



Gymnastics to Fight Delinquency in Colombia

Pan American Gymnastics champion joins program to help social outcasts in slum areas of 4 Colombian cities: Bogota, Medellin, Cali and Guapi

On November 11, Colombian gymnastics champion, Pan American Silver medallist in the All-around competition and Champion for Peace Jorge Hugo Giraldo will launch “GIMNASIA POR LA PAZ” (Gymnastics for Peace) in Bogota, a program using gymnastics to support women’s empowerment and social integration and prevent juvenile delinquency.

This program was initiated by “Peace and Sport, L’Organisation pour la Paix par le Sport” along with the International Federation of Gymnastics (FIG), in collaboration with Ecopetrol, the Colombian Gymnastics Federation and 4 local Non-Governmental Organizations (Colombianitos, FFUNDAMOR, Creo En Mi and the Foundation San Antonio).

Ms Cecilia Sabogal, President of the Colombian Gymnastics Federation said: *“We are proud of Jorge Giraldo, who is a symbol for Gymnastics in Colombia, and his involvement in the project Gimnasia por la Paz. As a role model for the younger generation he really adds value to this important programme that focuses on social reconstruction in our country with Gymnastics as a tool.”*

Social stability through gymnastics

For a minimum of 3 years, “GIMNASIA POR LA PAZ” will support efforts to eradicate a growing sense of insecurity and delinquency plaguing local youth in volatile slum areas of 4 Colombian cities: Bogota, Medellin, Cali and Guapi. The intrinsic values of gymnastics (perseverance, discipline, self-surpassing, creativity) will help to improve the emotional stability of young Colombians, to encourage social integration and to foster a culture of peace.

The program will equip vulnerable young girls and boys from 8 to 14 years old with the guidelines and values to lead a better life. It is also designed to improve the social integration and empowerment of women in the challenging and sometimes dangerous environment in which they live.

Gymnastics for All

From November 5 – 10, 2011, in the run up to the official launch of “GIMNASIA POR LA PAZ”, 27 local sports educators (12 from the program’s 4 partner NGOs and 15 from the Colombian Gymnastics Federation) will be coached in basic gymnastics and they will learn the “Gymnastics for All” methodology. They can subsequently pass on their knowledge and develop gymnastics in their own communities with almost no equipment or facilities, using only local, inexpensive resources, or even waste products such as benches, chairs, tyres, etc.



Partnership

Peace and Sport and FIG signed a partnership in 2010 to pioneer activities that can be practiced by a wide number of people without discrimination, in order to develop gymnastics in all types of cultural, economic and social environments, including the most underprivileged, while promoting reconciliation, dialogue and stability social in the most fragile countries.

The “GIMNASIA POR LA PAZ” program is the first real fruit of this partnership. Both organizations are pooling human resources, finances and expertise in pursuit of a common goal: to harness the power of sport as a vehicle for sustainable world peace.

#####END#####

PRESS CONTACTS :

Peace and Sport - Valérie AMANT
+33 (0)6 83 37 66 21 / press@peace-sport.org
www.peace-sport.org

FIG - Meike BEHRENSEN
+41 21 321 55 26 / mbehrensen@fig-gymnastics.org
www.fig-gymnastics.com

NOTES TO EDITORS

ABOUT THE FIG

The International Gymnastics Federation is the governing body for gymnastics worldwide. It is the oldest established international sports federation and has participated in the Olympic Games since their revival in 1896. The FIG governs seven disciplines: Gymnastics for All, Men's Artistic, Women's Artistic, Rhythmic, Trampoline, Aerobic and Acrobatic. It counts 130 national affiliated federations and boasts a 25-person staff at its international seat in Lausanne (SUI), host city of the International Olympic Committee (IOC).

ABOUT PEACE AND SPORT

“Peace and Sport, *L’Organisation pour la Paix par le Sport*” is a neutral and apolitical international initiative based in the Principality of Monaco and placed under the High Patronage of H.S.H. Prince Albert II of Monaco.

Peace and Sport puts sport and its values at the heart of local development projects conducted within communities in crisis around the world. Exercising its missions in post-conflict zones, areas of extreme poverty or lacking social cohesion, Peace and Sport makes sport a vehicle for tolerance, respect, sharing and citizenship at the service of sustainable peace.

Supported by governments, world sport governing bodies, international organizations, major international private companies and international sports champions, Peace and Sport creates synergies between different stakeholders based on four different activities:

- The annual Peace and Sport International Forum (next edition in Sochi, Russia, 31 October – 2 November 2012)
- The “Champions for Peace” : a club of over 60 high-level international athletes supporting the organization,
- The Peace and Sport Awards, to reward individuals and initiatives contributing to peace,
- Locally-Based Projects; concrete actions in different regions of crisis in the world (in Cote d'Ivoire, Burundi, Republic Democratic of Congo Israel-Palestine, Timor Leste, Colombia and in Haiti).

Peace and Sport was founded by Joel Bouzou, current President of the organisation. Joel Bouzou is an Olympic medallist, world champion of Modern Pentathlon and current Secretary General for the International Union of Modern Pentathlon (UIPM). He is also Advisor to H.S.H. Prince Albert II of Monaco.