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## Review Article

### PRINCIPLES OF THE OLYMPIC MOVEMENT

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#### ABSTRACT

The aim of this article is to clarify, review and reflect on the importance of the Olympic movement main principles on nowadays sporting society. For this purpose, the paper goes through the contents of the Olympic Charter, the threats to humanist thinking, the Olympic Games history and the most recent contributions to the Olympic philosophy. Similarly, this article goes deep on the figure of Pierre de Coubertin as the precursor of modern Olympic Games leading to the development of a relationship between the Olympic phenomenon and the need to establish an ethic conduct that embraces all the sports grandeur. Thus, the contribution of this Olympic education is used, through its principles of peace, personal development, equality and ecology in the next generations to come.

**Key words:** *Olympic movement, values, principles, philosophy*

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## INTRODUCTION

As one of the greatest associative tendencies of humanity, the Olympic movement is considered a group of entities, organizations, institutions and people, which follow the Olympic Charter. In this and its Fundamental Principles it is established that the Olympic Movement encompasses organizations, athletes and other people which accept to be guided by the regulations of the Charter under the supreme authority of International Olympic Committee (IOC) ([International Olympic Committee, 2001](#)).

The Olympic Movement has as its objective the construction of a better and more peaceful world by educating youth through sport without discrimination of any kind and with the Olympic spirit requires mutual understanding, the spirit of friendship, solidarity and fair play.

But, what is the essence of modern olympism? For Pierre de Coubertin, its founder, it is not a system but a state of being immersed in a double cult, one of endeavour and one of eurythmy ([Coubertin, 1973:96](#)). In 1908 Coubertin established his concept of olympism in a more schematic way when he considers it a fraternal doctrine between the body and the spirit ([Durántez, 2001a:52-59](#)). In 1920 gratified by the triumph of his idea and the firm establishment of olympism overcoming so many historical vicissitudes. He exclaims, “Olympism is one great silent machine whose wheels do not screech or whose movement never ceases despite the fistful of sand thrown at it with so much perseverance yet unsuccessful in stopping its functioning” ([Coubertin, 1973](#)).

Nowadays, the Olympic Charter considers olympism as a philosophy of life which exalts and combines in its harmonious whole the qualities of the body, the will and the spirit ([International Olympic Committee, 2001](#)). Associating sport with culture and education, olympism aims to create a life style based on the joy of endeavour, the educational value of good example and the respect for fundamental universal principles of ethics. It is for this reason that the objective of olympism is to always place sport at the service of the harmonious development of humankind with the goal of favouring a peaceful society committed to the maintenance of human dignity. For this, the Olympic movement carries out activities in favour of peace on its own or in cooperation with other organizations and within its possibilities. Therefore, one could consider olympism as a philosophy of life which uses sport as the transmission belt of its fundamental formative, peacekeeping, democratic humanitarian, cultural and ecological principles.

There is a tendency to confuse the concept of olympism when in some cases of highly competitive sport there is evidence of possible corruption, and such a situation is attributed as a general phenomena occurring in the Olympics in order to erroneously emphasise radical statements such as olympism does not exist or it is an obsolete and outdated term since the fundamental Olympic principles (non-discrimination, peace, the psycho-physical improvement of the human being through sport) are as valid in the 21st century as in the 19th century when Pierre de Coubertin, its founder, established them. Therefore, olympism as a philosophy of life is a wise understanding of human existence with the aim to elevate and dignify it. Sport is the transmission belt of olympism, but it is important to distinguish it from the generalised confusion which exists when these two elements are identified as one.

Yet, the possible cause of this error stems from determining what is the essence of true sport since the unequivocal concept at the beginnings of the last century has taken on a

wrong meaning. As a result, when one identifies himself/herself as a sportsperson one might question his/her category or class: Olympic, national, sports club, neighbourhood, stay-fit jogger, or the weekend chubby-cheeked overweight couch potato who passionately follows the jubilant or bitter rebroadcast of the throw while compulsively gulping whisky and peanuts?

The concept of leisure activity should be then inherent to sport since if this concept were lost, the activity would be relegated to a compulsory task normally linked to a chore. The joy of a sportsperson must be, then, a qualifying aspect of his/her mood, what made Pierre de Coubertin in 1918 evaluate sagaciously and exclaim as the expert sports psychologist he was, "If someone asked me for the recipe of how to achieve olympism, I would say the primary condition is to be happy". Two years later he added, "The day that a sportsperson stops enjoying the happiness of his/her own endeavour and the feeling of intoxication of power and body balance it has as a result, and the day that he/she is not led by considerations of vanity and interest, that is the day that his/her ideal would end and the pedagogical value of this ideal (if this expression may be used) would decrease inevitably (Trapero, 1979).

