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## IOC PRESIDENT :

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It is very kind of all of you to share this special moment with my colleagues of the Olympic Movement, my wife and myself. When I was advised by the Rector that the University of Calgary had selected me for such an outstanding honour, I was first of all very touched, but also surprised. I did not consider that my personal achievements justified this award. And then I realised that it was not in fact Juan Antonio Samaranch who had been selected, but myself as President of the International Olympic Committee. It was therefore the Olympic Movement as a whole which had graduated and this honour has been highly prized by those of us who share its ideal.

Not so long ago, it was difficult to conceive that sport and high level education could go together. However, educational institutions and the Olympic Movement have had a very successful relationship throughout the history of the Modern Games. Most of you probably know that it was at the Sorbonne University in Paris that the International Olympic Committee was created on the 23rd of June 1894.

In examining the history of the beginning of the modern Olympic Movement, one would be astonished to discover the many links established between the Renovator of the Games, Pierre de Coubertin, and the highest universities throughout the world. This is not so surprising when we know that Pierre de Coubertin's primary motivation in re-establishing the Games was to use them for the generalisation of sport and physical exercise as an integral part of any education. Education in fact was Coubertin's main objective, and his only task after he left the presidency of the IOC in 1924.

I can therefore say for sure how happy and interested he would have been to visit the Faculty of Physical Education of the University of Calgary, which is so closely linked with the welcoming, and planning of the XVth Olympic Winter Games. The first ever National Olympic Academy to be held in Canada was hosted last year by this Faculty and my wife and I were delighted to attend its inaugural session. I must say that it is also of great satisfaction to the Olympic Movement to see that the Winter Olympic Games in Calgary and this University are

so closely associated and will mutually benefit from this collaboration.

Material advantages will come with the construction of new dormitories, new premises, the renovation of a large part of the existing buildings, the construction of a new sports complex with the first covered oval ice rink for speed skating in the world. Together with research and sports medicine programmes.

More important : there will be many opportunities for the students to participate in this "once in a lifetime" Olympic experience. Also when studying the Olympic Movement, they may even learn something new about politics and economics. I know that by tradition, volunteering is very popular in Calgary. I am convinced that after the huge success of the volunteer programmes in Los Angeles and Sarajevo, this trend will be confirmed. Participation in the Olympic organisation is an exceptional experience.

Another aspect of the Olympic Movement is its focus on youth. The Olympic principles include the pursuit of excellence, friendship, mutual respect, fair-play, dignity and education. The athletes who take part in the Games are much more than proud members of their nations. They are ambassadors of the human spirit and as such, vested with the integrity, purity and courage that must be our goals. They are an inspiration for all of us. In our present-day world, we need the Olympic Games and what they represent, more than ever before. The spirit of the Olympic athletes must be an example for mankind.

It is therefore essential that the Olympic Movement and indeed the IOC itself, do not remain static, but constantly evolve. What I find of considerable interest is the fact that the principles and the vision of a revitalised Olympic Movement, are unfolding and developing. After several decades during which we concentrated upon the firm establishment of the Games themselves, we have now been able to extend our field of activities to give a better and more complete response to our aims. We, at the International Olympic Committee are attempting to develop our involvement and interest as well as those of the National Olympic Committees in various specific domains.

This is the reason why, for example, we are now engaged in the re-structuring of the Olympic

Museum in order to establish a world center of Olympic Studies. We have at the same time encouraged all the NOCs to create national sports museums in their own countries. An international art competition for children was recently initiated to associate Art and Sport more closely. I would also mention here our action for handicapped people, since you were able to witness this for the first time at the Olympic Games in Sarajevo and Los Angeles.

With the organisation around the world of National Olympic Academies, the patronage given by the IOC to many mass sports events in various countries, the creation for the first time of an athletes commission within the IOC and the encouragement we gave to NOCs and IFs to do the same, you can see that the Olympic Movement has truly become one of the greatest social forces in our present world. As such, it draws much attention. One of the most serious issues that has faced our Movement during the last ten years has been the pressure brought to bear around the world by governments who wish to intervene for political purposes. The Games have won such a high reputation world wide, that they have become one of the most important political targets.

When I was elected President of the IOC in July 1980 in Moscow, I promised to visit all the recognised National Olympic Committees around the world. I have now been to 132 out of the 160 NOCs, and at each of them, I speak the same language. I say : The Olympic Games must be understood by governments and politicians alike to be a great celebration of youth and sport, without any political, religious or racial discrimination. They must be the finest opportunity to test oneself in an atmosphere of friendship and fair-play. It is therefore our responsibility to make every effort to convince world leaders that to use sport for political goals only serves to create new sources of conflict.

I have learned at least one thing in my life – and that is that only through human contact can differences be overcome, dialogue opened, and solutions found to problems. Perhaps that is what the world today lacks most – human contact. This is why I travel so much to other countries to meet both governmental officials and sports leaders. Each National Olympic Committee has its own responsibility and should endeavour to maintain the closest and best possible relationship and collaboration with its government, as sport nowadays cannot be organised on a sound basis without the help and comprehension of the latter.

But I claim that governments must also respect our autonomy and independence.

In fact, it is to our advantage that we are acknowledged by the majority of people as a non-political, independent voluntary body that has world-wide membership and clear, important principles. All we require is that our rules, traditions and way of life be accepted by all those in positions of responsibility.

You can be sure that the Olympic Movement does not belong to any government ; it is not even the property of the International Olympic Committee. Today, it belongs to humanity.

I am convinced that the excellent results you obtained in Los Angeles and Sarajevo will greatly contribute to the involvement of all Canadians in the preparation of the Olympic Winter Games in Calgary. We highly value the progress of the Organising Committee, together with the full support of the three levels of government the whole population of this area, and the strong participation of this University. The accomplishments to date can receive our admiration.

And finally, you Calgarians are a warm and generous people. You have every right to be proud of your reputation for hospitality, and very soon, the whole world will be able to appreciate it. As for myself, I would like to reiterate how happy I am to have been awarded this Honorary Degree by such a famous university, an honour which I receive on behalf of the whole Olympic Movement. During the course of the last ninety years, we have shown the world that a private and benevolent organisation can develop, on a world-wide basis, human ideals such as generosity, friendship, comprehension and understanding, and resist two world wars and many more crises which threaten our activities.

The awarding of this Honorary Degree is the recognition of our contribution to the betterment of mankind, to international understanding and world peace. Therefore, I can say that each and every member of our Olympic family, to which you also belong, has been honoured.

You can rest assured that all members of the Olympic Movement are grateful to you and very much look forward to being here in three years time for the XVth Olympic Winter Games in Calgary, 1988.

I thank you very much for your kindness, and for this wonderful evening.

*J. A. S.*