

# FACTSHEET

XIII OLYMPIC CONGRESS –

THEME 2: OLYMPIC GAMES

SEPTEMBER 2009



## 1. THE THEME AND SUB-THEMES

The second Congress theme dedicated to the Olympic Games is split up into three sub-themes:

### 1.1 How to keep the Games as a premier event

### 1.2 Olympic values

### 1.3 Universality and developing countries

Across the global community, the Olympic Games have long been regarded as the world's premier sporting event.

Since the very first modern-day Olympic Games took place in Athens in 1896, the Olympic Movement has worked tirelessly to ensure excellence in every aspect of the event's organisation.

The question now is what more can be done to ensure that the Games continue to maintain their premier status?

As times move on, of course, so do the criteria by which major sporting events are measured. Technological advances, the financial rewards on offer for athletes, ever-increasing media coverage and equality for women, as well as sophisticated ambush marketing campaigns, all change the topography of the playing field, in turn necessitating renewed scrutiny to ensure that every aspect of the Games performs to capacity.

The evidence of the Beijing Games suggests that the appeal of the Games is undiminished – the 2008 Games were the most watched in Olympic history with a potential global reach of 4.3 billion people, while the official IOC website and the other Games-related sites attracted record numbers of hits.

The Olympic Games also facilitate the coming together of nations from around the world to share their differing and diverse cultures and backgrounds, and this was amply illustrated in Beijing.

Inextricably linked with the premier status of the Olympic Games is, of course, the notion of the Olympic values – also known as Olympism.

Olympism is a far-reaching, holistic philosophy that stretches beyond sporting performance by acknowledging the importance of a healthy balance of mind, body and spirit. By teaming sport with culture and education, Olympism seeks to foster an entire way of life based upon the satisfaction to be achieved from striving to be the best; the educational merit of leading by example; and a respect for certain core values.

For the Games to remain at the pinnacle of the international sporting calendar they must continue to promote Olympism appropriately and effectively, and performance criteria other than victory itself should be recognised and rewarded.

Also key to the success of the Games is the ability of as many countries as possible – regardless of their means – to participate in all the major sporting events organised by the Olympic Movement.

This core tenet is safeguarded by the principle of universality, whereby the Olympic family assists with the design and implementation of policies that focus in particular on the needs of developing countries.

In Beijing, athletes from a record 204 NOCs participated in the Games, with competitors from 87 countries – more than ever before – winning medals. Now the challenge is how to advance the goals of universality still further.

## 2. LINK WITH THE OLYMPIC MOVEMENT IN SOCIETY

The Olympic Games need not only to remain a premier event, but also have to show their integration in today's society, taking the notions of sustainable development and social responsibility fully into account.

At the last Olympic Congress in Paris in 1994, the environment was at the top of the agenda.



Since 1994, the IOC has developed new measures to improve its record in this field. Organising Committees for the Olympic Games have certainly learnt from the past, and strive for a sustainable approach including the environment and social and economic dimensions. The upcoming Games in Vancouver and London are certainly good examples in this regard.

The Olympic Games have an important impact on societal behaviour, and contribute to the popularity of all sports that feature on the Olympic programme, particularly those in which local or national athletes exceed. This helps to promote sports activities at all levels – from grassroots to elite - and contributes to a healthier society.

### 3. AGENDA AND KEYNOTE SPEAKER

**Theme 2, dedicated to the Olympic Games, is debated on Saturday 3 October in the afternoon in a plenary session, followed by breakout working groups for each one of the sub-themes.**

The keynote speaker in the plenary session will be IOC member **Jean-Claude Killy**.

Killy is known not only as a triple Olympic Champion who won three gold medals in the Alpine skiing events in Grenoble in 1968, but also as a profound connoisseur of the Olympic Games. As Chairman of the Coordination Commission for the 2006 Turin Olympic Games, he wrote a final report underlying the need for the Olympic Movement to encompass all pillars of the Olympic Games (sport, culture and education) in a 360° approach. As Chairman of the Coordination Commission, Killy is currently also advising Sochi 2014 in its preparation for the 2014 Winter Games. Previously, Killy had already taken part in the Coordination Commissions for the Salt Lake City Games (Vice-Chairman) and the Nagano Games (member), and acted as Co-Chairman of the Organising Committee for the XVI Olympic Winter Games in Albertville in 1992. Killy was also a member of the IOC 2000 Reform Follow-up (2002) Commission.

