

ISCA WORLD CONGRESS 2004 ON “SPORT FOR ALL”

On 19 – 23 May, 2004, the Danish Gymnastics and Sports Associations (DGI) hosted the ISCA (*International Sport & Culture Association*) World Congress on ‘Sport for All’ in the beautiful Danish capital city of Copenhagen.

The Congress began with the Opening Meeting, providing an insight into a wide variety of issues covered by the theme “Education and Development through Sport”. The Opening Meeting took place at the picturesque Copenhagen Town Hall. Mr Anders Bülow, President of ISCA, Mr Martin Geertsen, Copenhagen’s Mayor of Culture, Mr Brian Mikkelsen, Danish Minister of Culture, and Mr Søren Møller, Chairman of the Danish Gymnastics and Sports Associations (DGI) welcomed the participants.

On the second day, the Congress proceeded with two parallel conferences. There was a conference on networking within culture and sports, constructed as a forum for debate for all non-governmental sport and culture organisations. It dealt with issues regarding the development of society, particularly with topics like ‘voluntary commitment’, ‘education’ and ‘lobbying & fund-raising’. The conference included the keynote speech on ‘Human Rights and Democracy in the European Union with a Special Focus on Culture and Sport’ by Ms Pernille Frahm, a Member of the European Parliament. At the same time, a Senior Sport Conference was taking place, featuring a lecture on ‘A New Picture on the Process of Ageing’ by Prof. Dr. Herbert Hartmann, Vice President of the German Gymnastics Federation (Deutscher Turner-Bund).

A meeting on sport for development and peace and a youth theme were also on the agenda. The conference included two keynote speakers: Mr Adolf Ogi, former President of Switzerland and Special Adviser on Sport to the UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, spoke about sport as an important method of achieving the UN’s Millennium Development Goals in health, education,

sustainable development, peace and communication, whereas Mr Henning Eichberg, one of Europe’s leading sports researchers, gave a special lecture: Bodily Democracy – Meeting the ‘Other’ in ‘Sport for All’.

The Congress ended with the 10th General Assembly of ISCA, as a gathering of the ISCA committee members and delegates from all over the world. It dealt with current and future ISCA activities, focusing mainly on developing sustainable organisations for and with young people and developing youth empowerment strategies.

As informal networking proves to be one of the most effective methods of making new contacts and promoting new ideas, the participants were encouraged to take part in a daily organised networking café that provided them with the opportunity to exchange information in less formal surroundings.

A Copenhagen tourist programme was also offered as a part of the Congress. Participants were invited to enjoy an evening in the uniquely enchanting Tivoli Gardens, the oldest amusement park in Europe. A guided bus tour through the city was also organised, including visiting beautiful sights such as the Royal Palace of Amalienborg, the Little Mermaid Statue and Rosenborg Castle.

In conclusion one may say that the Congress, located in the wonderful city of Copenhagen, provided a great opportunity for sharing opinion, as well as creating guidelines for the further development of ‘Sport for all’ ideas, and these ideas can be most appropriately expressed by quoting Mr Søren Møller: “Our aim is to create a broad and diverse sports culture based on the joy of movement and appreciation of life. Our challenge is to ensure that sport’s benefits are made available to everyone, while at the same time not losing sight of its core humanistic values. First and foremost, we need to gain encouragement and inspiration from each other. Then, in order to maximize our influence, we need to stand together.”

Marija Rakovac