The ethical code of olympism, through sport tends to make the human race better and to achieve the ideal canon of the balanced and perfect human. The achievement of such a goal is a historical constant throughout time. In the initial gait of the old olympism through agonistic trance, there was a tendency to get the archaic and aristocratic arete (the maximum exponent of social prominence of the Homeric world) following the pattern of always being the first and excelling over others (International Olympic Committee, 2001).

Physical training with the cultivation of character designed to obtain remarkable achievements, embodied in agonism, where the confrontation in the competition is an expression of the instinct of immortality, the desire to continue living in the minds of relatives and the memory of humankind through outstanding achievements (Poplow, 1960:394). The Homeric pattern of the ideal (in the same anteroom of classicism) will lead to the new canon of perfection through the simultaneous and balanced cultivation of body and spirit. The kalocagathia (from kalos = beautiful, agathos = good) supposes the maximum historic exponent of the balanced education of humankind.

At that time physical beauty (kalos) was acquired in the forge of the arena and the gym by practicing agonistic disciplines in order to play in the edition of one of the great Panhellenic games. Intellectual and spiritual goodness (Agathe) was achieved with music, song, dance, rhetoric and philosophy.

The classic patterns of Olympia were clear in Pierre de Coubertin's mind regarding his restorative ideology of the modern olympism. In the days of glory of Olympia in 1906 he would say, "Arts and letters harmoniously combined with sport assured the greatness of the Olympics... because athletics education, he specifically states in 1889 exerts at least the same action on the moral as over the physical.... and if one side builds muscle, it also forms the character and will, in one word it produces men. The vital need for physical culture and the culture of character does not preclude the formation of intelligence or sensitivity. It is a harmonious whole (Durántez, 2001a:23,27). The ancient Olympic and Coubertinian principles find their normative place in the Olympic Charter when it states that "The goal of olympism is to place sport at the service of

harmonious development of humankind in order to promote the establishment of a peaceful society concerned with the maintenance of human dignity.... supporting and encouraging the formation of sports ethics... and keeping watch over the maintenance of the spirit of fair play in sport and the eradication of violence" ([International Olympic Committee, 2001](#)).

The Olympic ideal of surpassing which finds its place in the motto *Citius Altius Fortius* requires nor demands constant improvement of scores for the mere and only reason to break the previous record. The Olympic principle of surpassing presupposes and requires the improvement of a record, perhaps held by the same athlete that breaks it, because the competitor due to his systematic preparation has become better than in previous times.

"Recordmania" and "medallitis" which are devastating ills at high competitive levels, do not sit well with the humanism of Olympic requirements. The rush for the creation of champions or "campeonitis" was already reported in his day by Cagigal in the sixties. He said that humanity instinctively opened up to sports activities and could be obfuscated with the impression of great champions. And factories are set up to produce super-men that with a healthy standard of humanism are closer to inframen. The individual does not matter upon the arrival of cannibalism ([Cagigal, 1966:51](#)).

Records and remarkable results achieved very often within the same field in the olympic stage, were subsequently invalidated by evidence of fraud, dishonouring the athlete and tarnishing the event ([Duránte, 2001b](#)), highlighting the Machiavellian machinations designed to obtain an end without justifying the means. The dastardly trap ([Samaranch, 243:608](#)) of drugs and the aftermaths of macabre manipulations of the athletes ([Duránte, 2001c](#)) remove the dignity of the individual, are inhumane, not Olympic. This is where sports humanism focuses on "humanitarianism", "doing good to man, making man better even save the man, when necessary" ([Cagigal, 1981:137](#)).

### **The pacifist essence of the Olympic**

The search for peace has been a historical constant in the Olympic movement throughout the centuries. The Games of Olympia collided on the course of their normal historical development with the curse of war which permanently and persistently ravaged the Peloponnese ([Duránte, 1975:25](#)). It is for this reason that within the prehistoric stage of the Games in 884 BC, Cleóstenes, Ifit and Lycurgus, representing the three states bordering Pisa, Elis and Sparta, agreed to the international pact of the Sacred Truce or Ekekheria. The laconic mandate expressed in concentric lines on an iron disk reflected the agreement ([Pausanias, 1994](#)). "Olympia is a sacred place. Whoever dares to tread this ground with armed forces will be condemned as a heretic. Unrighteous also is he who does not avenge a crime being in his hand to do so" ([Diem, 1966:196](#)).

