



Olympic Truce

Message from the United Nations Secretary General, Kofi A. Annan

“The Olympic ideals closely resemble those of the United Nations in seeking peace and understanding among nations and peoples. The flying of the United Nations flag at all Olympic events is a visible reminder of the purpose shared between the UN and the International Olympic Committee. It therefore gives me great pleasure to greet the participants in the XVIII Olympic Winter Games in Nagano, Japan, and to congratulate the International Olympic Committee under the dedicated leadership of its

“I call upon all nations to observe the Olympic Truce. I am convinced that in this observance, and by working with the International Olympic Committee to promote the Olympic ideal, we will draw the world’s attention to what humanity can achieve in the name of international understanding.”

Solemn appeal by the president of the United Nations General Assembly, Henedly Udovenko:

“On November 25, 1997, the General Assembly adopted resolution 52/21, in which it urged the Member States to

and security. As the most visible illustration of this connection in goals and aspirations between the Olympic Movement and the United Nations, the International Olympic Committee decided, starting from this year, to fly the United Nations flag at all competition sites of the Olympic Games. The Olympic Winter Games in Nagano will be the first to commence this tradition.

“The forthcoming Nagano Games, which will be the last Olympic Winter Games of his century, should become a symbolic link to the next millennium, an important relay point in humanity’s quest for a world free of hatred and war, a world where ideals of peace, goodwill and mutual respect form the basis of relations among countries.

“That goal may still remain elusive, but the Olympic Truce can help us to bring about even a brief respite from conflict and strife it will send a powerful message of hope in the international community. With the United Nations flag flying in Nagano at the XVIII Olympic Winter Games, adherence to the Truce will gain even greater symbolism.

“I therefore solemnly appeal to all States to demonstrate their commitment to the spirit of fraternity and understanding among peoples by observing the Olympic Truce during the Nagano Games, from 7 to 22 February, 1998.

“I urge all those who are now engaged in armed struggles - for whatever reasons and wherever it might be - to suspend hostilities in keeping with observance. I urge everybody, individually and collectively, to take the initiative to abide by the Olympic Truce as a way of promoting goodwill and encouraging the peaceful settlement of conflicts in full conformity with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.”



The flags of the United Nations and of Japan, the Olympic flag and the Nagano Olympic Games flag.

President, Juan Antonio Samaranch. “The Olympic Truce, an ancient tradition calling for all hostilities to cease during Olympic Games, expresses humankind’s perennial aspiration to peace, goodwill and reconciliation. The overwhelming reaffirmation of the Olympic Truce by the 52nd General Assembly of the United Nations recommitted Member States to taking fresh steps toward the promotion of human rights, constructive dialogue and the search for durable and just solutions to contemporary problems. This message was more than a symbol; it expressed the international community’s real desire for a peaceful world united against violence.

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“The idea of the Olympic Truce dates back to an ancient Greek tradition of *ekecheiria*, in keeping with which all hostilities would cease during the Games. “Today, the Olympic Truce has become an expression of mankind’s desire to build a world based on the rules of fair competition, peace, humanity and reconciliation. Moreover, the Olympic Truce epitomizes a bridge from the old and wise tradition to the most compelling purpose of the United Nations - the maintenance of the international peace