



# General Assembly

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Sixty-fourth General Assembly  
Plenary  
21st Meeting (PM)

### **GENERAL ASSEMBLY CALLS UPON ALL MEMBER STATES TO UPHOLD OLYMPIC TRUCE DURING**

### **VANCOUVER WINTER GAMES, COOPERATE IN EFFORTS TO USE SPORT AS TOOL FOR PEACE**

#### **Adopts Consensus Text Welcoming Historic Holding Of 2010 FIFA World Cup In South Africa, Approves Observer Status of International Olympic Committee**

Recalling the ancient Greek tradition of the Olympic Truce -- which provided a peaceful environment for athletes and spectators during the Olympic Games -- General Assembly delegates today invoked that spirit, with their adoption of a consensus resolution urging national committees and sports organizations to promote and strengthen a culture of peace during next year's Games.

In a text entitled, "building a peaceful and better world through sport and the Olympic ideal," the Assembly noted that the XXI Olympic and X Paralympic Winter Games -- to be held, respectively, from 12 to 28 February, and 12 to 21 March 2010, in Vancouver, Canada -- aimed to uphold sport as an inspirational means for promoting peace, inclusion, indigenous participation and meaningful legacy for future generations.

By the text, the Assembly called on States to cooperate with the International Olympic Committee and International Paralympic Committee in efforts to use sport to promote peace and reconciliation in conflict areas. It also called on the Secretary-General to promote observance of the Olympic Truce.

"These Games are not just about 27 days of sport, but also about the privileged opportunity to inspire a generation", said John Furlong, Chief Executive Officer of the Vancouver Organizing Committee for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games.

Introducing the resolution, he said that for the XXI Games to have true meaning, a human legacy had to be ensured -- one that harnessed the power of sport in transforming the spirit of a nation, if not the world. The text captured key elements from past Olympic Truce resolutions, including recognition of sport's growing role in achieving the Millennium Development Goals. It also welcomed efforts of the International Olympic Committee, the International Paralympic Committee and the United Nations in areas like poverty alleviation, humanitarian assistance and HIV/AIDS prevention.

In other action, the General Assembly, acting on the recommendation of its Sixth Committee (Legal), adopted a resolution inviting the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to participate in its sessions and work in the capacity of observer.

Also by consensus, the Assembly adopted a resolution on the "2010 International Federation of Association Football World Cup event", by which it welcomed the historic hosting of the 2010 International Federation of Association Football (FIFA) World Cup in South Africa, the first time a major sport event would be held in Africa.

By that text, the Assembly emphasized the role of sport in promoting peace, solidarity and socio-economic development, and encouraged States to support sport as a means to promote peace and development. It also encouraged Governments to support the 2010 World Cup, including through stimulating popular attendance.

Introducing that resolution, South Africa's delegate said the FIFA event created an opportunity -- "so important in our troubled universe" -- for all to experience the reality that they belonged to one family, regardless

of race, colour, gender, age, or religious belief. Recalling that the United Nations had stood with South Africa during the dark days of Apartheid, he said the resolution presented the Assembly with another opportunity to offer support, as its objectives resonated with the United Nations' three pillars of peace, development and human rights.

In the ensuing debate, Greece's representative highlighted that the promotion of peace was, in fact, the actual reason the Olympic Games had been established. In ancient times, implementing the Olympic Truce had entailed a cessation of all hostilities to allow thousands of athletes, pilgrims and spectators to travel to the Olympic Games, attend the sacred celebration of human achievement, and then return home in safety and security. The Truce had been upheld for over 1,000 years, making it the longest peace treaty in history. It had become an expression of mankind's desire to build a world based on the rules of fair competition, civility, reconciliation and tolerance.

At the same time, Israel's representative recalled the 1972 Olympic Games in Munich, where terrorist gunmen opened fire on the Olympic Village, killing 11 members of the Israeli team, the reverberation of which could still be felt today. As the world sought to solve the most intractable challenges of peace and development, it had to find new ways of building bridges between people. The promotion of a culture of peace and development was one such effective tool.

Also speaking today was the Minister of State for External Affairs of India.

The Prince of Monaco also addressed the Assembly.

The representatives of China, Cuba, Singapore, Republic of Korea and the United States also spoke.

