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Story script and Shot log

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STORY HEADLINE: Sergii Bubka discusses Olympic Movement support with Ukrainian athletes at home and abroad

LOCATION: Ukraine & Switzerland

DATE: March-April 2022

LANGUAGE: English & Ukrainian

STORY SCRIPT:

International Olympic Committee (IOC) member Sergii Bubka has visited Ukrainian athletes in his homeland and across Europe as part of the organisation's extensive effort to provide aid and support to competitors from the war-torn nation.

In special IOC missions, Olympic pole vault champion Bubka, President of the National Olympic Committee (NOC) of Ukraine, has met the athletes who are being helped, and inspected the conditions and facilities where they are living and training during the time of crisis.

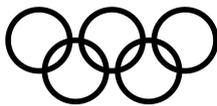
"(IOC) President Thomas Bach requested me to take this role to find the best way to help Ukrainian sport." said Mr Bubka, "We sent many athletes and coaches all over different countries, approximately 3,000. Our partners, stakeholders, our Olympic Family, International Federations and National Olympic Committees are doing an excellent job to support them."

"When the bombs started landing in Kyiv in February it was a big shock. I started to think what my role and position would be in this war. I immediately contacted the IOC leadership. We were in contact also with the chief of the office of President Zelensky. We can see the sport movement reacted very strongly and showed firm unity."

Over two million dollars has already been allocated to a Solidarity Fund set up by the IOC. The main aim is enabling Ukrainian athletes to continue taking part in international competitions, by providing not just financial aid, but also logistical support, travel support, offering training facilities, accommodation, equipment and uniforms, amongst other things.

The efforts of the IOC and the Olympic Movement are being coordinated by a task force led by Mr Bubka.

Over Easter, Sergii Bubka and the Ukrainian Minister for Youth and Sport, Vadym Guttsait, Olympic fencing champion, visited a number of training centres in Ukraine and met with



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athletes. And last week they continued their visits to Ukrainian athletes abroad, in Italy and Switzerland.

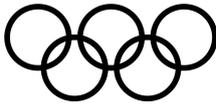
In the Italian capital Rome, Mr Bubka and Mr Guttsait were welcomed by Giovanni Malago, IOC member and President of the NOC of Italy, which is hosting over 400 Ukrainian athletes and coaches. In Switzerland, they were joined by IOC President Bach in visits to the Olympic House in Lausanne and the World Cycling Centre in Aigle, where Ukrainian cyclists are continuing to train for events. Talking to the athletes highlighted the horror being experienced by them and their families back in Ukraine:

“President Bach asked one girl from Ukraine about her family.” Mr Bubka continued. “She said her parents are in Mykolayiv and started to cry. It was very nice that her teammates hugged her, we hugged her. These are human feelings. This is very tough, of course, and we try to give them hope.”

“We are losing the lives of our people, our Ukrainian people, but we strongly believe we must be present in international sports events. Our flag and anthem must be heard by people all over the world.”

SHOT LOG

00:03 IOC member Sergii Bubka's car on way to sports training centre in **Koncha Zaspa**, Ukraine
00:10 Ukrainian female weightlifter lifts weights
00:16 Weightlifter adds weights to her bar
00:24 Second female weightlifter lifting
00:31 Third female weightlifter lifting
00:36 Mr Bubka shakes hands with a coach at the centre and hugs him
00:40 Mr Bubka addresses the athletes, coaches and staff (Ukrainian language)
00:50 Car on way to wrestling centre
00:58 Smoke billows in distance from car window
01:02 Floor/mats of wrestling centre filled with wrestlers individually exercising
01:07 Wrestlers grappling across the centre's floor
01:13 Mr Bubka meets coach and shakes hand
01:17 Mr Bubka addressing the wrestlers, coaches and staff
01:21 Wrestlers listening to Mr Bubka talking to them
01:27 Mr Bubka at end of their meeting
01:30 Equipment bags in Ukrainian colours in wrestling centre, Koncha Zaspa
01:37 Rhythmic gymnasts train with ribbons in sports centre in **Kyiv**
01:50 Mr Bubka speaks to the gathered gymnasts and staff
02:06 Gymnasts resume training (low shot)
02:12 Mr Bubka, Ukrainian Minister for Youth and Sport, Vadym Guttsait, coaches and staff at biathlon training base in **Ternopil** in conversation ascending hill
02:18 Shooting range for biathletes at the training camp
02:20 Ukrainian flag with design of biathlete shooting
02:24 Kits being laid out for biathletes
02:28 Mr Bubka talk to biathletes and staff alongside Mr Guttsait
02:34 Biathletes applaud the words of Mr Bubka
02:40 Aerial of UCI centre (World Cycling) in **Aigle, Switzerland**



