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Human Rights and the Olympic and Paralympic Games

A Joint Communiqué between the United Kingdom, The Russian Federation, The Federative Republic of Brazil and The Republic of Korea

London, 29 August 2012

1948 was the year in which the United Nations proclaimed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family as the foundation of freedom, justice and peace around the world. It was also the year in which the United Kingdom last hosted the Olympic Games, and the year which marked the origins of the Paralympic Games.

People witnessing and participating in the London Games in 1948 and today understand how sport can empower people - no matter who or where they are. The principles of the Olympic Charter promote non-discrimination, equality, inclusion, respect and mutual understanding. The very same principles are the bedrock of human rights.

Sport provides people with the chance to interact and join social networks. It is an important tool for reaching out to the underprivileged or groups at risk of or facing discrimination. Through its contribution to economic growth and job creation, it can also help to revitalize disadvantaged areas as seen by the legacy of many high profile sporting events.

The Olympic and Paralympic Games have long been recognised as a vehicle to foster development and strengthen education for children and young people; promote health and prevent disease, including the prevention of drug abuse; empower girls and women; foster the inclusion and well-being of persons with disabilities; and facilitate social inclusion, conflict prevention and peacebuilding. All of these activities are related to and supported by the fundamental principles enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

London 2012, Sochi 2014, Rio 2016 and Pyeongchang 2018 offer a valuable opportunity to systematically promote awareness of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to a worldwide audience of billions, and demonstrate how the principles of the Olympic Charter relate to the Declaration and can translate into all aspects of society.

In acknowledgement of this opportunity, and as current and future host nations, we affirm our intention to use the Olympic and Paralympic Games:

- to promote awareness, understanding and the application of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights among those watching and participating;
- as an opportunity to educate people on the values of respect, diversity, tolerance and fairness and as a means to combat all forms of discrimination, including racial discrimination, and promote an inclusive society;
- as a vehicle for empowering girls and women through the practice of sport, promoting women's equal inclusion throughout society, and combating discrimination and violence against women;
- to promote the equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by persons with disabilities and foster their inclusion in all aspects of society, including sports; and
- to consider accessibility as an integral part of achieving sustainability.