The General Assembly will reconvene at 10 a.m. Tuesday, 20 October, for its joint debate on the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), and the 2001-2010 Decade to Roll Back Malaria in Developing Countries, Particularly in Africa.

### Background

The General Assembly met this afternoon to take up matters related to sport for peace and development: building a peaceful and better world through sport and the Olympic ideal. It was also expected to consider the report of its Sixth Committee (Legal) on the observer status for the International Olympic Committee in the General Assembly (document A/64/458). It was also expected to consider three relevant draft resolutions.

### Action on and Introduction of Draft Resolutions

Acting on the recommendation contained in the report of its Sixth Committee (Legal) (document A/64/458), the Assembly invited the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to participate in its sessions and work in the capacity of observer.

The Assembly next took up two resolutions, respectively on building a peaceful and better world through sport and the Olympic ideal (document A/64/L.2), and 2010 International Federation of Association Football World Cup event (document A/64/L.3).

JOHN FURLONG, Chief Executive Officer of the Vancouver Organizing Committee for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games, introduced the draft resolution entitled "building a peaceful and better world through sport and the Olympic ideal," highlighting the principles and ideals that underpinned the text. When Vancouver won the bid to host the XXI Olympic Winter games, its Organizing Committee, with the Canadian Government and its partners, set out a vision for success. For the Games to have true meaning, a human legacy had to be ensured -- one that harnessed the power of sport in transforming the spirit of a nation, if not the entire world.

"These Games are not just about 27 days of sport, but also about the privileged opportunity to inspire a generation," he said. The draft captured key elements from past Olympic Truce resolutions, including the recognition of sport's growing role in achieving the Millennium Development Goals, and support for efforts by international sport organizations and National Olympic and Paralympic committees to strengthen a culture of peace. Further, the text welcomed joint efforts of the International Olympic Committee, the International Paralympic Committee and the United Nations in areas like poverty alleviation, humanitarian assistance and HIV/AIDS prevention.

The draft had found inspiration in the ancient Greek tradition of granting a truce during the Games to ensure athletes' safe passage to and from the events, he explained, adding that such an appeal called on States to cooperate with the International Olympic Committee and International Paralympic Committee in their efforts to use sport to promote peace, dialogue and reconciliation in conflict areas.

The draft was consistent with the long-standing recognition of sport as a vital tool for social development, he said, explaining that the 2010 Winter Games marked the first time Canada would be responsible for leading Olympic Truce efforts since it was revitalized in 1992. The very nature of that ancient tradition called for the widest cooperation at the global level if the draft's ultimate goals were to be achieved. The Organizing Committee aimed to pursue the Truce goals of protecting athletes' interests and contributing to peaceful solutions to conflict.

Also, he said recognition of the rights of persons with disabilities was evident in the Paralympic Movement's support for the draft. The application of the Olympic Truce to the Paralympic Games was an important testament to the power of sport to address social inclusion. Finally, he said the draft highlighted Canada's commitment to the full participation of Aboriginal peoples, as the Games marked a historic level of their participation in a national event.

Introducing the draft resolution on the "2010 International Federation of Association Football (FIFA) World Cup event", BASO SANGQU ( [South Africa](#)) recalled that South African President Jacob Zuma had underscored the importance his country -- and Africa -- attached to hosting the 2010 FIFA World Cup next year. Indeed, it marked the first time a major sporting event would take place on the continent.

Recalling that the United Nations had stood with the people of South Africa during the dark days of Apartheid, and supported the self-determination of its people, he said that today, South Africans came to the Assembly as free people. Indeed, the Government was committed to peace and development in Africa and the world. The resolution presented the Assembly with another opportunity to provide political support to South Africa and the continent, as the objective of the text resonated with the United Nations' three pillars: peace, development and human rights.

Further, he said there was global recognition of the contributions that sports like soccer could make in various domains, adding that, given its universal popularity, soccer could be mainstreamed into countries' strategic agendas. The FIFA event created an opportunity, "so important in our troubled universe" for all to experience the reality that they belonged to one family, regardless of race, colour, gender, age or religious belief.

South Africa was committed to ensuring that its historic hosting of the World Cup contributed to deeper social cohesion, national reconciliation, and peace and stability, both in Africa and beyond. The country was also committed to contributing to the ideals of freedom, liberty and a belief that sport could effectively contribute to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. He commended the Office of Sport and Development, in New York and Geneva, which had enhanced advocacy of sport in the United Nations.

