



## **THE CHOICE OF UNITING**

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### **SPEECH OF MR. JEAN-PASCAL DELAMURAZ FEDERAL COUNCILLOR**

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**T**he poignant, glorious or humble images we have all brought back from Los Angeles remain engraved in us as many facets of an immense epic. An immense epic and yet, an epic of human proportions. An epic, the sheer size of which, far from crushing the actor, extols him in its full moral, intellectual and physical values. An epic transcended by the athlete, faithful to the sacred heritage from Olympia.

That this event has been possible once again is a victory for sport and, much more, a victory for peace. You are its architects, Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen, members of the IOC ; your tenacity, your ardour, your faith have won. It is therefore with feelings of high esteem and profound gratitude that I have the honour to greet you on Swiss soil, on behalf of the Swiss Federal Council.

The fact that this 89th Session is being held in Lausanne, I know, is not by chance. It comes from the choice of uniting the Olympic Movement with our country ever more deeply. The Swiss Government has responded to this enlightened choice by

granting the IOC, a non-governmental organisation, a status in conformity with its world dimension as well as with its human significance and its political resonance. The President of the Swiss Olympic Committee has just stated : the Olympiad which has now begun represents several concrete signs anchoring Olympism in our country. We are delighted and sincerely hope that, through your status, through the fortunate understanding established with the political authorities - these of the City of Lausanne and of the State of Vaud particularly - through the interest and the warmth of the people, you may find in Switzerland the right conditions for the accomplishment of your mission. For your mission, and I stress this, is important for the world ; you constitute a significant connective force, in the same sense that was meant by the Count Henri de Baillet-Latour, third IOC President :

"We are rightly proud to remain a genuine link between peoples and to be able to work, more efficiently than any other organisation towards understanding between nations".

In order to realise this potential for union fully, you have to resolve problems relating to the internal cohesion of the Olympic Movement. You have divergent tendencies to bring together. You have to regroup.

This process reminds me of the process followed by the Swiss for six centuries. This particular process is of a different scale but responds to the same motivation : to unite. To unite various elements, even heterogeneous, to trace convergences. to consolidate the whole without damaging vital particularities. The history of the construction of Switzerland reveals the power of antagonism and the depth of internal torments which have arisen many times. But it also reveals the permanent will that has finally dominated contradiction - for there existed a common aim that was stronger, and that aim was freedom.

I wish the 89th IOC Session, in the context of the generosity of its inspiration, to consolidate the work, to maintain the marathon of the rhythm of Olympic construction and to bring to the world the hope of the olive branch from which the crown of the ancient victors was woven. "

The title and the subtitles are from the editor.