



the unrivalled focal point of world sports. This is due to the goal-oriented and skilful guidance of the IOC under the leadership of President Juan Antonio Samaranch. The professional administration that has been built up in Lausanne will enrich world sports up to and

far into the next century.

The National Olympic Committees all have the potential to grow even stronger. In a number of European countries, a process is under way in which the Sports Federations and the Olympic Committees are working increasingly closer with one another, and sometimes even merging. It is important and appropriate that, as in Norway, the National Olympic Committees are responsible for all championship sports, not just the Olympics. The time when the National Olympic Committees' only role was to select athletes for the games and supply equipment should thus be a thing of the past. It is also important that the Olympic Committees are selected democratically, without government interference. This, unfortunately, is not the case in all countries.

The Continental Olympic Associations and the ANOC must develop even further. The development in the last few years with respect to expertise and political influence has been positive. In Norway, we are of the opinion that an even stronger organizational link between the ANOC and the IOC would benefit the Olympic Movement.

Only a few days remain before the XVII Olympic Winter Games start. In the Lillehammer Olympic Organizing Committee, we have strived to put the athletes in focus in all our work. We hope and believe that the conditions for the athletes will be first

class. Sports are an important element of Norwegian culture. In Lillehammer, the athletes of all nations will be met with great enthusiasm. Excellent athletic performances will be recognized regardless of nationality. The Norwegian public will meet the world with national pride, not chauvinism.

When a country is awarded the Olympic Games, the situation for that country's sports changes dramatically. New opportunities present themselves and offer greater economic opportunities for investing in top athletics. The Olympic Winter Sports Federations obviously profited the most in our case, but also the Summer Sports Federations have received increased funding.

Doping has long been an ulcer within the international sports community. It is naive to think that this problem has been cured. But through common effort, the IOC, the International Sports Federations and the National Athletic Organizations, can take giant steps towards ridding sports of this sickness. Blood tests and random testing outside of competitions is necessary for all sports and in all countries if we are to achieve progress in this work.

Many say that the commercialization of the Olympic Movement and sports is an evil. It is important to face the fact that today, we depend on a close cooperation between the sports organizations and the business community. At the same time, it is of utmost importance that the sports organizations have full control over and steer this development. The only alternative to privately financed sports are government financed sports. In a number of countries, this would lead to government-controlled sports, something that is not desirable.

The Lillehammer Games will produce gold, silver and bronze medal winners. But it is not so that all the others will be losers. In modern times, the reality is that there are many more winners than losers. As

#### **SPEECH OF MR ARNE MYHRVOLD PRESIDENT OF THE NORWEGIAN OLYMPIC COMMITTEE**

We are gathering in Lillehammer for the first Games in the new Olympic Winter Games' four-year cycle.

The decision to organize the Winter and the Summer Games two years apart is now a reality. At the same time, we are celebrating the IOC's 100th anniversary. The Olympic Congress in Paris later this year will, thus, in many ways, be a milestone in the Olympic Movement's hundred year history.

As we enter this important Olympic year, we may conclude that the Olympic Movement stands stronger than ever. As President Juan Antonio Samaranch often points out, the strength in the trinity of the International Olympic Committee, the International Sports Federations and the National Olympic Committees are our fundamental foundation.

I am happy to confirm that all three are growing stronger. The International Olympic Committee is today

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the host country, we must do our best to see to it that every single athlete, team official and guest will have a memorable stay in Lillehammer.

And, we hope that your stay here in Lillehammer will exceed the expectations we know you as IOC members have of us as the Olympic organizer. In the Session on which you are about to embark, you will discuss many important issues and make many important decisions affecting the future of sports.

We wish you good luck on this important work and, again, welcome to Lillehammer and Norway!