
EDITORIAL



Human rights and Olympism

by Juan Antonio Samaranch

The main theme addressed by the *Olympic Review* as the year 1998 comes to an end is the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted on 10 December 1948, just months after the celebration of the Games of the XIV Olympiad in London, Great Britain. This gives us the opportunity to highlight the fundamental principles enshrined in the *Olympic Charter*.

The goal of Olympism is to place everywhere sport at the service of the harmonious development of man, with a view to encouraging the establishment of a peaceful society concerned with the preservation of human dignity”.

Our founder, Pierre de Coubertin, who as early as 1919 spoke of “all sports for all”, also reflected on the theme of “humanism”. Since the beginning, Olympism has been associated with well-being, education, health and the physical and intellectual development of humankind. The Olympic Movement also has the objective of “building a peaceful and better world by educating youth through sport practised without discrimination of any kind and in the Olympic spirit, which requires mutual understanding with a spirit of friendship, solidarity and fair play”. The concern to develop a culture of

democracy, justice, peace, solidarity and respect for universal fundamental ethical principles has been omnipresent in the activities undertaken by the International Olympic Committee since 1894.

Recently, we added to the fundamental principles an article which provides that “The practice of sport is a human right. Every individual must have the possibility of practising sport in accordance with his or her needs.”

At a time when the wind of democracy is blowing across the continents, it is essential to recall the importance we attach to the development of a policy of: sport for all - education for all - health for all - Peace for all - and all human rights for all. The Olympic Movement’s struggle against apartheid in sport, which held sway in South Africa, and against politically motivated “boycotts” of the Olympic Games, whose victims were the athletes, are also a matter of human rights.

As this year 1998 comes to a close, we wish all women and men a peaceful and better world in which human rights and, in particular, the rights of the child, are respected. A world of generosity, solidarity and tolerance and, finally, a world without armed conflicts and without human suffering, where peace reigns in perpetuity.

HAPPY NEW YEAR 1999