The Sacred Truce, when the date of the Games was near, was proclaimed and published by Espondoforos or "messengers of peace" that in threes set off from Olympia to announce to all Greek peoples, that the period had begun. From that moment onward the use of force based on the use of arms was prohibited. All military operations were suspended and the phalanxes of warriors returned to their bases predisposed to celebrate with the usual solemnity and joy the festive contests of peace. Pilgrims and athletes came to Olympia enjoying personal immunity during their stay at the Sanctuary as well

as the duration of their trips to and fro in an atmosphere of peaceful hope which extended throughout the territories of Hellas.

Protected by the cosy shelter of the Sacred Truce, the Games of Olympia initiate their official historic journey, composed at the beginning by a one and only race to be won for the first time by Corebe of Elaeus (Pausanias, 1994). And thus "as they agreed, they gradually added more and more events" (Pausanias, 1994).

The pact of ekekheria as a legal formula with deep religious anchorage managed to pacify with its influence the chronological time dedicated to the Olympic Game calendar, and incidentally, generated a political habit of stable peace, (Paleólogos, 1964:62) very rarely was this famous agreement broken, insignificant in any case, compared to the lengthy historical space of 1,168 years of ancient olympism.

The promotion of an international and internationalized stream of human relations that generate knowledge and understanding among peoples based on interracial and intercultural character presided by mutual respect was, if anything, the basic and essential idea of the "Coubertinian" restoration (Diem, 1983:9). "It is necessary", he said, "that every four years the restored Olympic Games give universal youth the opportunity for a happy and fraternal encounter which will dissipate slowly this ignorance some people live in respect to the others". "An ignorance which maintains the hatreds and accumulates misunderstandings accelerating events to the barbaric fate of a fight without mercy" (Coubertin, 1973:23).

This idea of peaceful globalization of sport as a vehicle driven by the Olympic philosophy is present in the mind of Coubertin at the first attempt for the restoration of olympism at the meeting of the Sorbonne on 25th November, 1892, which failed. Export oarsmen, runners and fencers, here is the free exchange of the future, and the day when it is introduced in the customs of the old Europe, the cause of peace will have received its greatest support (Coubertin, 1900:90).

The constant call for peace through sport newly found a longing and poetic expression with Coubertin in section IX of his Ode to Sport. However, implementation of world peace through olympism as Coubertin conceived and intended would not have the intended encouraging result as three Olympics were bereft of Olympic Games (the VI, XII and XIII) as a result of two World Wars. Coubertin died without seeing the completion of the second of the two confrontations of apocalyptic connotations.

The Olympic Charter echoes the regulatory Olympic peacemaking principle when it states that olympism aims at establishing a peaceful society committed to the preservation of human dignity... conducting actions for peace...in order to build a peaceful and better world (International Olympic Committee, 2001). However, a pacifist reflection of the Olympic program has not been enough for its actual effectiveness, and based on its historical background during the first stage, modern olympism has aspired as an initial step in its commitment towards peace to achieve at least a hiatus of widespread calm throughout the Games, as had happened in the remote antecedent of ekekheiria. The pacifist idea of olympism through all kinds of sports policies and administrative structures of the world becomes progressively more evident every day.

The widespread practice of sports and the call to a competition within a plane of equal rights has been a modern conquest achieved after many vicissitudes in history. The Greek world with its unique social structure did not allow the use of gymnastic practices to large numbers of people who lacked full civil rights. Such situation was reflected and made especially significant in the Olympic Games in which prior to their competing throws participants via the Olympic oath attested to their status as "Greeks and free men" (Mousset, 1960:60). Beyond these basic requirements, the increasing specialization in various agonistic contests of these major Panhellenic encounters gradually were attended by citizens in comfortable social circumstances which allowed the time and means for regular daily training.

That is why the conquest of democratic egalitarianism as a right to practice and compete in sport is fundamentally, as noted, a recent accomplishment. Teachers and educators would be those who used gymnastics as a forming element of the individual with the important contributions of Francisco Amorós in Spain, Henrik Ling in Sweden and Frederick Louis Jahn in Germany, who are conducive towards an international environment as a historical prelude to the cultural revolution of Pierre de Coubertin.

