

Message of Welcome by Mr. Avery BRUNDAGE

President of the International Olympic Committee

To those who are about to take part in the IXth Session of the International Olympic Academy, I extend the greetings of the International Olympic Committee. Since the VIIIth Session of last year, the XIXth Olympiad of the modern era was inaugurated in a burst of glory in the form of the grand spectacle of the Games which were held in October last in Mexico. As this world festival of youth was transmitted everywhere by satellite, it held the attention of millions of spectators for two weeks.

For a fortnight, the world was able to forget stories of crime and corruption, of disorder and war which fill the daily newspaper columns. What other venture could provoke such intense and general interest?

You will have the privilege, during this Session, of living very near the centre where this noble idea was conceived. You will have the opportunity of learning something about the "religion of sport", as Baron de COUBERTIN called it, and of discovering that the Olympic Games are not simply another athletic championship, a new chance to win medals and break records. The Games attract the attention of millions of people because they are a non-commercial enterprise, organized by amateurs, for amateurs, and all the competitors are received on a basis of equality, regardless of race, religion, political affiliation or economic state.

I wish you all a pleasant stay in the place where the Olympic Movement was born.