peace.

Supported by governments, world sport governing bodies, international organizations, major international private companies and international champions, Peace and Sport creates synergies between various different stakeholders to carry out four types of action:

- Organizing an annual International Forum (next edition in Monaco, 25 -27 November 2009)
- Creating a Resource Centre for sport and peace,
- The Peace and Sport Awards: rewarding individuals and initiatives that contribute to peace,
- Locally-Based Projects: concrete interventions in regions of crisis throughout the world.

Peace and Sport currently has interventions underway in Cote d'Ivoire, Burundi, Israel - Palestine, Timor-Leste and in Colombia and is planning to intervene in Haiti in the near future.

Peace and Sport was founded by Joel Bouzou, current President of the organisation. Joel Bouzou is an Olympic medallist, world champion of Modern Pentathlon and current Secretary General for the International Union of Modern Pentathlon (UIPM). He is also an Advisor to H.S.H. Prince Albert II of Monaco.

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