02:43 Ukrainian cyclists train in the velodrome watched by Mr Bubka and International Olympic Committee (IOC) President Thomas Bach
02:49 Cyclists pass fixed camera
02:55 Cyclists in team training (wide)
03:02 Mr Bach, Mr Bubka and Mr Guttsait meet Ukrainian cyclists
03:05 Mr Bach and Mr Bubka comfort a Ukrainian cyclist
03:14 Ukrainian BMX cyclists on outdoor track at UCI centre in Aigle
03:22 Mr Bubka, Mr Guttsait and Mr Bach meet young Ukrainian BMX cyclists
03:27 Photos of IOC delegation and cyclists at entrance to UCI Centre in Aigle

Q. Please tell us about your recent meetings with Ukrainian athletes.

03:36 SOUNDBITE: Sergii Bubka, IOC Member & President of the NOC of Ukraine, Olympic Champion (English Language)

“Well, it was a very special mission by the IOC. As you know, I am in charge of humanitarian aid and support through the Olympic Solidarity foundation for Ukrainian Olympic community and support. President Bach requested I take this role to find the best way to support Ukrainian sport. I would say this was an inspection to check how our support is going, together with the minister of Youth and Sport for Ukraine. We went through our centres, through our places of athletes, where we provide support through the foundation. We’ve been in our number one Olympic Centre, we saw the athletes from fencing, we saw the national team from weightlifting and wrestling, and we discussed with them about the worry about the situation, how we can overcome this and how we can do this together. We check if our help is enough, what we can do more, and how we can improve. Because for us it’s important to know our next step. This is one part of the mission, but the second part of the mission is to show the unity of the world community and Olympic Movement, behind Ukrainians, the Olympic Family, and Ukrainian Sport, and of course, to keep athletes motivated and this difficult time where the war really destroying the country, destroying the mind. We are losing the lives of the people, our Ukrainian people, but we strongly believe we must be present in international sports events. And in this regard, when I spoke with the Prime Minister, I tried to convince him that our presence in international competitions will help. Championships, World Cups, European Championships. It’s important for Ukraine to believe in our victory, to be united and to be strong. Our flag and Anthem must be heard by people all over the world.”

Q. In addition to Ukraine, where else are Ukrainian athletes being hosted, and where have you spoken to them recently?

06:23 SOUNDBITE: Sergii Bubka, IOC Member & President of the NOC of Ukraine, Olympic Champion

“Yes, we sent many athletes and coaches, all over different countries. Approximately 3,000 athletes and coaches spread mostly abroad. And we support them and our partners, our stakeholders, our Olympic family, International Federations and National Olympic Committees are doing an excellent job to support them. And this is this huge amount of money also spent by the Olympic Solidarity Foundation. We reckon already it’s around one million dollars that we have spent. But if we look at expenses from International Federations, Nation Olympic Committees. We have a couple of million already behind us. Then, we went on a visit with the minister in Italy, because Italy is also one of our strongest partners, they are hosting now over 400 athletes and coaches. They took the expenses on their shoulders. They helped us with uniforms for our athletes to use at the Youth Olympic Festival in the winter. We went to express gratitude to the Olympic Committee of Italy, to their ministry, and of course, we discussed the next step, what we should do, and it was really great to hear from them. They will continue to support as long as needed. This is what we discussed and what we did in Italy. After, we came to Switzerland, we went with President Bach, the Minister and



myself in Aigle. We saw our cyclists, our national team, also different ages and different kids who will stay there because UCI provides strong support. They increased their fund to over five hundred thousand Euros, and our foundation works together with them and other International Federations. And we see we work in close co-operation that we support partially or they cover everything or we divide the cost. This is really team spirit, it's really solidarity in our family and I'm very thankful for everyone."

