

# Message

sent by Baroness de Coubertin  
at the Opening Ceremony of the 49th Session of Athens  
and on the occasion of the 60th Anniversary  
of the Renovation of the Olympic Games

*With profound regret that I am unable to take part in the Olympic Jubilee at Athens, I have asked Mr. Massard to read this message, addressed to officials of Greece and the International Olympic Committee.*

*Permit me to recall a few remembrances of the 1894 Olympics, being today the only member of the Olympic family present at the birth of modern Olympism, assisting at its baptism at the Sorbonne congress in Paris and attending the first Games. Thanks to Prince Constantine, who succeeded in forming the organising committee, the Games were prepared in less than two years despite general skepticism. The generosity of Mr. Averoff made possible the rapid reconstruction of the old stadium. The young International Olympic Committee, composed of seven eminent members, assembled to hold its first meeting under the presidency of the writer and patriot Bikelas.*

*Let us honor the memory of those who contributed to re-establishing this most grandiose manifestation of the highest of civilizations. One should not forget the humble representative of the Greek people who aroused the patriotic enthusiasm of the public with a new victory of Marathon. It was an unforgettable moment when the shepherd Luis was carried in triumph across the stadium by prince Nicholas and prince George of Greece to the throne of King George in unrestrained applause.*

*In 1938, Prince Paul, faithful to the traditions of his country and his dynasty, presided at the memorial Olympic ceremony, and himself placed in the base of the commemorative monument the urn containing the heart of the man who had fought so forcefully for the revival of the Games and the high Olympic ideal.*

*Homage to King Paul!*

*Honor to the Greek Nation !*

Signed : BARONESS PIERRE DE COUBERTIN.