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Leading sport organizations join UN in responding to Indian Ocean tsunami

United Nations Office at Geneva, Thursday, 14 April 2005: Leaders of more than a dozen international sport organizations announced plans to join with the United Nations to assist recovery efforts underway in countries hit by the devastating Indian Ocean tsunami last December following a Roundtable in Geneva organized by *L'Equipe*, the French sports daily, and the Office of the Special Adviser to the United Nations Secretary-General on Sport for Development and Peace.

"This is a time for sport to play its role to help in rebuilding strong communities, overcoming the trauma and making sure that people have access to recreation and sports facilities necessary for their recovery and future development," said Adolf Ogi, Special Adviser to the UN Secretary-General on Sport for Development and Peace. He thanked the sport leaders for participating in the discussion on "what has been done so far and how we can work in closer cooperation in the future." The participants also exchanged views on strengthening their preparedness in response to future emergencies as well as using sport as a tool for development and peace.

The Roundtable was organized in the framework of the International Year of Sport and Physical Education (IYSPE 2005). Mr. Ogi and Claude Droussent, Editorial Director of *L'Équipe*, hosted the Roundtable, and Jacques Rogge, President, International Olympic Committee, was among the sport leaders participating.

The tsunami caused tremendous loss of life and destruction of property, schools, and sports facilities throughout the region. Hundreds of thousands of survivors are making enormous efforts to recover their lives and livelihoods and are still in dire need of the world's solidarity.

Several sports organizations have already pitched in. Participating in the Roundtable was Jean-Pierre Seppey, Director-General of the International Volleyball Federation, which has announced a \$3 million contribution to the United Nations for recovery activities. The International Rugby Board used proceeds from a south versus north rugby match to grant a \$3.35 million cheque to the United Nations World Food Programme for tsunami relief.

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Visit the IYSPE web site at www.un.org/sport2005 and for further information please contact:

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