Q. What did the athletes tell you?

08:58 SOUNDBITE: Sergii Bubka, IOC Member & President of the NOC of Ukraine, Olympic Champion

"The athletes were very thankful, but also we see some examples, like yesterday [Thursday, 21 April], when President Bach asked one girl from Ukraine about her parents asking: "How is your family? Where are your parents?" She said her parents are in Mykolayiv and the girl started to cry. This one we don't know how to help. We try to change, we try to bring her back. It was very nice that her teammates also hugged her and we hugged her and tried to calm her but these are human feelings. This is very tough and of course we try to give them hope, we try to give them belief and we know we Ukrainians, we're a strong nation. We believe in victory. We respect our soldiers, our army, what they are doing for us and we believe we will win."

Q. What was your first reaction when the war started?

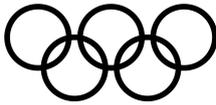
10:21 SOUNDBITE: Sergii Bubka, IOC Member & President of the NOC of Ukraine, Olympic Champion

"Well in Beijing, we talked with colleagues and friends of the Olympic movement a lot. And most of us, we don't think it's happened and I thought it's not possible. But what happened on 24 February, this was a big shock. I was in Kyiv. I heard myself at 5am when the bombs started landing around Kyiv. I woke up and started to think about what I needed to do. What will be my role and position in this war? I immediately contacted the IOC leadership. I was in close contact with the President, with the General, with the Director of Olympic Solidarity. I communicated immediately with the President of the European Olympic Committees, Spyros Capralos, and by this time it was already 6:30 in the morning. We were in contact at 7:30 with the chief of the office of President Zelensky, who called me and discussed our position in sport and what would be my mission to deliver a message to President Bach regarding the sanctions and steps forward. And since that moment in that morning, I have been in very close contact with the IOC. We condemned the breach of the Olympic Truce. We condemned the war and invasion of the Russians and Belarussians into Ukraine. This was a very difficult moment but the reaction of the IOC was immediate. On our side, in two hours there was first a strong statement, a strong position. On the 25th of February and on the 28th of February, the Executive Board even strengthened the sanctions and I was always in contact with the President and my colleagues here. We strongly support the IOC Executive Board decision and guidance for International Federations and we can see that the sport movement reacted very strongly and showed firm unity. We are very thankful for the IOC and the Olympic Family worldwide."

Q. And what have been the developments since then?

13:11 SOUNDBITE: Sergii Bubka, IOC Member & President of the NOC of Ukraine, Olympic Champion

"Well, I stayed, as I said to you, in the beginning there. I tried to coordinate and organise the work of the National Olympic Committee because everyone fled from Kyiv. I stayed in Kyiv with a few key people in the office there. Until the 28th when President Bach and the Executive Board decided to establish the Olympic Solidarity Foundation for support of Ukrainian Olympic community and



Ukrainian sport. The President strongly requested me to come to Lausanne, to take the lead and coordinate and be responsible for allocation of the money for Ukrainian sport. This was very important because the President trusts that I understand very well where we need to spend the money to whom we can trust and communicate and we immediately established the office in Lausanne. We established the office in Ukraine in NOC, we communicated closely, and worked together with the Ministry of Youth and Sport and of course International Federations, National Olympic Committees and even our members in Ukraine who left the country. They stay in Poland, Germany, some in Ukraine and they do the job to serve the athletes, to help them to prepare to go to the international competition and to represent Ukraine. This was the mission which I should do and I'm doing it day and night in the interest of Ukrainian sport."

Q. What should be the next steps for the Olympic movement?

15:03 SOUNDBITE: Sergii Bubka, IOC Member & President of the NOC of Ukraine, Olympic Champion

"During the trip, I saw a lot of people and tragedy, a lot of destruction in the country. The help from the world community is very important for us and we Ukrainians are very thankful, but regarding our task and our Olympic Family, I can tell you, this is unique. Unique support, unique solidarity and Olympic values among us. One of the missions, when President Bach sent me to see the athletes with the minister, was to check everything and bring us information of what we can do more. And clearly we will continue to financially support the travel, accommodation, food, everything athletes need to participate in international competitions, to represent Ukraine. This is very important for us. And also we have discussed the important issue about the next step with infrastructure. We understand it will take time and the IOC and the Olympic Movement is ready to stay strongly behind and help us to come back, continue to win and to keep the great Olympic history of the Olympic movement of Ukraine.

-- ENDS --

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