

Declaration on Sport in Japan: Sport Mission in the 21st Century

Preamble

On this centennial anniversary of the establishment of sport in Japan, this declaration pays tribute to the accomplishments of our predecessors, and expresses the determination of the sport community in Japan to carry on their legacy in the next 100 years.

In 1911 The Japan Amateur Sports Association was established, from which the Japan Sports Association and the Japanese Olympic Committee both stemmed. The founding of this organization consolidated sport across the country for the first time. In 1912 Japan was the first nation in Asia to send a delegation to the Olympic Games, and Japan sport established itself internationally.

The founder of the Japan Amateur Sports Association, Dr. Jigoro Kano, announced in its prospectus the goals of promoting sports and participation in the Olympic Games. This declaration carries on Dr. Kano's vision into the 21st century, while updating it with a view toward the next 100 years.

As part of our efforts to introduce the anniversary slogan, "A New Step into a Proud Future," symposia were held in Fukushima, Kyoto and Hiroshima with the theme of "Sport in Japan: the Past and Future 100 Years." The outcomes of these symposia are the basis for this declaration, along with comments from member associations and the general public. These were integrated to form the "Declaration on Sport in Japan: Sport Mission in the 21st Century", and the declaration was discussed and officially announced at a final symposium in Tokyo.

Declaration

Sport is a universally shared culture based on the enjoyment of free physical activity. When this cultural aspect is sufficiently respected, sport can be profoundly appreciated for its meaningful values, both individually and socially. Today sport is enjoyed by many as a pastime, for the education of the youth, for the promotion of health and interaction, and as a reason for living. Sport is indispensable for the pursuit of happiness, and a healthy and cultural life.

UNESCO's 1978 "International Charter of Physical Education and Sport" declares that sport is a fundamental right for all. However, there are still many in the world who, for whatever reason, are unable to exercise this right. It is, therefore, the great mission of those involved in sport to help all peoples of the world to enjoy the benefits of sport.

Sport, in modern society, has not only achieved remarkable progress in itself, it has also gained an extremely powerful social influence. Sport exerts great influence on our political, economical, and cultural life and our lifestyles. It is the immediate responsibility of those involved in sport to utilize this potential power for the common good.

It is from this perspective that we must look ahead toward the future development of sport in the 21st century. It would indeed be a worthy first step for toward a proud

future of sport in Japan if we, inheriting the roles played in the past, could lead the development of sport to contribute to solutions for global issues faced by human society today.

With this in mind, we summarize three global issues profoundly related to sport, and declare our new Sport Mission in the 21st Century as follows:

1. Sport allows people to share the joy of physical activity, to experience excitement together, and to deepen their relationships with each other. This capability of sport to cultivate bonds between various peoples augments the happiness and benefit of living together in the community, and makes communal life more enriched and meaningful.

Sport in the 21st century will contribute to the creation of equitable and just communities without prejudice and enhance the public welfare, by availing its benefits to all persons, with a diverse variety of ethnicities, beliefs and faiths.

2. Rooted in the joy of physical activity, sport spreads the enjoyment of the utilization of one's physical abilities. It is a natural physical experience that develops our innate abilities to recognize and understand ourselves and the environment we live in.

In the advanced informational society of the 21st century, sport will contribute to the reconciliation of nature and civilization through the refinement of our physical abilities, and lead to a new lifestyle in harmony with the environment.

3. The fundamental values of sport come from the spirit of fair play, in which personal dignity is based on respect for one's opponent. With its basis of mutual respect, sport promotes genuine goodwill and friendship, in which people open themselves up honestly to others, and accept others as they are.

In this complex world of diverse values, sport in the 21st century will contribute to building a peaceful world of friendship, through the spirit of fair play and proactive pacifism.

Sport in modern society is an excellent opportunity to confirm that we are truly one people of the globe, as is displayed in the Olympic Games and other international sport events. For this reason, it is extremely important for sport to use every opportunity to emphasize the importance of resolving global issues.

People involved in sport in the 21st century must not only provide these opportunities, but also they must be aware of and respect the inherent meaning and values of sport; that is, they must embody the 21st century values of sport, implement them, and achieve their missions. Those values are the fair and generous sharing of the simple joy of sport; the refinement of physical abilities; and respect for each other. When people all over the world appreciate these 21st century values of sport, the sport mission described above will be accomplished.

Today we face many global problems of great complexity. Those of us involved in sport should feel pride as successors to these inherently noble values and sport's enormous potential. We are conveyers of the values of sport in the 21st century.

Cooperation and Collaboration

This declaration is backed by the history of 100 years of sport in Japan. These 100 years certainly did not always run smoothly. With a deep respect for all those who have protected and cultivated sport despite the many hardships, we declare that we carry on their strong commitment to sport. The Japan Sports Association and the Japanese Olympic Committee will strive to their utmost to achieve this mission.

In order to do so, this declaration and its intentions must be made widely known, not only to our member associations, but to as many people as possible. We must also establish a long-term action plan to accomplish this mission from a global perspective.

At the same time, it is hoped that international sporting bodies such as the International Olympic Committee, as well as those in Japan and overseas, and with participation of the United Nations and global NGOs, will all collaborate and achieve the mission stated in this declaration in order to create a hopeful future for the world.

In order to ensure that this project progresses smoothly and robustly, it is also hoped that national and local authorities and other public bodies will recognize the importance of this declaration and actively support it above and beyond their current commitment.

This year, a year to celebrate the 100th anniversary of sport in Japan, is also the year that we have suffered the tragedy of the Great East Japan Earthquake. I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere condolences to the many people who suffered so much in this disaster, and declare that by achieving the mission for sport outlined in this declaration, we will support recovery and lead Japan and the world into a future filled with hope.

July 15, 2011

President,

Japan Sports Association · Japanese Olympic Committee

100th Anniversary Executive Committee

Yoshiro MORI