



The President's report

Executive Committee meeting – Managua, August 2019

Since our last Executive Committee (EC) meeting in May, I have had several surprises and reasons to be happy. I would like to share them with you in this report I presented at the EC meeting in Managua.

A seat on the ASOIF council

There were three seats up for renewal this year on the Council of the Association of Summer Olympic International Federations (ASOIF). I was one of the six candidates and I had the honour of being elected as a Council member at the ASOIF's general assembly, held in May on Australia's Gold Coast.

This success, as I always like to tell people, is not my achievement. It is the achievement of the whole Gymnastics family. Since the FIG was founded in 1881, Gymnastics has developed across the world as the sport which is the basis for all sports.

This place on the ASOIF Council serves as an important recognition of this development perspective. And it is why I would like to celebrate this honour with the entire Gymnastics family across the world.



**THE ASSOCIATION
OF SUMMER OLYMPIC
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Composition of the ASOIF Council

Integrity in sport and my boxing mission

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) and International Criminal Police Organisation (Interpol) organised a forum on integrity in sport in Tokyo on 15 May to which I was invited, as an IOC member, to make a speech.

I was surprised by Interpol's reports. They highlighted the increased scale of match-fixing incidents in the internet age. Yet fortunately, not a single one has been reported in Gymnastics.

As you know, the IOC's Executive Board decided to put me in charge of boxing. I am the chairman of a special task force, established to deliver qualification events and the boxing tournament at Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games.

Why put me in charge of boxing? It's because the world of sport understands that the FIG has made the necessary reforms to guarantee fair and honest judgements in Gymnastics.



Forum on integrity in sport in Tokyo

Success of Gymnastics festivals

On 21 June, I was in Switzerland to attend the Swiss Federal Gymnastics Festival. I was surprised by it. And delighted too. Up to that point, I had already seen the passion for the World Gymnaestrada. I also knew about the popularity of the Turnfest, the German Gymnastics festival. But I have to say the success of the Swiss festival exceeded my expectations.

This year's event brought together nearly 70,000 participants, for performances at a very high level. The most remarkable thing was that the entire city was full of Gymnastics lovers. As they say a picture speaks a thousand words, I advise you to look at the videos on YouTube.

These gymnastics festivals in Germany and Switzerland are models that every country should look to follow. We must look at ways of stirring such enthusiasm right across the world.



Swiss Federal Gymnastics Festival in Aarau

Spreading the joy of the World Gymnaestrada

In July, Dornbirn in Austria hosted the World Gymnaestrada. It was an event which really moved me. In fact, words cannot do it justice. After the opening ceremony procession, I felt the urge to say, loud and clear, that 'This is Gymnastics. Gymnastics is the king of sports.'

The participants had come from all corners of the world and had the pleasure of gathering together to enjoy their sport and to strengthen the bonds of friendship. The whole city and surrounding region welcomed us with their wonderful hospitality and generosity. It felt like there was a smile for every member of the Gymnastics family. These are scenes that I will never forget. I would like to thank Margaret Sikkens Ahlquist, President of the Gymnastics for All Committee, and her team for their efforts.



However, I always want more. I want even more people to enjoy the wonderful sport that is Gymnastics. This year, we had 66 national federations at the Gymnaestrada. I told Margaret to aim for a new goal – 1 million Gymnastics lovers taking part in our sport from 200 federations. I would also like more participants from the Gymnastics super powers of China and Russia. Sport is not only about medals. Sport can enrich the spirit and improve people's lives.

Junior World Championships provide compelling evidence

The Junior World Championships for Artistic Gymnastics took place in Gyor, Hungary in June, and those for Rhythmic Gymnastics followed in Moscow, Russia in July. On an operational level, both were excellent and I would like to thank the two federations involved for their efforts.

On a technical level, the standard of the gymnasts exceeded my expectations. This has left me more convinced than ever that the Junior World Championships can contribute to the development of Gymnastics.

In addition, unlike with their senior counterparts, these junior competitors were evidently enjoying gymnastics and, like myself, the spectators could sense the joy they were taking from their sport.



