



Organisation pour la Paix et le Sport

The Peace and Sport Awards reward the best initiatives for reconciliation through sport

Monaco, 4th December 2008 - Emotion and respect were on the menu this evening in Monaco during the first "**Peace and Sport Awards**" ceremony to recompense initiatives in sport that have made a particular contribution to social stability in the world in 2008.

In front of an audience of over 300 personalities from sport, politics, business and civil life assembled for the International Peace and Sport Forum, **H.S.H. Prince Albert II of Monaco and Joel Bouzou, President and Founder of the international organisation** presented awards for four projects and symbolic moments in sport that have successfully created links between divided or opposed communities.

The Peace and Sport Image of the Year Award: Turkey and Armenia

This distinction for the best image of fraternization through sport was awarded for a photograph of the historic handshake between the **President of the Republic of Turkey Abdullah Gül and the President of Armenia, Serge Sarkissian**, during the qualifying match for the Football World Cup between Turkey and Armenia. Thanks to football, this moment marked the end of nearly two decades of diplomatic silence.

H.S.H. Prince Albert II of Monaco presented the award jointly to Armen Grigorian, Armenian Minister of Youth and Sport, and to Mahmut Özgener, President of the Turkish Football Federation, who exchanged long greetings on stage, creating a moment of intense emotion amongst spectators.

Joel Bouzou and David Tomatis, CEO of Sportel, acclaimed the photograph as "*a symbol of hope for two communities whose history has been marked by hostility and pain.*"

In a letter sent to Peace and Sport, the Armenian President Mr Sarkissian proclaimed himself "*deeply moved to hear the Grand Jury's decision to attribute the Peace and Sport Image of the Year Award to his handshake with Turkish President Mr Gül.*" He added that he was convinced that "*Sport is one of the best ways to overcome differences between nations*".

The award for the best peace project from an International Sports Federation: Judo for Peace

This prize was awarded to Marius Vizer, President of the International Judo Federation (IJF) and to Jan Erick Scholtz, President of "Judo for Peace" a commission created by the IJF. It was presented by Joel Bouzou and Christine Dominguez, Director of the General Association of International Sports Federations (GAISF).

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For more information, please contact "Peace and Sport"
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The 'Judo for Peace' initiative teaches the practice and values of judo to disadvantaged young people or those weakened by conflict, poverty and insecurity. Thanks to its highly pedagogic approach, Judo for Peace has already enabled thousands of young people from all over the world to join this discipline, learning about respecting the opponent, discipline and the power of mental strength over physical strength.

Peace and Sport supports one of its projects in Cote d'Ivoire.

Prize for the Sports Event of the Year: Rally Ireland

Rally Ireland in November 2007 enabled a bridge to be built between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. As both regions submitted a joint bid to the International Automobile Federation, the event led to a joint organizing committee being set up, heightened cooperation between the two authorities, uniting hundreds of volunteers and above all, reinforced social cohesion on both sides of the border. For the millions of spectators, Rally Ireland showed an image of a peaceful island after decades of conflict. Political leaders from Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland furthermore heralded the Rally as a major political event.

The prize for the best sports event of the year was given to John Naylor, President of "Motor Sport Ireland" and to Ronnie Trouton, President of the "Association of Northern Ireland Car Clubs".

Prize for the Non Governmental Organisation of the Year: Serge Betsen's 'Les Enfants de Biemassy'

In a video message, the exceptional sportsman Serge Betsen thanked Peace and Sport for the prize and then went on to explain the origin of this adventure. Conceived at the outset as a project to popularize rugby amongst disadvantaged youth in Cameroon, "Les Enfants de Biemassy" uses this sport as a vector for social integration, personal fulfilment and access to education and training for thousands of children in poor districts in Yaoundé. Although modest, the NGO has already brought structure and stability to hundreds of young people, using Serge Betsen's celebrity. This approach of using famous sports personalities to popularise sport is valued by Peace and Sport in its own field operations.

Many athletes were present during the Gala Evening including Olympic legends **Sergey Bubka** and **Dick Fosbury**, the famous 800-metre runner, **Wilson Kipketer** (World Champion in 1995, 1997, 1999; world record holder in 1997 and 2000) and cyclist **Bradley McGee** (Olympic Champion, World Champion, world recordholder, winner of 17 stages in the Tour de France and Tour of Italy)

Prize-winners of the 'Peace and Sport Awards 2008' were chosen by a commission of Peace and Sport members. A jury composed of well-known personalities will choose winners for the 2009 Awards.

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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 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, Peace and 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 has interventions in Cote d’Ivoire, Burundi, in the Great Lakes Region in Africa, in Timor Leste and is planning interventions in Israel-Palestine, Colombia and Haiti in the near future.

Peace and Sport was created by Joel Bouzou, its current President. Mr. Bouzou is an Olympic medallist and a Modern Pentathlon World Champion. He is the current General Secretary of the Modern Pentathlon International Union (MPIU), a Member of the World Olympians Association (WOA) Executive Committee, and an Advisor to HSH the Prince Albert II of Monaco.