



Organisation pour la Paix et le Sport



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Canoeing Builds Bridges between Divided Communities

*The International Canoe Federation has created a partnership with "Peace and Sport"
for peace education in Africa*

Monaco, 5th August 2008 – The International Canoe Federation (ICF) today announced its partnership with the international organisation "Peace and Sport" based in Monaco to implement peace education programmes on the African continent.

Under the terms of the agreement, the ICF will support action implemented by Peace and Sport in several countries in the Great Lakes Region, notably in Burundi and Rwanda where Peace and Sport already has a presence and is working on several projects. These operations aim to reconcile communities that have been divided by conflict and to create favourable conditions for Sustainable Peace.

Given the natural environment of the Great Lakes Region which abounds with lakes and rivers, Canoeing seems a particularly appropriate sport to practice. The geography of these nations means that populations are often separated by water; this physical separation leads to cultural distancing, misunderstandings and intolerance, sometimes even leading to war. By developing the practice of Canoeing the ICF and Peace and Sport hope to encourage dialogue and sharing as the fundamental nature of Canoeing is the image of a boat propelled in a forward direction and serves as a unifying symbol amongst cultures and nations dating back 5000 years in history".

Initial visits to the area allowed representatives to identify the sports disciplines most adapted to the local environment: Flatwater, Slalom and Marathon are easy to practice in a natural environment and Rwanda and Burundi fit this criteria

In Rwanda where isolated populations live on the islands of Lac Kivu, programmes to introduce Canoeing mean that they interact more regularly with urban inhabitants for competitions and for communal training sessions. Once this contact has been established in a structured, good-

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For further information, please contact "Peace and Sport"

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natured framework to encourage communication, different populations will understand each other better and relations between them will be pacified.

Under the terms of the Partnership, the ICF will make sizable contributions of equipment to Peace and Sport. The ICF will also organise training for local instructors who remain on site and ensure long-term supervision of the sport.

Other fruits of the ICF/Peace and Sport partnership will soon be seen in Rwanda; for example the creation of a new National Canoe Federation equipped with 20 boats.

Peace and Sport has coordinated the programmes in close collaboration with governments, actors from the world of sport and local NGOs who will be there to monitor operations and make sure that equipment is properly managed.

In Burundi, the Locally-Based Project will elevate the National Canoe-Kayak Federation to a first-rate actor for society. Peace and Sport will act as a springboard to popularise the sport, to introduce a more ambitious sports calendar, to discover young talent and to find concrete opportunities for commercial development.

Canoeing, a sporting lifestyle with attitude in a natural setting, is able to alter people's lives and make them aware of the environment. The Great Lakes Region is a perfect site for the practice of recreational and professional Canoeing.

According to Simon Toulson, General Secretary of the ICF:

"The partnership with Peace and Sport will allow us to accelerate the growth of our sport in numerous countries, especially on the African continent where we particularly want to get involved. Over and above sports values linked to its practice, canoeing is very educational: it promotes increased understanding of ecosystems and deeper knowledge about environmental protection issues. It's also an important factor in economic development. We are extremely happy to be able to contribute to such an ambitious project for economic and social development that can change the lives of hundreds of young people in vulnerable situations."

Joël Bouzou, President of Peace and Sport, added:

"Each sport, each discipline has its own special characteristics to answer the needs of different communities. This is certainly the case for Canoeing; it's the perfect sport to make use of pedagogic and educational virtues to benefit isolated populations in the Great Lakes Region. Following our recent

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partnership with the International Judo Federation, this agreement with the ICF will allow us to be more targeted, more equipped to provide the right resources for each project that we are operating in this region that has so much suffered and deserves to be supported in its peace-building action."

#####END#####

About the International Canoe Federation:

The International Canoe Federation was formed in 1946 as a common link between Canoeing associations around the world. Around 150 countries are currently associated with this umbrella organisation. The ICF is responsible for the integrity of Canoeing as a sport on an international level. The ICF's role is to establish the rules and regulations of the sport, to schedule events and select officials for events and to promote Canoeing around the world. The ICF doesn't just focus on Canoeing on a professional level but also acts to promote canoeing to a wide audience and ensures that best practices are adhered to..

The ICF launched its development programme in 1988 with the objective of strengthening Canoeing's global sporting success encouraging people around the world to stay healthy and making the sport more accessible to an increased numbers of participants. The development of Canoeing in Africa is a priority of ICF's development programme; therefore one third of its budget is allocated to this continent. 28 African National Federations are currently affiliated to the ICF, which not only supports the federations financially, but also provides them with appropriate tools and skills to allow them to continue their own progress and development.

ICF support includes:

- Equipment donations*
- Provision of experienced coaches*
- Organisation of courses, seminars and training sessions for athletes and coaches*
- Support in organising regional and continental Games and Events*
- Logistical and financial support for World Championships and other events*

About PEACE AND SPORT

"Peace and Sport Organisation pour la Paix et le Sport" is an international organisation based in Monaco, created under the High Patronage of His Serene Highness Prince Albert II.

"Peace and Sport's" objective is to bring the structuring values of sport to the heart of communities and individuals in crisis throughout the world. Undertaking projects in areas suffering the consequences of

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armed conflict, areas of extreme poverty or in lacking social cohesion, "Peace and Sport" makes sport a vehicle for tolerance, harmony, respect, sharing, citizenship and self-achievement, at the service of Sustainable Peace.

Supported by governments, world sport governance bodies, international organisations, private international corporations and international sports champions belonging the World Olympians Association, "Peace and Sport Organisation pour la Paix et le Sport, creates synergies between various actors to successfully carry out two major types of activity:

- 1) Organising an annual International Forum*
- 2) Implementing Locally-Based Projects: concrete projects in areas in crisis throughout the world.*

"Peace and Sport" benefits from the substantial support of its partners in different areas:

- INTERNATIONAL SPORTS FEDERATIONS whose experts are essential for legitimate interventions during Locally-Based Projects*
- Logistical and financial partners such as Onexim (investment fund specialised in nanotechnology and sustainable energy) Aegis Media (marketing, communication and media services group) and Mercure International of Monaco (sports goods distribution group to supermarkets and hypermarkets), all of whom allow "Peace and Sport" to make its projects tangible and bring about sustainable results.*

Peace and Sport" was founded by Joël Bouzou, the current President of the organisation. M Bouzou is an Olympic medal winner, World Champion in Modern Pentathlon and General Secretary of the Union Internationale de Pentathlon Moderne (UIPM). He is also a member of the Executive Committee of the World Olympians Association (WOA) and an advisor to H.S.H. Prince Albert II of Monaco.

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