



Organisation pour la Paix et le Sport

“Peace and Sport” of Monaco puts into action First Mission in Timor-Leste

Dili, Timor-Leste – February 22nd 2008 : “Peace and Sport”, international organisation based in Monaco under the High Patronage of His Serene Highness Prince Albert II of Monaco, dispatched their first expert, Mr. Laurent Torrecillas to Timor-Leste for a 4-day visit to ascertain the sporting needs of the newly independent country.

Mr. Torrecillas’ visit is the first concrete action to emerge after the success of the “Peace and Sport” Forum held in Monaco in December 2007.

Not deterred by the tragic events of 11 February that resulted in the failed assassination attempt of President Jose Ramos-Horta and Prime Minister Xanana Gusmão, “Peace and Sport” is confident that now more than ever, sport will play an important role in the future stability of Timor-Leste. With 40% of the population composed of young people who are under-educated, under-employed and who often gravitate toward violent martial arts gangs, positive sport activity is not only essential, but urgently needed.

The “Peace and Sport” expert's visit is the prelude to the quick deployment of a Local-Based Project in the region, which will consist in the implementation of concerted actions in order to increase and structure the sport offer in the country.

Mr. Torrecillas had productive meetings with Prime Minister Gusmão, the President of Timor-Leste’s National Olympic Committee, Joao Carrascalão, the Secretary of State for Youth and Sports and the Heads of all major sport federations.

Also during his stay in Timor-Leste, the “Peace and Sport” Expert was able to visit Dili’s National Stadium, and the University facilities where he could observe and talk to young people practicing aikido, tennis, and other youngsters with disabilities.

Mr. Torrecillas will present his conclusions to “Peace and Sport”'s President Joël Bouzou for follow-up so that “Peace and Sport” can play an important role in shaping the future of sports throughout the country.

Prime Minister Xanana Gusmão said about “Peace and Sport” : *"The fundamental objective of sport in Timor Leste is to mobilize youth. This is a major factor of peace and we ask Peace and Sport to help. Politicians will focus*

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on improving lives, but sport can be a good motivator to change the minds and behaviors of youth. Peace comes from an environment of tolerance which is why sport can play an important role in starting a new chapter in our history. Only sport can orient and correct the mindset of youth. Sport is crucial in Timor Leste peace's process."

Upon conclusion of this important mission, Joel Bouzou, President of "Peace and Sport", believes that *"through its universal values, sport should serve efficiently Timor Leste's development, not only in terms of education, social economic integration, reconciliation, health protection and the improvement of the population well-being, but also by the promotion of the country overseas."*

Mr. Torecillas added : *"My work sessions were very productive and I look forward to my next visit to implement our proposals concretely, in close cooperation with the Government and the Olympic National Committee. Regarding the necessity to set up a sustainable framework, the adoption of a sport legislation should be our first milestone with the forthcoming weeks"*.

The "Peace and Sport" visit to Timor-Leste is the first in a series of eight, which are currently taking place until March in different parts of the world including Ivory Coast, Burundi, Colombia, Israel, Palestine, Djibouti, Haiti and Brazil.

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About PEACE AND SPORT

"Peace and Sport" is a world peace initiative based in Monaco, founded under the High Patronage of HSH Prince Albert II.

"Peace and Sport" has set itself the objective to promote sport and to use the structuring values of sport and its practise to serve individuals and communities across the world. By implementing customised programmes in post conflict zones, extremely poverty-stricken areas or those lacking social cohesion, "Peace and Sport" uses sport to promote values of respect, sharing, tolerance and community-spirit with a view to instilling Sustainable Peace.

Supported by governments, world sport governance, international organisations, major global corporations and world class champions represented by the World Olympians Association, "Peace and Sport" creates synergies between the multiple players. Its action consists of two main axes: the development of Locally Based Projects and the organisation of an international annual forum, acting as a hub of exchange and convergence.

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To develop and unfold its Locally Based Projects, “Peace and Sport” relies on an international Family of Partners of private and institutional bodies:

- INTERNATIONAL SPORT FEDERATIONS, whose experts stand out as legitimate and even compulsory players to act efficiently on the ground,
- THE “WORLD OLYMPIANS ASSOCIATION” (WOA), which brings its support to “Peace and Sport's” Local Projects by involving role-model athletes in the framework of customised programmes,
- FINANCIAL AND LOGISTICS PARTNERS, like Mercure International of Monaco (sports and retail market) or Aegis Media (marketing communications group), who enable “Peace and Sport” to implement its projects and achieve sustainable results.

“Peace and Sport” was created by Joel Bouzou, its current President. Mr. Bouzou is an Olympic medallist and a Modern Pentathlon World Champion. He is the current General Secretary of the Modern Pentathlon International Union (MPIU), a Member of the World Olympians Association (WOA) Executive Committee, and an Advisor to HSH Prince Albert II of Monaco.

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