



THE ONOC XL GENERAL ASSEMBLY

# Communiqué

5 DECEMBER 2020

## **Preliminary**

- 1) The XL Oceania National Olympic Committees (ONOC, the 'Committees') Annual General Assembly was convened virtually on 5 December 2020 as a direct response to global travel and physical distancing restrictions related to the ongoing coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic. It was chaired by ONOC President, Dr Robin Mitchell (FIJ).
- 2) The Assembly was attended by ONOC Members at President and or Secretary-General levels, or by their proxies, by American Samoa (ASA), Australia (AUS), Cook Islands (COK), Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), Fiji (FIJ), Guam (GUM), Kiribati (KIR), Marshall Islands (MHL), Nauru (NRU), New Zealand (NZL), Palau (PLW), Papua New Guinea (PNG), Samoa (SAM), Solomon Islands (SOL), Tonga (TGA), Tuvalu (TUV), and Vanuatu (VAN).
- 3) The Assembly was also attended by ONOC Associate Members at President and or Secretary-General levels, or by their proxies, by New Caledonia, Niue, Norfolk Island, Northern Mariana Islands, Tahiti, Tokelau, and Wallis and Futuna.
- 4) The Assembly was attended by Partners including: the Oceania Australia Foundation (OAF), Oceania Regional Anti-Doping Organisation (ORADO), World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA), Organisation of Sports Federations of Oceania (OSFO), Oceania Sports Information Centre (OSIC), Pacific Games Council (PGC), and the United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee (USOPC). The full list of delegates and observers can be found in [Annex 01](#)
- 5) The Assembly was preceded by 3 days of Pre-Assembly Workshops (2 – 4 Dec.) for sharing, consultations and deliberations on various thematic papers, issues and reports for endorsement and or approval for adoption at Assembly (5 Dec).

## **Tributes**

- 6) The Oceania national Olympic Committees (the 'Committees') paid tribute to two ONOC staff who passed on in 2019: Dennis Miller (FIJ) who was Executive Director of ONOC and Vice-President of the global swimming body, FINA, the Fédération Internationale de Natation; and Ms Talei Burness (FIJ), at the time of her passing, the longest-serving staff member of ONOC and a legendary administration expert who served as Executive Assistant and ONOC Office Manager

### ***International Olympic Committee (IOC)***

- 7) The Committees acknowledged the inspirational message from the IOC President who presented that the pandemic is an opportunity for the IOC in that its many actions taken with NOCs has strengthened the role of sport in society and allowed IOC to broaden its partnership given it signed an agreement with the United Nations (UN) and the World Health Organisation (WHO) recognising the role of sport in physical health and jointly rolling out the Healthy Together campaign with NOCs. It was shared that 118 UN States Parties have called for sport to be included in their crisis recovery plans and G20 Leaders expressed their support for the postponed Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games and the Winter Olympic Games Beijing 2022.
- 8) The Committees welcomed news of the IOC President's visit to Tokyo and noted the determination of Japanese partners and friends, fantastic facilities, the prioritisation of the health and safety of participants, the toolbox of COVID-19 Countermeasures, and was encouraged by the development of rapid testing and vaccines.
- 9) The Committees welcomed the acknowledgement made of the ONOC President, Dr Robin Mitchell who in his capacity as Chair of the OS Commission played a critical role in achieving the outcome of increased budgets within the pandemic and also the recognition of Oceania for its signal of resilience and confidence through the Cook Islands conducting its National Games during COVID-19, demonstrating the feasibility of design and delivery of safe games.

### ***Association of the National Olympic Committees (ANOC)***

- 10) The Committees welcomed the positive message from ANOC highlighting that the pandemic has made an enormous impact on everyone; commended the ONOC President, Dr Robin Mitchell's hard work in his capacity as Chair of the Olympic Solidarity Commission and Member of various commissions and many working groups following the COVID-19 crisis; acknowledged the role of John Coates as Chair of the IOC Coordination Commission in his new task to keep preparations ongoing for another year, keeping athletes motivated and offering possibilities for them to train and qualify for the Games; and emphasised Solidarity has been a very important tool to keep athletes motivated.