#### ➤ **For more information/story ideas:**

- Interview with Jean-Claude Killy in Olympic Review, September 2009

## 4. CASE STUDIES

### a) **How to keep the Games as a premier event**

- The IOC Olympic Programme Commission, chaired by IOC member Franco Carraro, is in charge of regularly evaluating all the Olympic sports and proposing new sports for the programme, particularly those appealing to younger audiences. Today, the Session may vote on the inclusion of additional sports by a majority of the votes cast. The IOC Session also considered keeping the maximum of summer Olympic sports at 28 in order to avoid an abundance of sports. In addition the IOC Executive Board can decide to introduce new disciplines and/or events.
- The collaboration between the Organising Committees for the Olympic Games, the IOC Coordination Commissions and the work of the Olympic Games Department at the IOC is crucial to guarantee the success of any Olympic Games.
- Over the last few years and under the leadership of IOC President Rogge, progress has been made, particularly on the basis of the 117 recommendations made by an ad hoc Commission that proposed measures in order to keep the Games manageable and the costs stable.
- On the occasion of the Sydney Olympic Games, President Jacques Rogge, the then-Chairman of the Sydney Coordination Commission, established the system of transfer of knowledge. The main idea was to avoid each organiser of the Games having to reinvent the wheel. New working tools and communication channels have been developed over the last 10 years in order to assure this transfer.



- The final report of the Coordination Commission Chairman for the Turin 2006 Olympic Winter Games, Jean-Claude Killy, stressed the importance of having a 360° approach to the event including sport, education and culture, the impact the Olympic Games have inside and outside the sports venues, and the importance of providing a proper legacy after the Games. All these elements are now integrated into the numerous technical manuals that guide the Organising Committees in their operations.

**For more information/story ideas:**

- <http://www.olympic.org/coordination-commissions>;
- Final report of the Coordination Commission for the 2006 Turin Games;
- Edited video and rough cut with text and photos of Vancouver 2010 and its sustainability policy.

**b) Olympic values**

- On the basis of Pierre de Coubertin's inspiration and his endeavour to build the Olympic Movement on strong values, over the last few years the IOC has undertaken the task to streamline and promote the Olympic values. Excellence, friendship and respect are the three values retained and were promoted in the framework of the "Best of Us" campaign and throughout all communications platforms available, including a special video clip.
- In parallel, the IOC has launched the Olympic Value Education Programme with two components: a teaching manual and a reference databank with examples of good practice.
- The Commission for Culture and Olympic Education, chaired by IOC member Zhenliang He, is a driving force behind the promotion of the values, and organises an international forum that takes place every second year.
- In the framework of the Olympic Games, the values gain all their

importance and are illustrated and highlighted during the Opening and Closing Ceremonies but also throughout the exemplary behaviour of athletes and spectators in the venues.

**For more information/story ideas:**

- <http://www.olympic.org/culture-and-olympic-education-commission>;
- Edited video and rough cut with text and photos on Olympic values illustrating how they are practised worldwide.
- OVEP- the Olympic Value Education Programme brochure
- Olympic Review April-June 2007

**c) Universality and developing countries**

- The IOC's Olympic Solidarity Commission, chaired by Mario Vázquez Raña, contributes substantially to the universality of the Olympic Movement. Scholarship programmes for athletes assure that all National Olympic Committees have the possibility to send athletes to the Olympic Games. Other worldwide programmes of the Olympic Solidarity Commission, some linked to management, others to the promotion of the Olympic values, strengthen the Movement significantly.
- At the Olympic Games in Beijing in 2008, a record figure of 204 National Olympic Committees participated. The number of NOCs participating in the Winter Games has increased steadily over the last decades, from 67 NOCs in Lillehammer in 1994, to 72 in Nagano in 1998, to 77 in Salt Lake City in 2002 and to the record number of 80 in Turin in 2006.

**For more information/story ideas:**

- <http://www.olympic.org/olympic-solidarity-commission>;
- Quadrennial reports of the Olympic Solidarity Commission



- Profiles of scholarship holders in all recent Olympic Reviews
- Edited video and rough cut with text and photos of OS scholarship holder Rohullah Nikpai from Afghanistan, first Afghan athlete to win an Olympic medal.

## 5. FURTHER INFORMATION

- **See all additional information and story ideas under each sub-theme under chapter 4.**

Other overall information includes:

- Programme of the XIII Olympic Congress
- Factsheets, one each theme
- Factsheet on previous Congresses
- 12 video news releases on different sub-themes
- Olympic Review September 2009
- Follow the Congress on facebook and Twitter.com.

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