Coubertin was a man of cultured and refined spirit belonging to the social elite of his time. But above all, Pierre de Coubertin is an educator, and thus his vision of sport as a human right and philosophy with which he restores olympism are deeply imbued with an essence of democratic egalitarianism.

In 1920 Coubertin stated that a sporting record is a limit a man reaches with the collaboration of the strength nature has endowed him and he, himself, with the energy of his character has developed. His social status, family name or fortune inherited from his parents do not influence this at all. The fact that he is a Prince or craftsman does not make him go a foot longer in the long jump or increase fifty centimetres the length of the path, or what a runner, a swimmer or a rower can achieve in a given time (Coubertin, 1973:143).

The aristocratic-democratic nature of olympism was expressed by Pierre de Coubertin in the radio message sent from Berlin on 4th August, 1935. The second feature of the olympism "is the fact that it is an aristocracy, an elite, but of course, a totally egalitarian aristocracy of origin, since it is determined only by the superiority of the individual body and its muscular possibilities multiplied up to some extent by his desire to train" (Coubertin, 1973:213). Hence, a healthy democracy and an intelligent and peaceful internationalism will enter the new stadium and keep the cult of honor and selflessness that will allow athletics to make a work of moral improvement and social harmony (Coubertin, 1973:23).

Studying the structure of sports associations and how its members are integrated in them, he sees an example of democracy in the associative, voluntary and egalitarian character of these stating in 1919: "a sports club is, in some way, the cell of democracy because only there the inequality that exists from nature while the artificial inequality introduced by men is rejected" (Coubertin, 1973:122).

It is noteworthy that within egalitarian humanism the "Coubertinian" conception of the right to sport, its sharp and tenacious defense of sport for all, is a novel practice at the

time and against the elitist and aristocratic current of thought Anglo patrons proclaimed through amateurism and markedly anti-social.

Coubertin stands up to this problem in 1919: For a long time he used to say, "Renovated athletics in the nineteenth century, has only been the pastime of the young and semi-idle rich" . "Our Committee has struggled more than anyone to make it the pleasure of young people of the petty bourgeoisie and now must be fully accessible to adolescent proletarians". "All sports for all, this is the new formula we must dedicate ourselves to its fulfillment" (Coubertin, 1973:121).

The Olympic Charter includes the Olympic "Coubertinian" principles in its legislation when it points out that "sport is a human right". Everyone should be able to do sports as needed... "It is a function of the International Olympic Committee to carry out the development of sport for all, which is one of the foundations of high-level sport, which in turn contributes to the development of sport for all" (International Olympic Committee, 2003).

The humanitarian nature of Olympic principles is shown by the purpose and objective of these as intended or pursued for the "good of humanity", and this generic and egalitarian benefit that olympism proclaims directly clashes with the antidemocratic and unjust limiting parameters of discrimination. This Olympic movement in its aim for equality has mainly fought for two great groups essentially focusing its political battle against apartheid and in the progressive advancement of women.

The Olympic Charter regulates both cases setting the educational objectives of the sport in the sixth fundamental principle "doing sport without discrimination of any kind" and the mission that the IOC imposes for... "sport promotion of women at all levels and in all structures with a view to the strict application of the principle of gender equality" (International Olympic Committee, 2003).

Throughout the centuries in the course of Olympic history, both approaches represent a radical change in the initial assumptions that conditioned participation in Olympia, where the competitors took an oath as Greeks, and women were excluded from the stadium under draconian death penalty.

The Coubertinian conception on both extremes was different, and so, while categorically establishing the principle of "sport for all" viewing sport as a "heritage of all races" or "property of all alike," it did not fight in the same way or favour the presence of women in stadiums. In 1931 Coubertin's article in Sports Colonization and which appeared unsigned in the Bulletin of International Bureau of Sports Pedagogy laid the unheard-of groundwork for the minds of those times of the introduction of sport and olympism in the great continent of Africa and aimed to organize some African Olympics which he personally designed a special medal (Coubertin, 1986:675,678).

Coubertin's wishes were not met along with the reputation and organisational structure designed by him, but his universalising ideology and anti-racist (sport is the heritage of all races) destroyed the wall of prejudice and contempt toward the Negro race, whose continent of Africa had been divided by the European powers in an arbitrary manner by drawing new borders and territorial divisions disregarding ancient historical boundaries.