### ***Olympic Solidarity Commission***

- 11) The Committees welcomed the Olympic Solidarity report that the new Programme features increases in World Programmes, Support to Athletes, National Olympic Committees (NOC) and in Continent-Specific Programmes.

- 12) The Committees acknowledged the report highlights of the 2017 – 2020 OS Programme which included 180 MEMOS scholarships; 25000 directly supported athletes; 8500 coaches supported; 64 fora, workshops and seminars; US\$37 million to support NOCs and their athletes for Tokyo 2020 postponement; 3000 athlete scholarships; US\$222 for Continental Programmes and ANOC; and 644 Sport Administrators and Advanced Sport Management Courses among others; which had also brought huge benefits to Oceania through ONOC and through individual NOCs and Athletes.
- 13) The Committees expressed gratitude for the update on preparations for Tokyo 2020One which covered the Qualifications systems, the Playbook, and COVID-19 Countermeasures. Under the Qualifications systems, 57 percent of quota places were allocated prior to postponement of the Tokyo 2020 Games and in the redesign of qualifications the 43 percent remaining will, as much as possible, take place on the field of play; Dr Mitchell is one of three persons delegated the power to change the rules for Qualification systems ensuring speed in notifying NOCs of changes through NOCnet. Under the Playbook, there is current IOC – Tokyo 2020 collaboration in creating a series of Playbooks to be published from January 2021 that are information on the various ways the Games will take place at an operational level; there will be new procedures, new rules and new processes in place for all Games participants (athletes, officials, media, etc.) presented as journeys; and Playbooks will be shared from January 2021 and evolve over 6 months until the Tokyo Games. Under COVID-19 Countermeasures: Development is being pursued under six pillars including travel / country entry; physical distancing; PPE / cleaning; testing, tracking and isolating; vaccines; and provision of information; Travel to Japan, entry and physical distancing will be according to the standards set by Japan; PPE and sanitation will be higher or more than normal; Vaccines will be part of the countermeasures but not obligatory; Current and comprehensive information will be available to everyone; and there will be Minimisation of number of participants at the Games and the Olympic Village at any one time.

#### ***United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee***

- 14) The Committees welcomed the message from the USOPC recognising ONOC for the joint sharing of learnings and findings from its USOPC – OSEP research in examining the status of NOCs and Oceania region ministries of sport; commended the Chair, Dr Mitchell for his leadership of ONOC, mentioning that he is considered one the highest ranking thought leaders in the Olympic Movement and extended the acknowledgement of the USOPC toward his hard work, commitment and wisdom toward ensuring NOCs and athletes thrive in all Continents; and reflected that despite the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic the Olympic Movement and the athletes of the world displayed tremendous resilience during this period of uncertainty.

### ***Update from the IOC Coordination Commission - Focus on Tokyo 2020/1***

- 15) The Committees welcomed the Tokyo 2020/1 update which highlighted the following: work to deliver Tokyo 2020 has been intense; the Games will go ahead with the same number of athletes and supporting officials; next update from IOC President on 21 January 2021 regarding the Games; during the IOC President's visit to Tokyo, the new PM of Japan reaffirmed utmost efforts to ensure safe and secure Games as a symbol that humankind has overcome the virus; since the pandemic broke, the Japanese Team has had to re-secure 42 venues, 78 hotels, the Olympic Broadcaster and the Olympic Village (16, 500 apartments being developed by 11 developers part of a consortium); the Japanese Team also had to re-sign and extend the rights of their national sponsors - USD 3.1 billion for the Games, with some additional sponsors; the aim of the Games is to make the Games Village the safest place in Tokyo.
  
- 16) The Committees noted that all COVID-19 countermeasures will be undertaken to reduce the inhabitants at the Games Village at any stage without reducing the size of the delegation; proposal to be made to the IOC Executive Board as a guideline to say that teams and athletes can only enter the Games Village 5 days prior to their competition starts and leave within 48 hours after the conclusion of their participation; there is flexibility for teams which want to be there earlier to prepare like teams from Oceania going to Fukuoka (Teams would have to stay in their training camps until 5 days before their competition); athletes and countries participating in the second week of competition will be allowed to come into the Games Village earlier to participate in the Opening Ceremony and stay until their competition; and as a matter of policy, flag bearers of each country to be one male and one female at the Games.
  