With 234 days to go before the opening of the World Cup, he assured the Assembly South Africa was ready to deliver a world-class soccer event. In that context, the African Legacy Programme for the 2010 World Cup aimed to support African Renaissance objectives, including such African Union programmes as the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). It also aimed at ensuring maximum and effective African participation in 2010.

As such, South Africa would ensure the continent shared a sense of hope and would sustain the pride of all footballers. In closing, he thanked all States for their constructive inputs during consultations on the draft text and expressed hope that the text would enjoy universal support in the General Assembly. Working together, the Assembly could ensure that the 2010 World Cup was one of the most memorable soccer events. "See you in South Africa", he said.

### Statements

PRENEET KAUR, Minister of State for External Affairs of [India](#) said sport was about inclusion and participation. It brought individuals and communities together, and bridged ethnic and cultural divides. Sport transcended sociocultural barriers, geographical borders, and promoted peace. It also provided for understanding the importance of discipline and leadership. In addition, sport was an important part of education, child development, and part of the socialization process.

Because sport had obvious benefits of physical and mental well-being, they were a tool to support the achievements of the Millennium Development Goals. In addition, she said sports had a unique "convening

power” to spur social communication and advocacy, and were the most effective tools for HIV/AIDS education and immunization campaigns. They could be used to channel destructive impulses and harmful actions such as drug abuse and involvement in crime.

She pointed to the fact that a mastery of sports was considered as important as the knowledge of scriptures in ancient India, and thus, her Government had adopted a national sports policy in 2001. In addition, the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports had responsibility for sport with the Sports Authority of India being its principle arm for nurturing talent and for provision of infrastructure, equipment, coaching and other.

Proud that New Delhi would be hosting the next Commonwealth Games in October 2010, she said that the three core values of those Games were humanity, equality, and destiny -- and that they inspired and united millions of people and symbolized their broad mandate for holding the Games within the Commonwealth. She was pleased that the 2016 Olympics were awarded to Brazil, and that the 2010 FIFA World Cup would be hosted by South Africa. She wished Canada success in organizing the Winter Olympic Games and commended Singapore’s Initiative to organize the Youth Olympic Games.

PRINCE ALBERT of Monaco said that there had been renewed calls for a new multilateralism, one that was imbued with cooperation, mutual understanding, solidarity and tolerance. By inviting the International Olympic Committee to take part in the Assembly’s work, the world body had recognized a movement that stood for human progress and promoted a peaceful society and an awareness of the need to preserve human dignity. Indeed, he said building a peaceful world through sport and the Olympic ideal was as important today as at any time in the past 16 years. By giving the Committee observer status, the Assembly was reinforcing its ideals, as well as the values of human progress and peace. The Committee institutionalized a link between wisdom, antiquity and the United Nations’ vital objective of maintaining peace and international security.

He said he had no doubt that the International Olympic Committee would support the Assembly’s work, adding that its role in ensuring that peace and conflict resolution had brought the Assembly’s bid to implement the Millennium Development Goals to the fore. He also said that the Third International Peace and Sport Forum, hosted by Monaco and due to take place from November 25 to 27, 2009, would once again gather Governments, athletes, non-governmental organizations and people from the private sector in an apolitical framework. He was committed to having sports recognized as a means for peacebuilding in the aftermath of conflict. As the Committee was the largest sports organization for youth, he noted that the first Youth Olympics to be held in Singapore in 2010 would be a major event. He wished the South African delegation all the best in the forthcoming World Cup Games due to take place there in 2010.

ANASTASSIS MITSIALIS ( Greece), began by expressing his wholehearted support for the draft resolution on “building a peaceful and better world through sport and the Olympic ideal,” and said that since 1993, the Assembly had adopted eight resolutions on the Olympic Truce. They had been co-sponsored by almost all Member States. He declared: “This absolute record in the history of the United Nations proves that Member States are fully committed to Olympic ideals and do believe that the ancient Greek concept of *Ekecheria* conserves its importance and can offer a constructive approach to conflict resolution.”