African athletes timidly began their Olympic participation taking part in the teams of the colonial powers, but the arbitrary prevailing racism in the African states emerging from former British colonies would find a paradigmatic example of Olympic injustice in South Africa, where the racial segregation imposed caused very serious social tensions. This continual discrimination which resulted in unrest and scandal in the rest of the African states induced severe warnings in the sporting world by the International Olympic Committee, declaring that the arbitrary apartheid imposed broke the Olympic Charter. Given the stance of the leaders of Pretoria, the IOC excluded South Africa from the Olympic Games in Tokyo in the 1964 edition ratifying its decision to expel it from the Amsterdam Olympic Session in 1970 (Durántez, 1998).

The Apartheid and Olympism Commission created by the IOC for the study and solution of the South African problem and composed of African leaders followed closely the symptoms of positive sensitivity of the Pretorian government which was internationally criticised for its proceedings.

In 1984 the South African president, Frederick de Klerk, initiated the change of abolishing apartheid. Given this fact, the Commission on Apartheid and Olympism the IOC recommended the provisional recognition of the South African National Olympic Committee adopted at the 97th IOC Session in Birmingham, and the decision to admit and invite South Africa to take part in the Olympic Games of Barcelona in 1992. A long period of struggle had ended with justice with the International Olympic Committee's resolution, which made diligent and effective progress ahead of all other international agencies.

On the issue of women's participation in the Games the Olympic reaction was slower and delayed. Coubertin wanted the modern Olympic Games to allow participation as far as possible in the spiritual essence of cultural and ideological impetus that triggered the Games at Olympia in classical times. He saw in the modern festival, which had internationalized, a repetition of the ancient agon, thus, he did not favour women's participation, not only due to their absolute exclusion in Greek olympism, but also to the prevailing view in the media at the time. They considered doing sport as harmful for maternity (the only function that was attributed to women at the time).

In another sense, the emerging women's sport, free of technicalities and, thus, flamboyance was a poor partner for the competitive and sumptuous spectacle the Olympics. References to this conduct are constants in the work of Coubertin, adopting a more permissive stance on this issue at the end of his life. The Olympic Games must be reserved for men ... Would sports done by women be a worthy show for the crowds that gather in the Olympic Games? ... Our concept of the Olympic Games deals with the fulfillment of its formula: The solemn and periodic exaltation of male athletics with internationalization as a base, loyalty as a means, art as a frame and female applause as a reward... (Coubertin, 1912:109-111).

The increasing female participation in the Olympics as of Paris 1900 is not viewed with pleasure by Coubertin who wrote in 1928: Regarding women's participation in the Games, I am against it. Against my will, they have been admitted to a number of trials each day more (Coubertin, 1988) and he stated six years later: I still think that women's athletics is detrimental and that this athletics should be excluded from the Olympic program (Coubertin, 1973:211). Finally, given real evidence, his view becomes tolerant



and ironic. Also, women could participate as he said in 1935 if it is deemed necessary. Personally, I do not approve of the participation of women in public competitions, which does not mean they should refrain from doing many sports provided they are not deemed as a show. Their role in the Olympics should be essentially as in the old tournaments to crown the victors.

Coubertin's misgivings about female participation in the Games were proven unfounded by the reality of the competitions already in his own time, and since then such incidence has been steadily and progressively increasing. But women have not only been integrated into the phenomenon as a competitor in Olympic sport, but also, following the tolerant open-minded trend, they have entered the highest Olympic leadership. Pioneering in this achievement was the Venezuelan, Flor Isava Fonseca, which together with the Swede, Pirjo Haggman, were appointed members of the International Olympic Committee in 1981.

The IOC following the mandates of the Olympic Charter ensures the progressive incorporation of women into the Olympic and sports structures and with this aim it organizes informative seminars for training women leaders, trainers or technical coaches. At the same time a Working Group operates with similar purposes comprising members of the IOC, NOC and FI as well as athletes and scholars, and finally it schedules a World Conference every four years to review and assess progress in this field ([Comité International Olympique, 2001:44](#)).

The cultural dimension of olympism has been shown since the Games of Olympia, where apart from the official competition involving muscular struggle, parallelly an artistic cultural confrontation developed. The quadrennial event at Olympia had a priority interest over all the other religious holidays or sports events and due to the social reputation acquired with Olympian success, the dates of the Games were moments of meetings among the most important thinkers, sculptors, poets, painters and artists in general. Plato, Thales of Miletus, Herodotus, Thucydides, Pindar and Simonides, Pythagoras and Anaxagoras, among others, came to Olympia to celebrate the feast of Zeus taking advantage of their stay to disseminate their ideas, express their political or philosophical ideas or finding clients or patrons that supported or paid their creations ([Durántez, 1975:320](#)).

