

BY JUAN ANTONIO SAMARANCH

Doping destroys health

The Olympic Movement is gratified by the active and constructive participation of government representatives, and especially of ministers, of intergovernmental organizations, and of experts in the field of doping, in the World Conference on Doping in Sport, which took place recently in Lausanne.

The speakers all emphasized the importance of a campaign to promote education and prevention, the application of a single Medical Code, the harmonization of sanctions, collaboration between the Olympic Movement and public authorities, and the need to establish an independent international anti-doping Agency.

A working group representing the Olympic Movement, including the athletes, and the governments and inter-governmental organizations concerned will meet on the initiative of the IOC within three months in order to define the structure, mission and financing of the Agency.

The International Olympic Committee is determined to take up the challenge it has been given to resolve these problems quickly and serenely.

The role of the International Federations and their national federations is predominant, for it is mainly thanks to them that the fight against doping in sport will become permanent and extend throughout the world. The IOC is already striving to accomplish this through its Medical Commission, whose mission is to take measures to prohibit doping, to establish lists of prohibited classes of substances and prohibited methods, to prescribe mandatory medical controls and examinations for competitors, and to provide for sanctions to be applied in the event of a violation of the Medical Code, which must also include provisions relating to the medical care given to athletes.

But in order to achieve this goal of prevention and social education, it is imperative to secure the collaboration of all governmental and non-governmental authorities. It is also necessary to constantly ensure that the considerable interests at stake do not threaten sporting values. The fight is difficult and complex. Its outcome will depend not only on the vigorous measures taken in the case of a violation, but also on the educational campaigns that will be launched at all levels to inform athletes and the public alike about this odious and unhealthy form of cheating.

For the Olympic Movement, the principal objective is to make our contribution in the areas of prevention and education in order to shelter youth from these life-threatening dangers. The use of drugs destroys health and life, which are a human being's most precious possessions.