Promoting peace was, in fact, the actual reason the Olympic Games were established, he continued. In ancient times, implementing the Olympic Truce had entailed a cessation of all hostilities to allow thousands of athletes, pilgrims and spectators to travel to Olympic Games to attend the sacred celebration of human achievement and then return home in safety and security. The Olympic Truce was upheld for over 1,000 years, making it the longest peace treaty in history.

Stressing that modern Olympic Games should continue to offer a unique opportunity to create a lasting peace from a pause in hostilities he said the Olympic Truce had become an “expression of mankind’s desire to build a world based on the rules of fair competition, civility, reconciliation and tolerance.” Moreover, the Truce bridged a wise tradition to the most essential element of today’s world: international peace through multicultural dialogue, cooperation and understanding.

Making the Olympic Truce a reality in the modern world was challenging, and his delegation had no illusions that the Truce would miraculously heal the rifts that ravaged so many regions of the world. Nevertheless, sport was a practical means to advance human development. In addition, it contributed to international development, especially the Millennium Development Goals, and successfully could address issues such as racism, the plight of street children, gender inequality, and traumatized youth.

ZHANG YESUI ( China) said his country supported consideration of the agenda item on “Sport for Peace and Development”. China believed that sport had always played a major role in the pursuit of peace and development. In that regard, it supported the United Nations efforts to weave in sports-oriented values into attaining peace and development. He expressed his country’s support for the United Nations Sport Office’s

quest to mobilize resources to advance the role of sport in attaining the Millennium Development Goals. The success of the 2008 Beijing Summer Olympic Games had hugely increased the impact of such games in developing countries. It had spread the spirit of sport and aroused interest among hundreds of millions of Chinese people, and bolstered the social foundations for the development of sports at the grass roots level. In that regard, his country had designated 8 August as National Fitness Day.

The advancement of sport in China had promoted public health and general enthusiasm among the people. Due to competitive sports, physical education at school and grass roots activities, 28.2 per cent of the population was now taking part in sports. At the national level, the Chinese Government would continue to promote the positive role of sport in building a harmonious society and increasing the physical well-being of the population. That would entail improving urban and rural sports facilities, grass roots organizations and the national fitness system. At a global level, he said China was ready to support countries in ensuring that they advanced the role of sport in promoting international peace and development and jointly contributed to peace, development and prosperity.

PEDRO NÚÑEZ ( Cuba) recalled that the United Nations had been created with the aims of maintaining international peace and security -- based on the principle of sovereign equality -- and fostering peaceful dispute settlement, non-use of force and non-intervention into States' affairs. Today, there was a gloomy socio-economic picture, marked by a myriad of crises, and powerful countries aimed to control national resources through wars of aggression. Due to such ills, the countries of the global South had been hindered in their development efforts, and he therefore urged creating a culture of peace.

For Cuba, sport strengthened friendship among peoples, he said. Sport was an important aspect of development and had become a right for all Cubans. Starting with the triumph of the Cuban revolution, Cubans had discovered the right of collective sport. Today, Cuba was working to achieve sport preparation from early childhood, with a view to promoting the talents of future athletes. At the same time, Cuba was opposed to organizations whose only goal was to earn money, and condemned the fact that athletes had been "stolen" from developing countries.

He said Cuba had offered its cooperation to other countries in the global South, notably its experts and trainers, who introduced new training methods to countries and had helped to improve their participants' results. Cuba had boosted international cooperation with the creation of the Institute of Sport Medicine and the Anti-doping Laboratory. Further, Cuba founded the International School of Education and Sport, and would host a convention on physical activity and sport, from 9 to 13 November 2009. In closing, he congratulated Brazil on its hosting the 2016 Olympic Games, saying that countries of the South also deserved to host the Games. "Let us share the hope that a better world is possible", he concluded.

GAN TENG KIAT ( Singapore) said his delegation was pleased to co-sponsor the resolution on the Olympic Ideal, and he stressed that sport could promote understanding and respect, combat social exclusion, build community and engage youth. At the global level, sport reinforced links between countries and regions, challenged perceived biases, and revealed commonalities among nations in conflict. Sport was about values that were fundamental and transcended boundaries, he said.

Turning to the Youth Olympic Games (YOG), to be hosted by Singapore in August 2010, he said that event was about making an investment in youth, providing them with the opportunity to develop confidence, belief and the courage to succeed not only on the playing field, but to champion their values and convictions to make a positive impact and build a peaceful world.