- 17) The Committees noted that since July 2020, the Tokyo Government, the Japanese Government and the Organising Committee are working in a three-party joint council to address all the Countermeasures needed to meet expected scenarios; athletes will be allowed into Japan on the basis of an arrival COVID-Test and that they will not be subject to going into any bubble; there will be regular and rapid testing done at the Games and progress is being made around rapid testing so that results are received within 15 minutes with some equipment; Tokyo Municipal Government's own economic study shows a figure of USD 300 billion as the economic impact of the Games over a four-year period; IOC has been working with WHO for potential vaccine manufacturers for months now with regular dialogue around the development of a vaccine; Vaccinations are not going to be mandatory with different countries and religions having different approaches to these things around the world (the idea around it though is that the more visitors vaccinated for the Games, the better); only athletes and up to six officials can march during the Parade of Nations for large delegations (this number will be subject to the size of the delegation) and operationally, a whole set of test events have been approved for every sport and these are expected to proceed in February, March and April 2021 to ensure operational readiness under COVID measures.

18) The Committees noted that regular briefings will continue around the matters of ticketing and accommodation with NOCs, International Federations and broadcasters; there is a playbook of countermeasures being developed for all possible scenarios and relevant countermeasures are to be adopted closer to the Games after assessing the COVID situation.

### ***Report of the ONOC President***

19) The Committees welcomed the President's Report which highlighted increases in the OSC and the ONOC OS Programme budgets for the 2021 - 2024 Quadrennial; the importance of financial reporting and the new requirements from IOC; ONOC Commissions' activities; assistance to NOCs through ANOC Tokyo Funds; the development of an International sports calendar for Multisport Games; and on Games in Asia as an opportunity for ONOC athletes to participate in, including the Asia Indoor and Martial Arts Games (AIMAG) in 2021 and the 19<sup>th</sup> Asian Games in 2022.

20) The Committees noted that NOC Activities (NAP) had a balance of slightly more than USD 1.2m; Olympoecania Project funds were used to secure a loan to purchase the new ONOC House and this has been paid back; OSEP has had the biggest budget which it shares with the Education Commission but it has also had an independent external evaluation leading to its new strategy and its new online course platform. In addition, The allocation termed 'Sports and Healthy Lifestyle' has been discontinued and these funds have been moved to the ONOC Athletes' Commission and NOCs can apply through this mechanism

21) The Committees acknowledged that ONOC funds all its Commissions which are very active. These include the Athletes', Equity, International Relations, and Medical commissions which each receive an allocation of USD 50,000 per year. The only exception is the ONOC Education Commission which receives an allocation under OSEP.

22) The Committees acknowledged that under ANOC Tokyo Funds, ANOC Executive decided to assist all NOCs offset postponement costs and ONOC received USD 950,000 at the end of July. It was agreed that each NOC receive USD 25,000 and the process is almost complete for Panam Sports, ANOCA and ONOC. (g) Additionally, NOCs applied for funds to assist in qualification events in 2021 and various regional and Japan-based training camps and these funds will be disbursed from 7 December.

### ***Report of the ONOC Secretary-General***

- 23) The Committees welcomed the ONOC Secretary-General's Report which acknowledged FASANOC, Nauru NOC and ONOC for support to athletes stranded due to COVID-19 travel restrictions; shared the successful purchase of a new ONOC House in Suva; and thanked NOCs for the highest percentage of completion of Quadrennial Reports to OS in an Olympiad.
  
- 24) The Committees acknowledged the report that of almost all NOCs cooperating and assisting with completion of outstanding Quadrennial Reports to OS. Those remaining will be assisted to complete their reports as ONOC's ongoing support to the NOCs.
  
