

May 4, 2001

TO: All IPC Membership (NPCs, IOSDs, Sport Committees, Executive Committee (EC), Headquarters (HQ) staff

FROM: Dr. Bob Steadward, O.C., LLD (Hons), President

Re: 2001 IPC Congress - Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, April 27 - 29, 2001

President's personal Observations and Recommendations

First of all, to those of you who attended the Congress, thank you for taking time out of your busy schedules and for sharing with us your wisdom, experiences and expertise with regard to the current state of affairs of the International Paralympic Committee (IPC), the Paralympic movement and future strategic planning directions.

Thank you, also, for being part of a very momentous occasion in the young history of IPC, where more than 250 delegates from 77 nations, 14 sports, four IOSDs and representatives of the Athletes Committee along with members of the IPC EC and Headquarters staff. We came together in an open-minded environment, to discuss the future vision and mission of the IPC as well as to make specific recommendations from the consensus statements reached with regard to Governance, Roles & Responsibilities and Structure.

Some may have felt that our initial start was a bit rocky, but this is not unusual under these situations; however, I was pleased that our discussions progressed quickly into an environment of trust, faith, honesty and integrity with the ultimate goal of harmony and unity of purpose.

I was in a unique position, during the Congress, to be able not only to listen to all of the presenters during the plenary sessions, and also to participate as an observer in every one of the break-out groups. I intentionally did not speak directly to these sessions because I wanted to hear what the membership had to say. I took the opportunity only to deliver an address to both the Opening and Closing ceremonies, in order to set the tone and bring things back together.

I know that a number of nations, and a few sports and other interested individuals, were not able to attend this Congress and, therefore, I felt it was important for me to send out, as soon as possible, a detailed summary of the Congress based on my own personal observations as President of the IPC. Please bear in mind that the following report is how

I view the current state of our development, and how I interpreted the consensus statements and recommendations. You may, or may not, agree with some of the summary statements and recommendations that I am going to present to you, but I hope that you will take the time to provide me with your input and feedback.

Once the full and complete summaries are compiled, Dr. York Chow, as Congress Chairman, will be circulating those summaries along with a series of questions, for your direct input and feedback. These will in turn be summarized and included in the full Congress report.

I believe that it is very important for the IPC to now identify those recommendations which can be implemented easily and immediately by the HQ staff and/or the Management Committee (MC). These are the recommendations or concerns that were expressed by a number of people within the Congress, that will not require any Motions by the EC or changes in our Constitution, but which are actually expressions of concern that can be enacted without delay. There are other recommendations that may require discussion and Motions by the MC and/or the EC prior to their implementation, and you have my commitment that these will also take place as soon as possible.

Finally, there will be some items that will require specific Motions for consideration and vote by the GA because of potential and direct implications on our Constitution. These items will go forward to the December 2001 GA if at all possible.

When one sits back to reflect upon the discussion of the Congress, a few key concepts were consistently prevalent throughout the Congress and I believe we need to focus on these in the future. They include, but are not limited to, such matters as our being an *athlete-centred organization*, that we conduct a *strategic review and plan*, that we create a *vision and mission*, that we improve *communication*, that we become more *open and transparent* and that *we reduce the size of our EC*.

Therefore, allow me to provide you with my personal observations. These major overall recommendations are not necessarily in order of priority, but I hope that once they are addressed and implemented they will improve the quality of service and representation within the IPC and Paralympic movement.

Recommendations for Consideration

1. **Vision and Mission for IPC**

You will recall that during Dr. York Chow's summation, he presented a sample Vision and Mission Statement for IPC that was developed by myself. In addition, there were some very good comments made by members of the Congress that can be added to these statements, for future consideration. People talked about values and principles, quality of life, etc. These are all very important in developing both a Vision and Mission statement, but they must also reflect the unique nature of our movement as well. We will endeavour to develop these statements further, and circulate them to the nations for feedback and possible incorporation within the overall strategic review and plan.

