

THE VOLUNTEER PROGRAMME ATHENS 2004

A campaign to attract volunteers for the Games of the XXVIII Olympiad in Athens in 2004 was launched on 30 January, during a ceremony with the participation of, among others, Prime Minister Costas Simitis, the president of the Parliament Apostolos Kaklamanis, the leaders of the political parties, Costas Karamanlis, Nikos Konstantopoulos and Stephanos Manos, the representatives of religious congregations, Government Ministers, the Mayor of Athens Dimitris Avramopoulos, as well as numerous representatives from local governments, sports federations and clubs, non-governmental volunteer organizations and Greek medal winners, who will be the 'messengers' of the volunteer movement.

During his speech, Prime Minister Simitis recalled that "We are all brought together here by a very important issue: Volunteerism, essentially meaning participation and contribution by all to the cause of organizing the 2004 Olympic Games. The Olympic Games, as we have learnt from historians, was for Ancient Greece a truly national celebration, one of several noble activities established by Hercules, because through these Games he united the Greeks. [...] We are sure that there will be a warm response to our appeal for 60,000 volunteers. The momentum which will develop, will help to support other changes in social attitudes, changes which we should preserve even after 2004. We do not aim to win the challenge of volunteerism by offering material motivations, thereby distorting the effort we are undertaking to prove the value of social contribution. After all, there have never been any Olympic Games where the development of vol-



unteerism was accompanied by material motives. The motives were primarily moral, educational such as through the learning of foreign languages, specialized training, scholarships and post-graduate education. [...] The Volunteer Programme we will develop in cooperation with the government and ATHOC 2004 has a total budget of 25 billion drachmas. The Programme in effect is related to the Programme for Olympic Education, the Cultural Olympiad and the Olympic Torch Relay, and also embraces the Greeks Abroad. The volunteer, man or woman, participates in the effort through an agreement which is not a professional or commercial one. It is, in effect, the greatest 'unwritten word of honour'. I therefore appeal to all of you, to all Greek men and women, throughout the land and throughout the world, to respond to the invitation. It is worth it for the sake of the Olympic Ideal, for our country, and for all of you". Next to take the floor was the President of the Organizing Committee of the Olympic Games in Athens (ATHOC), Gianna Angelopoulos-Daskalaki, declared that "the production of educational material and the organization of training will begin in April 2001. The campaign to collect applications, in writing or through a special web page on the Internet, will start in the second

half of 2001. Interviews with candidates and allocation of specific job roles will start in the year 2002, and general and specialized training in the facilities and other areas related to the organization of the Games will take place in the year 2003". She continued by saying, "The significance of volunteerism is therefore: without volunteerism the Olympic Games would not be Olympic Games. They would be 'something else'. They would be of far less symbolic significance and of a more outdated ideological scope. They would be a major sporting event just like so many others. But they would not be anything special. But volunteerism does not simply complement but literally constitutes the foundation for the global, ethical dimension of Olympism. These people, the volunteers, offer a few weeks of their lives and thereby prove that it is up to the will of the people to change and enrich their lives. That is the specific message. [...] For us Greeks in particular, Volunteerism has an additional national dimension. The organization of ATHENS 2004 undoubtedly constitutes the biggest peace-oriented challenge our country has ever known. We are therefore called upon to show that Greece never ceased being the ecumenical home of peace, culture, hospitality, reason and creativity. Olympic volunteerism is therefore a chance for all Greeks to contribute to our national progress. All Greeks, in whichever country they live, can and should offer their skills to a lesser or greater extent towards the common goal. We Greeks are capable and worthy of the best. We will all contribute to this magnificent festival of peace and cooperation. And everyone will then be able to say 'I was also there'".

2001

Année Internationale
des Volontaires



In Nagano.



In Lillehammer.



In Sydney.



In Albertville.

In Atlanta.