

7 May 2012

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser,
President of the 66th Session of the General Assembly,
at the Board Meeting of the International Olympic Truce Foundation**

Your Excellency, Dr Jacques Rogge, President of the International Olympic Committee, IOC,
Under-Secretary-General Wilfried Lemke, Special Adviser of the UN Secretary-General on Sports for
Peace and Development,
Your Excellency, Sheikh Saoud Bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani, Secretary General of the Qatar Olympic
Committee,
Distinguished Members of the Board of the International Olympic Truce Federation,
Mr. Dmitry Chernyshenko, President of the Organising Committee of the Sochi Winter Games,
Mr. Bill Morris, representing the Organising Committee of the London Summer Games,
Sir Philip Craven, President of the International Paralympic Committee,
Distinguished Presidents of Organizing Committees,
Distinguished Members of the IOC,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am truly honoured to address you here today as President of the UN General Assembly and as a
Board Member of the International Olympic Truce Foundation, IOTF.

I wish to thank Dr. Jacques ROGGE and his team here at the IOTF, and also staff at the Centre, for the
tremendous work they continue to do in using Sport to serve humankind.

I wish, specially, to commend and congratulate Dr. Rogge for the extraordinary work he has been
doing, especially over the past few years, to bring the IOC and the United Nations closer together.

Just last September, in the first few days of my Presidency, Dr Rogge was in New York to address us in
the UN General Assembly during the High-Level Meeting on the Prevention and Control of Non-
Communicable Diseases. He pledged his commitment and that of the IOC in strengthening the
excellent partnership that continues to grow between our two Organisations.

Thank you, Dr. Rogge.

The United Nations and the International Olympic Movement share similar ideals. Equality, fairness
and respect among nations and peoples, are some of these values that guide the work that we try to
achieve peace, security and development around the world – whether through sports and games or
through diplomacy and politics.

In fact, since 1993, and every two years, the General Assembly has consistently expressed its solid support for the IOC by unanimously adopting a resolution entitled, “Building a peaceful and better world through Sport and the Olympic ideal”. This Resolution is one of the most popular in the United Nations and the latest one, for the upcoming London Games, was adopted last October. It attracted the historic endorsement or co-sponsorship of ALL the Member States of the UN. This is unique !

By this Resolution, the General Assembly is urging all Member States, especially nations at war or in conflict, to observe the Olympic Truce by stopping war and conflict during the period of the Games.

Just imagine the guns of war going silent in the conflict-affected parts of our world. Consider a beautiful situation where all the parties in a conflict decide to observe the Olympic Truce and reach across borders or dividing lines with handshakes of peace and harmony. Or, just imagine a situation where Palestinians and Israelis could build on the principles of the Olympic Truce and move to the two-state solution, with two nations living side by side in peace.

This may look distant and impossible sometimes, but we must continue to promote the benefits of the Olympic Truce and the ideals of the Olympic Movement.

In fact, it is also a true reflection of the spirit of the Olympic Truce that, last year, I chose Mediation and the peaceful settlement of disputes as one of the main pillars of this Session of the UN General Assembly. During my presidency we have been highlighting and promoting the benefits of Mediation as the most cost-effective way of addressing disputes. We will continue to work together with the IOTF and the IOC to promote mediation among the nations of the world.

I wish, at this point, to commend the IOC for all the creative and innovative schemes and partnerships it continues to pursue with various parts of the UN family, to make our world a more peaceful and prosperous place. There is probably no single UN agency, fund or programme that is not working directly with the IOC. In particular, I wish to cite the initiatives and efforts of the IOC in helping us achieve the Millennium Development Goals – the MDGs.

In particular, I wish to urge greater support for Under-Secretary-General Lemke and the UN’s Office on Sport for Development and Peace.

There is no question that Sport offers us valuable avenues for the promotion of development and peace around the world.

Just as the Olympic arena provides a fair, equal, and dignified environment for people of all races and nations to compete in sport, so too does the UN General Assembly, which remains the world’s foremost representative, equal and deliberative policy-making body. In the General Assembly every country – no matter how large or small, no matter how rich or poor – can make their voices heard on a one country one vote basis.

And so the ideals of the Olympic movement and principles of the UN Charter continue to inspire us greatly to do more together for the greater good of humankind.

Personally, as a President of the General Assembly who is a citizen of Qatar, I feel proud about my country's deep commitment to Sport, nationally and internationally.

In recent years, Qatar has invested heavily in Sport – including, in community and school sport, developing top athletes and in hosting major events. This investment is a strategic decision of the Government and a key part of Qatar's National Vision. It is a vision that goes beyond Qatar. That's why the Qatar Olympic Committee is working closely with the UN Office on Drugs and Crime, UNODC. Through this partnership the Global Sports Fund was established in 2005 to support worldwide efforts to use Sport in shielding young people from drug abuse and crime.

The Fund has been holding regular camps for young people in the Middle East, Africa, Asia, Latin America, the Caribbean and Central Europe, with the objective of inspiring young people and making a positive impact in their lives.

We are inspired by the record number of Olympic activities initiated by the London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games and the UK Government, at national and international levels. The greater involvement of the youth, especially in the design of the Truce Wall is highly commendable.

In this connection, on my part as President of the GA, I will, in early July, make the Solemn Appeal to all Member States to observe the Olympic Truce during the London (Olympic) Games. I will be urging the Member States to support initiatives that would promote development, peace and prosperity throughout the world.

We are encouraged by the thriving partnership between the United Nations and the IOC.

Already, the International Forum on Sport for Peace and Development is producing good results for the IOC and the UN. As a result of this Forum's work UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon embarked on a joint high-level visit with IOC President Jacques Rogge in February this year to Zambia.

We will continue to build on the common ideals and values that we share for a better world – a world that is peaceful and prosperous.

I urge Member States to do more in integrating Sport and the IOC's work into their national programmes and policies.

I wish you productive deliberations here today.

I extend my best wishes for the success of the upcoming London Olympic Games.

I thank you.