- 25) The Committees noted the reiteration on the need for compliance and proper reporting on finances and the request to communicate and work together with ONOC Finance and Administration Teams to sustain the improvements in practice.
  
- 26) The Committees noted the reminder for all NOCs to familiarise themselves with the RELAY platform as all grants management will be migrated to ensure accountability and improve credibility.

### ***Report of the ONOC Commissions***

- 27) The Committees welcomed the five reports which had been printed and published in the 2019 ONOC Annual Report. The ONOC Commissions are Athletes', Equity, International Relations, Education, and Medical and all reports can be accessed [here](#) from the annual report on the ONOC website.
  
- 28) The Committees acknowledged the Report of the ONOC Athletes' Commission which highlighted Australia and New Zealand ACs leading the way with athlete engagement activities; the Commission participated in 48 activities; and strengthening its communications with the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) engaging more closely with the Oceania Regional Anti-Doping Organisation (ORADO) to empower and educate athletes and NOCs.
  
- 29) The Committees acknowledged the Report of the ONOC Education Commission which highlighted the Independent External Evaluation of the Oceania Sport Education Programme (OSEP), the development of the new OSEP Strategy and Plan and its Budget for the 2021 - 2024 Quadrennial. OSEP programmes and resources are

increasing yearly with 3 new courses developed for Organisational Development, 3 for Community Development; for Entourage, and for OSEP Trainer levels. Three new NOC Education Commissions were set up in FIJ, BLW, and PNG. There are now 8 NOCs with OSEP staff: COK, FIJI, FSM, KIR, MHL, PLW, PNG and TUV.

- 30) The Committees acknowledged the Report of the ONOC Equity Commission which highlighted that where team sports are back, the participation of women and girls is being supported by NOCs and IFs; Samoan Rugby Union was highlighted as an example for making it mandatory for women's teams to be part of any series or competitions; PNG has both urban and rural sports being delivered; Palau has invested in sports infrastructure such as baseball, volleyball, softball and beach volleyball. The Committee noted the less comforting reports from NOC included safety and security of women traveling to and from games; ensuring proper nutrition to support female athletes reaching optimal performance levels; anecdotal evidence of increase in abuse of women and girls during COVID-19 lockdown periods; keeping interest and preparation at a high standard for athletes; and mental health issues which are heightened during this ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.
- 31) The Committees acknowledged the Report of the International Relations Commission which highlighted its engagement mandate through its participation in various fora including in the PIFS Regional CSO Forum; the Pacific Regional Sports Taskforce where Ms. Baklai Temengil was appointed Chair; the Forum Economic Ministers Meeting (FEMM) where a paper on Sport and Development was presented along with the research report titled 'Maximising the Contribution of Sport to Sustainable Development' with calls to improve data collection and availability, improve sport data in SDG reporting, and further development of Pacific human resource capacity; and the 2019 Pacific Sports Ministers Meeting; and the Pacific Regional Sports Forum. It also highlighted partnership discussions with the United Nations Office of Drugs and Sport (UNODS) and the IOC Manipulation of Sport Unit.
- 32) The Committees acknowledged the Report of the ONOC Medical Commission which highlighted its support for the 2019 Pacific Games in Apia, Samoa; its close work with ORADO in addressing anti-doping in sport; the need for financial support from ONOC for course deliveries; the need for adequate budgetary allocations for medical support to athletes by NOCs during planning; and in terms of Tokyo 2020 preparations by athletes, common themes reported from Members and NOCs included: lack of international competitions; financial support given sponsorship deals and training grants with the one-year extension; a significant proportion of athletes struggling to remain motivated to train; and some athletes nearing career end making the difficult decision to retire from high level sport.