Coubertin's project in the modern restoration of the Olympics regarded the Games as a driver of art and culture. In the days of glory of Olympia, arts and letters harmoniously combined with sport, assured the greatness of the Olympics ... since sports should be conceived as a producer of art and an occasion of art. It produces beauty, it creates the athlete who is a living sculpture. But it is also the occasion of beauty with the buildings which were inaugurated for them and the shows and parties it generates ... because the Olympics only mission is not only the exaltation of muscle strength, but on the contrary they must also be intellectual and artistic ([Durántez, 2001a:45](#)).

Obsessed to create a formal and stable relation between the arts and sports during the Olympic Games, Coubertin convened a Consultative Conference of the Arts, Letters and Sport in Paris on May 24th, 1906 where outstanding writers and artists, sixty in all, were invited to participate and study how the arts and letters could be part of the modern Olympic celebrations and in general be associated with doing sports to benefit from them and ennobling them ([Coubertin, 1922](#)).

The Conference achieved its tasks by proposing to the International Olympic Committee the creation of five contests on architecture, music, sculpture, painting and literature to promote new works directly inspired by the idea of sport every four years (Coubertin, 1959:84).

The Olympic Charter echoes the cultural dimension of olympism at a generic level and at the level of a qualifying element of its nature as well as a specific objective at a precise moment in defined places. In the first aspect, considering that with this dual cultural and educational component both united to sports they conjugate with their indissoluble partnership social penetration and permeability characterizing olympism as a humanly inclusive and just element demolishing outdated or circumstantial barriers, if not arbitrary, tyrannical or despotic (Coubertin, 1973:34).

The support that the Olympic Charter gives both the International Olympic Academy and other institutions whose objective is Olympic education is an eloquent normative recognition of such essential ethical principles. In another sense, the commitment of special cultural momentum during the Olympics that the organizing committees of the Olympic Games are to plan and organize is defined and established in rule 44 and in its text of application regarding the cultural program to be organized in every edition of the Games serves to promote harmonious relations, mutual understanding and friendship among the participants and others attending the Olympic Games. All of this can be summarized in Mandell's quote where he stated "that the Olympics were going to play an increasingly important role as a peaceful forum where architectural originality, organizational virtuosity, peaceful cohabitation of peoples and a continual betterment of humankind will become apparent and with this the living proof of one of the "leitmotiv" of our epoch, the idea of progress (Mandell, 1986:960).

Finally, olympism respects and protects with special care ecology, which is nowadays, the environment, the third basic dimension of its objectives in addition to sport and culture. Earth is the generic concept of mother or creative power, generous in the sustenance of human beings in life and welcoming as the eternal refuge after the passage of death. It has been deified since ancient times in all cultures, but in the twenty-first century man recklessly is generating a progressive annihilation and destruction of what once was looked after and preserved, to the point of deforestation and a constant reckless polluting of the air, contaminating water, rivers, lakes and seas, as well as the extermination of groups of animals, either by the unnecessary invasion of reserves in their habitats or indiscriminate hunting and trade of certain species.

In this confusion, the Olympic movement has raised the banner of ecology being aware that if olympism seeks through its ethical principles to achieve a balanced and perfect being, the highest aspiration of that balance cannot be achieved if the individual's environmental surroundings is inhuman, noisy, grating, aggressive, and polluted.

The Olympic Charter states as the fourteenth function of the International Olympic Committee to assure that the Olympic Games are held in conditions which show a responsible attitude towards environmental problems ... stimulating the Olympic Movement to worry about these problems and to take into account this concern in all its activities, increasing awareness of the importance of sustainable development among all who are connected with the Olympic Movement.

In line with these principles, after the meeting in Lausanne in 1995 and Kuwait in 1997, the IOC held in Rio de Janeiro the IOC World Conference on Sport and Environment in 1999, in which Agenda 21 of the Olympic Movement was adopted, inspired by Agenda 21 of the United Nations Conference. In them, given the universality of sport, it recognises that the Olympic Movement will play a decisive role in making sustainable development-favoring measures where Agenda 21 must be applied as a matter of form respecting the different social, economic, geographical, climatic, cultural and religious means to mobilize the whole body of members of the Olympic Movement in the resolute defense of ecological values.

In conclusion, and therefore, the Olympic Movement can be valued as a humanizing culture of peace.

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