



International
Olympic
Committee

The President

Full Speed Ahead: Spotlight Initiative

New York, 23 September 2025

Your Excellencies,

We are here to address something urgent and deeply painful: violence against women and girls. This is one of the most widespread violations of human rights. It is not just a women's issue, as we have heard; it is a human issue. And, it concerns us all.

No single organisation can solve this alone. Partnership is key, and the Spotlight Initiative shows what we can achieve when we work together.

Sport also has a vital role. While sport is a mirror of society and is not immune to violence, it can be a powerful part of the solution. Sport can give girls confidence, teach respect, and break down harmful gender stereotypes.

At the IOC, promoting sport as a force for good is central to our mission. We support hundreds of projects that use sport to advance the UN Sustainable Development Goals, from education to health, from gender equality to peace. These projects are already reaching millions of people around the world.

Investing in sport is a low-cost, high-impact solution. With the right partnerships, it is one of the most effective ways to reach communities, change attitudes, and, most importantly, protect lives.

This is why I am proud to announce we are deepening our collaboration with the United Nations. Together with the Spotlight Initiative, we will expand the contribution of sport to ending violence against women and girls through joint advocacy, training, and direct support to community programmes.

To truly make a difference, we need strong partnerships, political will, and continued investment, because we know that investing in sport works.

Sport is about thriving for something better every single day.

Let us commit today to building a future where every woman and every girl can live and play free from violence, and free from fear.

The Olympic Movement is ready to play its part.

Together, we can make this future a reality.

Thank you to you all.