



Samaranch must resign

Ever since its foundation in the year 1894, the Olympic movement -as the most credited expression of organised sport- has insisted on the need for sport to be seen as an activity capable of promoting ethical and democratic values worldwide. The movement's principles and foundational documents speak of "*brotherhood*", "*freedom*" and "*equality*" between human communities as its foremost values. In addition to this, the Olympic Charter -in the version updated on July 7th 2007- refers, in its first point, to the "*educational value of good example and respect for fundamental universal ethical principles*" in association with sports. Its second point also establishes that sport must be a way of promoting "*a peaceful society concerned with the preservation of human dignity*".

It is for this reason that we firmly believe that world sport should be presided over by people who are truly in a position to give a good example and whose careers are flawless as regards the respect for democracy and human rights in the world. We cannot understand, therefore, that a person such as Juan Antonio Samaranch, who held important posts during the fascist dictatorship of general Franco in Spain, continues to hold the post of Honorary President of the International Olympic Committee. All the more so now that photographic documents showing him making the Nazi salute, at a date as recent as 1974, have been made public.

We are persuaded that there must be more suitable candidates for the post and thus present this Letter/Manifesto which we would be delighted that as many people and organisations as possible subscribe. It is soon to be sent to the presidents of all the National Olympic Committees in the world, as well as to the media. Good example and common sense must be the parameters that guide world sport. How can we hope to put an end to curses such as doping if we cannot first solve basic questions of an ethical and moral nature?

Today is as good a day as any to set to work on the need to democratise sport and rid it of loathsome totalitarian ghosts from the past. Please join us in signing this Public Letter/Manifesto that is aimed to draw the attention of the Olympic Movement to this pressing question.

Democracy and Dignity in Sport. Barcelona June 2009.