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**STORY HEADLINE:** Algerian judo legend Salima Souakri wins 2020 IOC Women and Sport Award for Africa.

**LOCATION:** Algiers, Algeria

**DATE:** 6.3.2020

**LANGUAGE:** Arabic and French

*Broadcast quality footage available at the IOC Newsroom: [http://iocnewsroom.com](http://iocnewsroom.com)*

**STORY SCRIPT:**

Algerian judo legend Salima Souakri fought in four Olympic Games. But her biggest fight so far has been against prejudice and misogyny.

“I once applied for a position at a judo union” recalls Salima. “The boss made a remark which is etched on my mind: ‘Did we run out of men, that we need to appoint a woman now?’”

Salima was called up to the Algerian national judo team aged just 16 and made her sensational debut at the Olympic Games Barcelona 1992.

But persecution in her homeland followed: “As a woman, I had a right to succeed for myself but also for all oppressed women who lack the courage to dream. Instead of staying at home crying and giving up, I wanted to continue fighting.” Salima fought in three more Olympics, coming close to medals in both 1996 and 2004.

Since retirement she has devoted herself to the cause of gender equality, as coach of the women’s national judo team and as the first-ever female Algerian UNICEF goodwill ambassador:

“I am so very happy with this wonderful honour from the International Olympic Committee. This prize is a prize for women and sport of which I am so very proud. As it came after a thirty-six-year athletic career, this prize came to crown this journey. So, I am very happy and especially very proud.”

**Women and Sport Background**

Women first competed at the Olympic Games Paris 1900, before they had even been granted the right to vote in most countries around the world. While only 22 women competed at the 1900 Games, female participation has increased steadily since then the event programme for Tokyo 2020 will see female participation rise to a projected 48.8 per cent, with double the number of mixed events compared to Rio 2016.

The IOC Women and Sport Awards were introduced in the year 2000 to recognise the outstanding achievements and contributions of those who promote gender equality in sport.
Every year, the IOC invites each National Olympic Committee, International Federation and Continental Association to nominate a person or association active in promoting gender equality and the presence of women in their sport or country.

An IOC jury composed of members of the IOC Women in Sport Commission reviews the nominations and chooses six winners per year including the World Trophy Winner and FIVE Continental Trophy winners. This year's winners were selected from amongst 50 strong candidates.

Sport provides a fantastic opportunity for girls and women to break free of barriers and negative stereotypes, giving them the chance to demonstrate what they are truly capable of.

SHOTLIST:

00:02 Shot of 2020 IOC Women in Sport Award.
00:05 Archive action of Salima Souakri from the Olympic Games Barcelona 1992.
00:28 Various shots of Salima Souakri working as a TV presenter.
00:42 Various shots of Salima Souakri coaching children judo.
“Am very happy and especially very proud.”

01:26 Various shots of Salima Souakri leading the warm-up of a judo class.

“From a personal experience I remember once applying for a position in one of the Judo union as technical manager, everything was going fine until it reached the decision-maker I remember the remark which was etched in my mind as he said, “Why we ran out of men, so we need to appoint a women now?”. This remark has no place in society in general, and no place in sport at all. There is no difference between men and women the only difference we need is in their ability of doing the job and not based on their sex, this is the message I wanted to convey, and the message I wanted to tell the Olympic organization so it can help women to perforate this field as women have proven time and again their abilities and determination.”

02:35 Various shots of Salima Souakri leading the class.
02:44 Close up of girls listening to Salima Souakri.
02:48 Shot of Salima Souakri coaching judo class.

“As a woman, I had a right to succeed for myself but also for all oppressed women without the right to dream. Instead of staying at home crying and stopping, I wanted to continue fighting. The fight has continued until today because unfortunately a lot of sports organizations have closed their doors to girls out of fear or their own convictions because for them a woman should not do sport, especially a combat sport. So, I had to do a tour to encourage the few women and also encourage parents to get their daughters to do judo.”
04:00 Behind shot of Salima Soukari demonstrating to the class.

04:07 Shot of students performing in Salima Souakri’s judo class.

04:14 Wide shot of Salima Soukari demonstrating to the class.

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