He noted specific programmes, such as Friends@YOG, which provided an opportunity for interaction between youth of different countries to gain a better understanding of one another's cultures. In addition, YOG would create an environment where young people, especially athletes, would receive support and be engendered to take ownership for their ideas, and be empowered to make a difference in their communities by contributing ideas for Singapore's 2010 Youth Games.

Lastly, he said that Singapore had many colours and textures; and it would be a good backdrop for cross-cultural learning and understanding. "What Singapore hopes to achieve at the end of the inaugural Youth Olympic Games is to be successful in inspiring and sowing the seeds of these Olympic values in the young people of the world."

PARK ENNA ( Republic of Korea) said she wholeheartedly supported the draft resolution on "building a peaceful and better world through sport," saying that last summer's Olympic Games in Beijing were a success. Her country, as host of the 1988 Olympics, understood how important the Games were to Member States, and congratulated both China and Canada in that context. She expressed hope that States would uphold the Olympic Truce and lend their backing to the initiative of sport and human development throughout

the Games. While sport alone could not pave the way for peace and social development, it could be effectively used with other programmes and initiatives, and in that regard, she noted the many positive ways sport contributed to the Millennium Development Goals.

For its part, the Republic of Korea had engaged in various global sporting events, and would take part in future events, including the 2011 World Track and Field Championship and the 2014 Asian Games, she said. Her country also hoped to host the 2018 Winter Olympics and 2022 World Cup, and had made official bids for both events. In addition, her Government supported the resolution on the 2010 FIFA World Cup, and emphatically backed South Africa's preparations for the event. As a co-host to the 2002 tournament alongside Japan -- the first and only time the World Cup had come to Asia -- the Republic of Korea fully understood the significance that the event would have in advancing development, tourism and the prestige of Africa. She looked forward to a successful competition that would further the global spirit of competitiveness. Her country would remain a strong advocate of sport for development and peace.

DANIEL CARMON ( [Israel](#)) said that on a global playing field, sport could foster a common language of friendship and harmony, helping people transcend their differences and realize that they had far more in common with one another. His region sought to foster a spirit of building bridges between people and cultures through organizations that used sport to promote peace and coexistence. He cited the example of the Abu-Gosh Mevaseret Zion Soccer Club -- an Arab-Jewish soccer club -- to demonstrate how a supposed battleground could become a field of coexistence. The Peres Center for Peace was another success story that brought Israelis and Palestinians closer together for learning and cross-cultural exchange purposes, he said.

Unfortunately, he cautioned against a dangerous trend to politicize the world of sports, citing the case of an Israeli tennis player who had been denied a visa to participate in the Dubai Tennis Championships. He also recalled the 1972 Olympic Games in Munich where terrorist gunmen opened fire on the Olympic Village, killing 11 members of the Israeli team, the reverberation of which could still be felt around the world today. As the world sought to solve the most intractable challenges on peace and development, it had to find new ways of facing up to challenges and building bridges between people. He cited the promotion of a culture of peace and development as one such effective tool. This, he warned, could not be attained alone and required the support of the media and civil society.

WELLINGTON WEBB ( [United States](#)) said the United States supported the use of building a peaceful world through sport. He noted that he had been the mayor of Denver, the headquarters of the United States Olympic Committee. Sport could be used as a fundamental goal to serve society and promote human dignity. The United States supported the many resolutions to implement projects to use sport as a tool for development and to help achieve the Millennium Development Goals. Sport could be used to pursue the Goals and ideals of international understanding. Sport could be used to rebuild countries coming out of conflict and build a better and more peaceful world.

Sport could inspire peace and had been used since the beginning of ancient games to bring people together. In Vancouver, the world community would be able to set aside its differences and compete on a level playing field, he said. It would be a peaceful competition among nations. He added that in non-Olympic years, sports could help create a dialogue of achievement among youth. He reminded the Assembly that as the world prepared for the Olympic Games, nations were working together. Sport did not have to be an end in itself, but could be a means to promote peace and educate the youth of the world.

#### Action

The Assembly adopted without vote the two resolutions, respectively on "building a peaceful and better world through sport and the Olympic ideal", and on "2010 International Federation of Association World Cup event".

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