



International
Olympic
Committee

The President

Sport for Sustainable Development Summit

Paris, 25 July 2024

On behalf of the International Olympic Committee, a warm welcome to all of you. Our gathering is a reflection of the extremely fruitful cooperation and partnership between France and the IOC in organising the Olympic Games Paris 2024. This is why I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to our co-host, President Emmanuel Macron, who with his government has set a great example when it comes to promoting the power of sport in society.

The Olympic Games are about sport. And they are about more than sport: Sport is health. Sport is inclusion. Sport is respect. Sport is empowerment. Sport is solidarity. Sport is peace.

With our Olympic Agenda reforms, the IOC is fully committed to strengthen the role of sport as an important enabler of the UN Sustainable Developments Goals. Together with our many partners from the UN family, with development institutions and civil society organisations, we are addressing eleven of the SDGs at the same time: be it in health, social inclusion, gender equality, sustainability, peace and others.

And here is how are doing this:

We are building healthy communities in partnership with the World Health Organization. The WHO warns us that globally, 1.8 billion adults do not do enough physical exercise. This shocking figure means: people are at much greater risk of non-communicable diseases such as heart attacks, diabetes, dementia or cancer. For all these diseases and predispositions sport is an excellent preventive tool. When it comes to health, we can truly say: Sport saves lives.

The economic burden of treating such diseases is huge. It costs public healthcare systems around 27 billion US dollars every year. Therefore: sport saves lives and sport saves billions of dollars.

In this respect, we are very happy with the huge success of our ongoing “Let’s Move” campaign with WHO, which has already inspired 500 million people around the globe to move. To improve their lives. To save healthcare costs.

We are promoting social inclusion in partnership with UNHCR. An emblematic symbol of this is the IOC Refugee Olympic Team, which will participate with a record number of 37 refugee athletes at the Olympic Games Paris 2024. Beyond the Olympic Games, our Olympic Refuge Foundation is supporting displaced people across the globe by providing safe sport opportunities. This is extremely important for their physical and mental health, for inclusion and for conflict prevention. With these activities, we will by the end of this year reach one million displaced persons.

We are advancing gender equality in and through sport. We are happy and proud that the Olympic Games Paris 2024 will be the very first Olympic Games in history with full gender parity on the field of play. This has been achieved by the IOC allocating exactly 50 per cent of quota places to female athletes and to male athletes. Off the field of play, we have achieved full gender parity in the IOC Commissions and have doubled female IOC membership to 42 per cent.

When it comes to climate change, the IOC is reducing its direct and indirect emissions by 30 per cent by the end of this year and is on track to achieve a 50 per cent reduction by 2030 in line with the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

As the leader of the Olympic Movement, the IOC, together with UN Climate, has assembled 274 organisations as part of the UN Sport for Climate Action Framework. One partner of this framework, the Paris 2024 Organising Committee, is setting an impressive

milestone by being on track to achieve a 50 per cent reduction of carbon emissions compared to previous Olympic Games already six years ahead the global target set by the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

The IOC considers peace as the most fundamental of SDGs. In our world torn apart by so much conflict, wars, hate and division, the Olympic Games are the only event that still manages to unite the entire world in peaceful competition. Tomorrow, you will all witness athletes from the territories of all 206 National Olympic Committees and the IOC Refugee Olympic Team coming together, competing fiercely against each other, while living peacefully together under one roof in the Olympic Village. This sets an example for how our world would be, if everyone would respect the same rules and one another. We know that the Olympic Games cannot create peace. But the Olympic Games create a culture of peace.

These are just a few examples of how the IOC is bringing the benefits of sport and its values to people around the globe, improving lives in tangible ways.

With all these efforts, initiatives and actions, we also want to inspire all of you. Our offer to you is: Join us.

Join us to make the world a better place through sport.

Whether you are in government or in business, in a development institution or like us from civil society: join us.

Our commitment to these partnerships is our Olympic Solidarity budget which we have increased to 650 million US dollars for the next Olympiad.

This is only possible because our Worldwide Olympic Partners and Media Rights Holders share our values-driven mission. To them I say a heartfelt thank you.

With all this in mind, I trust that you, the political leaders, will recognise sport again as an important enabler of sustainable development also in the ongoing negotiations concerning the United Nations Pact for the Future.

For this, our shared future, we need to go faster, aim higher, be stronger – and we can only achieve sustainable development together. Therefore, let us live our Olympic motto: Faster, Higher, Stronger – Together.