### **Report of the ONOC Partners**

- 33) The Committees acknowledged reports from Partners. These included reports from the Oceania Australia Foundation (OAF); joint Oceania Regional Anti-Doping Organisation (ORADO) and the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA); Oceania Sports Information Centre (OSIC); Pacific Games Council (PGC); and the Organisation of Sport Federations of Oceania (OSFO). The full reports had been published in the 2019 ONOC Annual Report and all reports can be accessed via the annual report [here](#).
- 34) The Committees welcomed the report from the Pacific Games Council that highlighted the 2019 Pacific Games and extended gratitude to the Samoa Association of Sport and National Olympic Committee (SASNOC) and to the Samoan Government; noted that it was the biggest Games ever with more than 5,000 athletes and officials participating; 23 countries won medals and 21 countries won at least 1 gold medal; its gratitude to ONOC for NOC/PGA financial support through per diems; ONOC Medical Commission assistance; ORADO anti-doping; Voices of the Athletes programme highlighting Oceania athletes; and availability of ONOC staff as human resource support. It also noted Australia and New Zealand were granted associate membership. The Mini Pacific Games in CNMI have been postponed to 17 - 25 June 2022 and the Honiara Pacific Games are on schedule to be held in 2023.
- 35) The Committees welcomed the report from the Oceania Australia Foundation (OAF) highlighting that it took the decision to return all scholarship athletes back to their home countries before the conclusion of the Spring Semester due to the impending closure of national borders and restricted flights due to the COVID-19 pandemic; that Ms Heleina Young is the inaugural recipient of the Griffith University Oceania Australia Foundation Athletic Business Scholarship (the scholarship offers a three-year Bachelor of Business degree with the opportunity for athletic training and is a joint initiative of Griffith University, the Foundation and the Oceania Athletics Association); and that In response to the pandemic and the importance of raising and improving individual wellbeing to build resilience in athletes of Oceania, the Foundation has created a course supporting the PostEdge journal.
- 36) The Committees noted the report from the Oceania Regional Anti-Doping Organisation (ORADO) highlighting ORADO Lead Doping Control Officers Workshop held in collaboration with the United States Anti-Doping Agency (USADA), its ORADO Board Meeting in Samoa; Nauru National Anti-Doping Organisation (NADO) officially joining ORADO as a Member; Kiribati attending the meeting as an Observer; its acting as the Authorised Sample Collecting Agency to test athletes before and after games at the 2019 Pacific Games; its Promotion of and partnership in 'Play True' in support of the Voices of the Athletes Programme, and Support for Clean Support activities in 7 countries.

37) The Committees acknowledged the report from the Oceania Sport Information Centre of which the key highlights were its completion of all results of the Micronesian Games from 1969 - 2018 and its creation of a bibliography of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) in Sport which becomes a useful tool for both researchers in the area of sport.

38) The Committees acknowledged the report from the Organisation of Sport Federations of Oceania (OSFO) which highlighted the emphasis on the need to implement new strategies in every Oceania country ensuring athletes can return safely to the field of play; acknowledgement of small countries returning to limited competition; and acknowledgement of the positive response toward the 2015 Positive Edge Journal being reintroduced as a result of COVID-19 for the wellbeing and resilience of Oceania athletes. It noted the OSFO Merit Award was won by Ms Geraldine Brown (Oceania Badminton) and Mr Robert Steffy (Oceania Baseball/Softball).

### ***Decisions***

39) The Committees approved and adopted the:

- a. ONOC 2019 Audited Financials and Financial Statements
- b. ONOC 2021 - 2024 ONOC Plan
- c. ONOC-OSEP Independent External Evaluation
- d. ONOC-OSEP 2021 - 2024 Plan and Budget
- e. Request to consult and design individual OSEP Plans of Action per country in Quarter 1 of 2021

### ***Closing Summary***

40) The Committees acknowledged the closing remarks from the Chair / ONOC President and Secretary-General noting the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and the ongoing work with administrative completions by NOCs and the support to athletes, both in preparation for the postponed Tokyo 2020 Games and their general wellbeing recognising their place at the heart of the Olympic Movement.

41) The Committees welcomed the Chair's extended greetings for Christmas and the 2021 New Year with the note on care and the ongoing work in promoting sport and physical activity throughout Oceania.

42) The Committees concluded the XL General Assembly with the agreement to confirm the dates for the next meeting at a later date and with the note to participate in a Press Conference immediately after Adjournment.

***For media and administrative enquiries:***

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