



HOW TO KEEP THE GAMES AS A PREMIER EVENT?

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The subject of this breakout session “How to keep the Games as a premier event?” received the greatest response from the contributors to the Virtual Olympic Congress, and I believe there is good reason for it.

Over the past fifty years I have visited 23 Summer and Winter Olympic Games. I have also seen many world and continent championships, spartakiades as well as cups competitions. I can say with confidence that the Olympic Games are a unique sports event.

The Games are not like a great number of world championships that are held at the same place and time. The Games are like no other sports event as they unite nations, their cultures and aspire towards peace.

Each Olympic Games is a one of a kind event. They leave unforgettable memories and have a panhuman value.

Our goal is to promote their further success. I believe that to achieve this we should concentrate on two aspects:

- improving the required components; and
- eliminating the negative factors which are still there, unfortunately.

1. IMPROVE THE REQUIRED COMPONENTS

The Programme of the Olympic Games

There needs to be further support for the initiative of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to periodically review the contents of the Olympic programme and strengthen control over the size and costs of the Games.

The programme needs greater flexibility, by using its internal reserve and further expanding women’s presence, making the Olympic Games more appealing to young people and ensuring participation of disabled athletes in the Games.

Organisers of the future Olympic Games should be given a right to choose one of the recognised sports right after the voting. This will increase people’s interest in the Games in the host country, take local specific features into consideration and increase the status of the recognised International Federations.

The qualification system

The qualification system should correspond to the principle of universality.

The qualification selection of the athletes and teams must be completed no later than 2-3 months before the Games, and not 3 weeks before as is often the case now. This makes the work of the organisers and National Olympic Committees more difficult and prevents the National Olympic Committees and common people from buying tickets to competitions in which their athletes are participating.

Participation of professional athletes

It is necessary to clearly regulate the proportion of professional and amateur athletes in those sports where it is possible.

Limit the possibility for one athlete to participate in not more than 3 to 4 events.

This will eliminate inequalities such as when one athlete or team in the Games competes for the only medal whereas in other sports, such as gymnastics, athletics, swimming or speed skating the opportunities are quite different.

To increase moral values promoted by Olympism

In case one of the participating athletes, judges or other accredited persons demonstrates an outstanding example of fair play, it should become common practice to award a special IOC prize at the closing ceremony.

Support the principle of equality

To support the principle of equality my recommendation is to come back to the previous rule that all athletes should live in the Olympic village as one family. In order to limit the time of the parade we should cut down the number of delegations proportionately and shorten the intervals between the delegations. The parade should not continue for more than one hour. This can be achieved through close cooperation among the IOC, NOCs and organising committees.

2. ELIMINATING THE NEGATIVE FACTORS

Doping

This is a special subject to be discussed in a different auditorium.

Judgement

We should punish strictly and remove judges who broke the oath they took at the Opening Ceremony. Organising committees and International Federations should strive to avoid mistakes in installing equipment, marking and so on, which puts the participants in unequal conditions.



The Games organisers should increase their responsibility to prevent the audience interfering with the competition process.

The proposals I have submitted for your attention have been based on my long-term experience with the Olympic Commission under the Programme of Olympic Games, my work in organising committees preparing the Olympic Games, and many years of observation and activities.