

PRESIDENTIAL VISIT TO SOUTHERN AFRICA

After a three-day stay in South Africa on 9th, 10th and 11th November last, President Juan Antonio Samaranch visited several NOCs in southern Africa. His tour took him to Namibia, Angola, the archipelago of Sao Tome and Principe and the Cape Verde islands, In Johannesburg, accompanied by Messrs Mario Vázquez Raña, ANOC president, Jean-Claude Ganga, ANOCA president, Kéba Mbaye, Executive Board member and chairman of the former Olympism and apartheid commission, the President met the new head of state, Mr Nelson Mandela, to whom he presented the Olympic Order. On this occasion, Mr Mandela underlined the "considerable contribution of the highest international sports authority in the fight against racism". The delegation, which also had a brief meeting with the South African vice-president, Mr Frederick W. de Klerk, then had lunch with the sports minister, Mr Sieve Tshwete, and the NOC president, Mr Sam Ramsamy. President Samaranch announced that the IOC would give 25,000 dollars to a fund to develop sports activities in Soweto.

For the next part of this visit to southern Africa, the IOC President travelled to Namibia where he was received in Windhoek by the foreign minister, Mr Theo-Ben Gurirab, before meeting the prime minister, Mr Hugué Geingob, in the absence of the head of state. In Angola, Mr Samaranch said that the IOC would shortly be sending a cheque for 40,000 dollars to support the training and preparation of talented young athletes. Mr Rogerio da Silva, the president of the Angolan NOC, who described the problems that sports development was experiencing in his country, emphasized the malnutrition, extreme poverty and terrible financial difficulties that are the current conditions of everyday life. The IOC President recalled that, although Olympic aid was always given to individual athletes, it was always possible to grant aid to a team which might have a chance of qualifying for Atlanta. The small Atlantic archipelago of Sao Tome and Principe was the next destination for the Olympic delegation, which was received by the head of state, Mr Miguel Trovoda. The President made a donation of 10,000 dollars in the same spirit of support for sports development activities to the NOC president, Mr Antonio Munel dos Santos, who told his guests about his committee's difficulties. The last stop in Africa was Cape Verde, where the Olympic delegation was received by the minister of education and sport, Mr Manuel Faustino and, in the absence of the head of state, by Mr Antonio Spirito Santo, the prime minister.

is part of her speech describing the great moments of Paavo Nurmi's career. In the speech which followed, Mr Aho said he was happy to see the IOC tackling social issues and getting involved in humanitarian actions.

A CHAMPION'S MEMORIES

Let me take you back to July 1952 and the Opening of the XV Olympic Games at the Olympic Stadium in Helsinki. Seventy thousand spectators and the press direct their eyes to the Marathon Gate. It is the moment they have been waiting for, the scoreboard flaring up with the words: "The Olym-

pic fire is brought in by Paavo Nurmi". Tens of thousands of hearts are flooded with intense emotion. Despite his 55 years, the Master still runs as he did in his days of greatness, slightly rocking, with a long, elastic stride.

The lines break up in the middle of the field as the athletes rush to have a closer look at the greatest sportsman in Olympic history. Emil Zatopek, who was to emerge as the celebrated figure of the Helsinki Olympics, recalls how he as a young boy, racing his friends, shouting "Nurmi, Nurmi, I'm Nurmi!" The King of Runners, the

Flying Finn, the Phantom Finn was in his element: on the track, before a large audience, receiving a standing ovation - now for the last time. His contemporaries considered Paavo Nurmi almost superhuman. The testimony to this is above all the number of his Olympic medals and world records. For the contemporaries, it was nothing short of a miracle, when he won both the 1500 and 5000 metres run within 45 minutes of each other at the Paris Olympics. This he had already practised at the national qualifying games in Helsinki, where he broke the world records in both distances. Paavo Nurmi's precept as an athlete was regular, hard training with systematic goal-orientation, a certain solitude and a remarkably ascetic life. These qualities are still a valuable guideline for all who wish to



THE IOC GETS THE LAUSANNE PRIZE

The Olympic capital awarded the 11th Lausanne Prize to the IOC. This award is a token of the Olympic capital Lausanne's gratitude to the IOC on the occasion of its centenary. Lausanne is thereby acknowledging the relations which link it to the IOC, whose presence in the city since 1915 is very important to it and in particular to its sports activities which the IOC always supports. This was the first time that the Lausanne Prize, worth SFr. 25,000, had not been awarded to an individual. Upon receiving the prize from the city mayor, Mrs Yvette Jaggi, on 28th November last, the President immediately offered the money to the Lausanne city sports department.