The United Nations (UN) General Assembly has adopted the Olympic Truce for Beijing 2022, highlighting the contribution of sport to the promotion of peace and solidarity.

Since 1993, the UN General Assembly has repeatedly expressed its support for the Olympic Games and the IOC, by adopting the resolution, every two years, one year before each edition of the Olympic Games.

During the debate, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) was represented by IOC Member and Permanent Observer for the IOC to the UN, Luis Alberto Moreno. He delivered the speech of IOC President Thomas Bach, who could not be present due to the current pandemic situation.

In the speech, the IOC President stressed the importance of peace and solidarity in our divided world: “By adopting this resolution, you are supporting the mission of the Olympic Games to unite the best winter sport athletes of the entire world, without any discrimination whatsoever, in a peaceful and respectful competition. This bond of our shared humanity is even more relevant in our polarised world today.

“We can only accomplish this mission if the Olympic Games stand above and beyond all political, cultural and other differences. This is only possible if the Olympic Games are politically neutral and do not become a tool to achieve political goals.”
The resolution also expresses “the expectation that the Olympic Winter Games Beijing 2022 will be a meaningful opportunity to harness the power of sport to advance the world by fostering an atmosphere of peace, development, resilience, tolerance and understanding, and welcoming all the delegations of National Olympic and Paralympic Committees to participate in the Games”.

The resolution “calls upon all Member States to cooperate with the International Olympic Committee and the International Paralympic Committee in their efforts to use sport as a tool to promote peace, dialogue and reconciliation in areas of conflict during and beyond the period of the Olympic and Paralympic Games”.

Andrew Parsons, President of the International Paralympic Committee (IPC), also stressed the importance of the resolution.

He said: “At the International Paralympic Committee, our vision is to make for a more inclusive world through Para sport. We believe that sport can bring people of all backgrounds together in peace and have a transformational impact on societies. We have already shown this year how the Paralympic and Olympic Games are a showcase for human endeavour, resilience and hope.

“When the world comes together in friendship we send a powerful message that we are celebrating difference, displaying the best of humanity, and showing that there is unity in diversity. At the Beijing 2022 Paralympic Winter Games, sport and peace will be united, and our athletes will deliver performances that will inspire and empower. These Games will continue to transform attitudes and lead to greater social inclusion for the world’s 1.2 billion persons with disabilities. Change starts with sport, and together we can create a more peaceful world.”

The tradition of the Olympic Truce – “Ekecheira” – has been to ensure a halt of all hostilities, allowing the safe passage and participation of athletes and spectators taking part in the Olympic Games. The resolution reaffirms that the Olympic values of peace, solidarity and respect are as important across the world today as they were over 3,000 years ago, when the ancient Olympic Games first took place in Greece.

On 17 October 2021, on the eve of the Olympic flame-lighting for the Olympic Winter Games Beijing 2022, the original parties of the Ekecheiria – the cities of Olympia, Ilida and Sparta – solemnly renewed their pledge with their Olympic Truce declaration highlighting once again the role of the Olympic Games as a symbol of peace and unity.

The Olympic Games Beijing 2022 will take place from 4 to 20 February 2022 and will be followed by the Paralympic Games from 4 to 13 March 2022.

SHOTLIST:
00:03 Wide external view of the United Nations Building, New York, USA
00:07 Pan down external view of the United Nations Building
00:14 Luis Alberto Moreno walks up to the podium to address the United Nations General Assembly.
“By adopting this resolution, you are supporting the mission of the Olympic Games to unite the best winter sport athletes of the entire world, without any discrimination whatsoever, in a peaceful and respectful competition. This bond of our shared humanity is even more relevant in our polarised world today. We can only accomplish this mission if the Olympic Games stand above and beyond all political, cultural and other differences. This is only possible if the Olympic Games are politically neutral and do not become a tool to achieve political goals.

“In this way, there was from the very beginning an inseparable link between the Olympic Games and peace, which allowed the ancient Olympic Games to take place for approximately 1,000 years. Just a couple of weeks ago, the original parties of the Ekecheiria – the cities of Olympia, Ilida and Sparta – have solemnly renewed their pledge with their Olympic Truce declaration. I hope that this meaningful initiative is an encouragement for all UN Member States.

“History also shows us what happens if the political neutrality of the Olympic Games is not respected. The ancient Olympic Games came to an end when the Roman emperor Theodosius effectively abolished them for political reasons. It took almost 2,000 years before the Olympic Games could be revived by our founder, Pierre de Coubertin. I hope very much that we all take this lesson of history to heart.

“You may ask why this lesson still matters today, the answer is because the Olympic athletes demonstrate to the entire world that yes, it is possible to be fierce rivals and engage in intense competition, while at the same time living peacefully and respectfully together. In the Olympic Village, the athletes from every corner of the world are living together in harmony. In the Olympic Games, we are all equal, irrespective of social background, gender, race, sexual orientation, or political belief. In the Olympic Games, everyone respects the same rules.

“The pandemic, the UN Sustainable Development Goals and all of the challenges we are facing today have taught us one lesson: We can only go faster, we can only aim higher, we can only become stronger, if we work together. This is why we amended our Olympic motto to: “Faster, Higher, Stronger – Together”. The word ‘together’ tells us we need more solidarity. More solidarity within societies and more solidarity among societies. Because there is no peace without solidarity.”
**Question: How are the Olympic Games and the Olympic Movement in step with the Sustainable Development Goal of the United Nations?**

“The UN General Assembly has once more recognised the important role of sport to enable the achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals and we are contributing to many of them. There is first of all, through the Olympic Games, in the participation without discrimination, our contribution to peace, there is the great contribution of sport to health. We have seen during the crisis that sport can save lives and there is the commitment of the International Olympic Committee to the other UN Sustainable Development Goals, in particular, with regard to sustainability and climate change.”

**05:11 SOUNDBITE: Thomas Bach, IOC President (English Language)**

**Question: What can the athletes look forward to at the Olympic Winter Games Beijing 2022?**

“The preparations in Beijing are very well underway. All the test events we are seeing are successful. There remain always things to do, but the venues are more than state-of-the-art, the athletes are excited about these venues. And so therefore, we can look forward to successful Games, but also to safe Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games, because also the preparations with regard to the anti-Covid measures are very well underway, and we will see a second so-called Playbook coming up in the next couple of weeks.”

-- ENDS --

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