



Quotations of Juan Antonio Samaranch

1985

Stemming from a long tradition, the Olympic principles and ideals have acquired universal value and importance. As a result, while we should pay attention to the lessons of the past, we must not close the door to the changes required to adapt to modern life and the extremely varied conditions that one finds from one country to another.

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Hundreds of thousands of people wrestle, play, and compete in the four corners of the world, with the sole aim of succeeding one day in participating in the Olympic Games; the Games have become not only the biggest event of all time but also the clearest and most evident demonstration that coexistence, solidarity and also friendship between the peoples of the world are possible.

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There are many different political systems in the world, and each of them gives rise to a different sports structure within the country concerned. Each system is as worthy as the other, but they could not work in another country. Therefore, it is the Olympic Movement, which deals only with the very essence of mankind, whatever their race, religion, belief, sex or social position, that must make the like between them.

1986

If we were unable to forget our differences, to snub our prejudices and our personal preferences, if we looked after our own particular interests instead of those of the general interest, the international sports movement would be a thing of the past.

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Sport should reflect our daily reality and, as such, we should accept its diversity.

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To understand and accept the necessary evolution of Olympism is thus extremely important. We must not blindly submit to self-imposed dogmas, but seek instead to perceive the evolution of the societies in which we live and bring to our Movement the regular adjustments it needs.

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Sport and Olympism have raised stadiums in our world. The sports halls of modern architecture rival in beauty, functionality and popular fervour the other palaces which have so amazed the generations of the second half of this century.

1987

The Olympic Games, created for the Greek world nearly three thousand years ago, were revived to serve as a melting pot for modern man, wherever he may come from, whoever he may be. By strengthening them, we are serving Man and preparing the way for Peace.

1988

This essential attitude that we, leaders of the sports movement, seek when

dealing with potential sponsors: both sides in our "relationship" must naturally be able to find a reward or benefit from their association, but there is a frontier which should not be passed: the control of sport should always remain in the hands of sport itself.

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The social and political phenomenon of Apartheid cannot be reconciled with the Olympic ideal and is a source of concern for the entire world. We must all fight to eradicate it, while listening carefully to the Africans who, once this objective is achieved, will tell us when and how South Africa can be reinstated in the international sports community, from which the International Olympic Committee was the first organization to exclude it.

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We are not idealists lost in our dreams, Through our responsibilities we have our feet firmly on the solid ground of the real world. We are not blind to our weaknesses, our imperfections, nor to the dangers which lie in wait for us.

1989

The Olympic Movement brings a new dimension to sport, a human, spiritual and philosophical dimension, this is "the additional dimension of the soul" that Coubertin spoke of.

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Tourism, like sport, may be a true generator of civilization and culture, bringing people together and enabling them to exchange experiences and new knowledge, opening new horizons, and bringing an irreplaceable breath of fresh air to a human society subject to so many perverse influences.