Shinnosuke Oka (JPN), gold medallist in the All-Around at the Junior World Championships

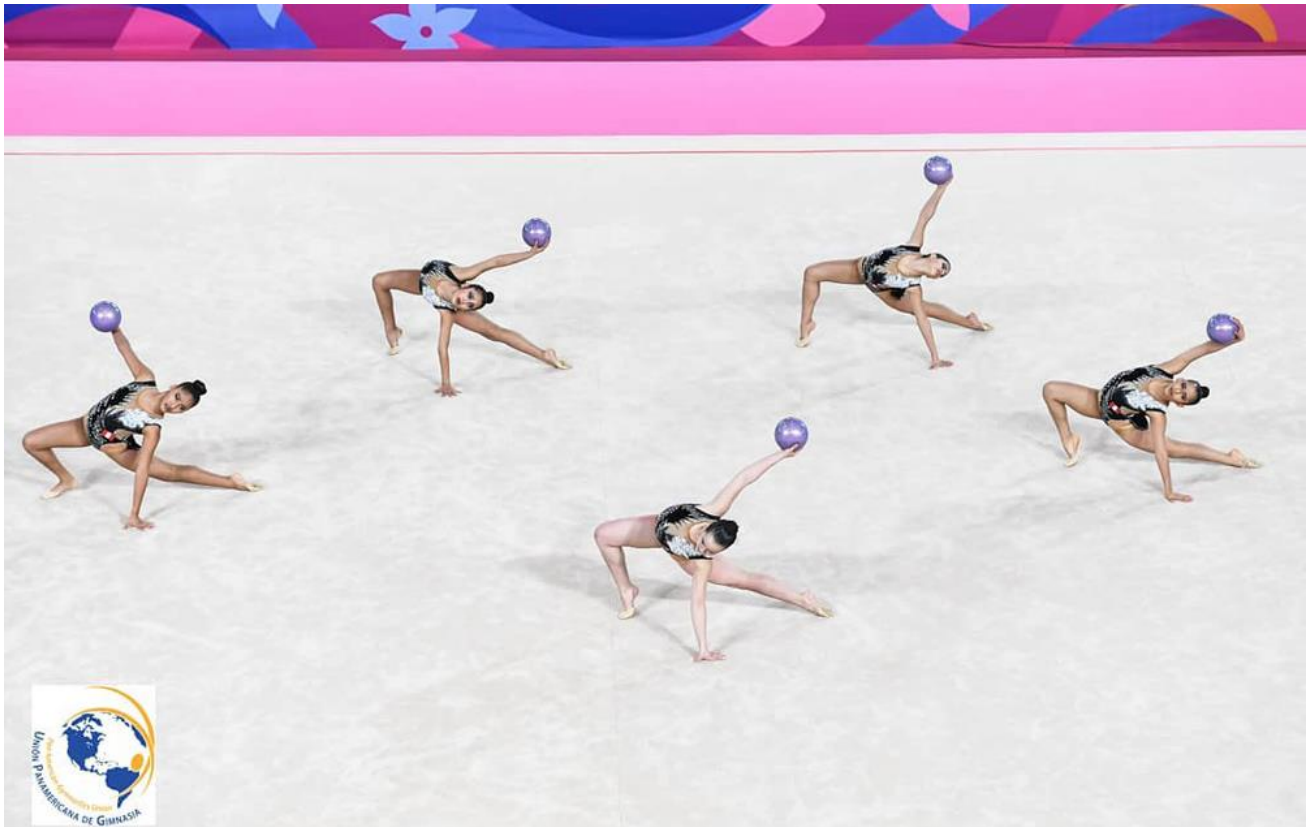
Big step forward for Pan American region

There was also a surprise for me when I went to Lima for the Pan American Games. These Games have changed a lot in the last four years. The level has greatly improved. Some of the smaller federations have stepped out of the shadows.

Four years ago, there was almost nothing for Jamaica's Gymnastics. This year, the country was represented in finals. I also noted the progress made by Colombia's Rhythmic Gymnastics compared with 2015. Indeed, I could see that the level has risen for other young federations. And I am sure that this progression is felt with each of the federations in the Pan American region.

This is the result of the efforts undertaken by Naomi Valenzo, President of the Pan American Gymnastics Union, and her team. I would like to offer her my heartfelt congratulations – and I must congratulate her too on her re-election as PAGU President.

On the other hand, there is been no noteworthy improvement in the abilities of their judges. We have to solve this problem. Those federations facing financial difficulties only have resources to spend on their gymnasts. They have no money for the training of judges. We must tackle this problem of judges' education and not only in the Pan American region but in all other federations that have financial problems.



Peruvian Group at the Pan American Games

That aside, and by way of conclusion, I am delighted to see how the Gymnastics community is continuing to develop our sport in a positive way across the world. Thank you!