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Story Headline: Olympic flame brings message of hope and peace to UN Headquarters in Geneva before making its way to Brazil


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STORY SCRIPT
The Olympic flame has visited the United Nations headquarters in Geneva on its way to Brazil from Greece to begin the Brazilian Torch Relay.

The flame was carried inside the Palais des Nations by 13-year-old Bruna Gabrielle Pitta Portugal for the ceremony commemorating the International Day of Sport for Development and Peace which was attended by the United Nations Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, and the President of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), Thomas Bach.

President Bach presented the Olympic Cup to the United Nations – an distinction which is awarded to associations or institutions that provide notable service to sport or the promotion of the Olympic ideals. The UN Secretary-General accepted the honour.

Other dignitaries including IOC Member Prince Albert II of Monaco; Wilfried Lemke, the Secretary-General’s Special Adviser on Sport for Development and Peace; Ricardo Leyser, Brazil’s Minister for Sport and Carlos Nuzman, President of the Rio 2016 Organizing Committee also attended the ceremony.

Brazilian Paralympic athlete Natália Mayara, a Pan American Games gold medallist in wheelchair tennis, also spoke during the ceremony which emphasised the role sport can play in promoting development and peace across the world through the power of sport.
The flame will make its way to the Olympic Museum in Lausanne after visiting the United Nations, where it will remain over the weekend before continuing its journey to Brazil.

The Olympic flame was officially lit in Ancient Olympia on 21 April before making its 2,235km six-day journey across Greece, including a visit to the Eleonas Open Reception Centre for refugees in Athens, before being flown to Geneva.

The Brazilian leg of the Olympic Torch Relay will begin on 3 May in Brasilia where it will visit every state within the country before the Rio 2016 opening ceremony on 5 August.