2. **Strategic Review and Plan**

There appeared to be a very strong consensus that a complete and detailed strategic review and plan be implemented for the IPC and the Paralympic movement. I personally believe that this is an extremely important and high priority for our organization, as we have not gone through one in the past and we are at the crossroads in our development. Therefore, we need to reflect not only on our history and past accomplishments, but also construct a more sophisticated plan for our future. In order to implement this strategic review and plan, we were informed of the importance for some of you to enlist the services of an outside consulting firm, to bring an unbiased outsider's point of view. I can certainly support the idea of involving an outside consultant, but it will still be important to obtain membership input; as well, for an outsider to produce a fair and intelligent perspective, a tremendous amount of time and education will be required before they can carry out their task with any competence or credibility. Therefore, perhaps a first step would be to create a special Task Force or Commission, to prepare a brief for the EC to consider. This could then be used as a basis if an outside consultant is employed. We had predicted that this kind of recommendation might come forward; therefore, we have already received some quotes on the cost of enlisting professional consultants to conduct such a strategic review and plan. I can assure you that this is a very expensive undertaking. It will be important that we receive bids from completely neutral companies as we cannot afford to bring in consultants who may have either direct or indirect association or affiliation with any individuals or groups within our movement. Therefore, we would intend to put this project out for tender. We have no budget earmarked for this strategic review and plan, nor are we in a financial situation to afford it. Therefore, if we are to move forward with such a project, it will be absolutely essential that we call upon many of our more developed nations whose budgets are capable of contributing to its reality. If any nation is prepared to contribute financially to the success of this strategic review and plan, I would appreciate them approaching me directly as to the level of support that they are prepared to provide. This strategic review and plan will not be successful unless we also receive financial resources from our membership.

3. **Congress follow-up**

As I mentioned in my preamble, a full Proceedings of the Congress will be compiled and circulated to our entire membership. In the meantime, Dr. Chow will be circulating the Congress summaries along with a Questionnaire. If we are to implement any of the consensus statements or recommendations from the Congress, it will be important for you to give us your immediate feedback. Therefore, once you receive the summaries and Questionnaire, you will need to provide us with your input, your feedback and your recommendations within a three to four week period.

4. **Athlete involvement**

It was clear from the Congress that delegates placed emphasis and importance of the IPC and the Paralympic movement as an athlete-centred organization. I personally believe that we have encouraged and involved our athletes wherever possible within our movement, and within the resources that have been available to us. I also believe, however, that we can involve athletes further within our organization provided that they have the time and energy necessary to fulfill the participation required. At the present

time, our athletes have their own Committee with full representation on the EC as well as on the Sport Council Executive Committees. In addition to this, we have also made provision for athletes to represent the IPC on the IOC Commission for Athletes; and, as well, representation on the IPC Commissions that have recently been created. In the future, we will endeavour to work much closer with the Athletes Committee and to find ways to involve them further on other Committees. If anyone has other ideas as to how we can ensure that our organization continues and improves upon our being an athlete-centred organization, I would be most appreciative of your input.

5. Communication

In both listening to the comments that were passed on at the plenary sessions and break-out groups, and during my private discussions with a number of individuals throughout the Congress, it is my observation that some people feel there is excellent communication by the IPC, while others feel communication could be improved. There was also a feeling that if our organization was more transparent, better communication would consequently follow. From my perspective, there will always be good communication not only if we are a transparent organization but if we are an open organization and one that is built on trust and unity. As well, we must be open-minded, tolerant and understanding of one another. Remember, that communication goes in both directions. Our HQ staff must communicate effectively and efficiently with our members, but also our members have a responsibility to communicate with the IPC and our HQ. To be honest with you, when we have communicated with our members and requested their input on a variety of topics, we have received very little feedback from the nations, and sometimes no feedback at all. We will immediately implement a better communications system for our membership, not only as we continue to communicate through our Paralympian newsletter and our website, but I will also initiate a very brief but informative "circular" to go out every two weeks which will highlight the activities of our movement. We will allocate a section for highlighting the HQ activities but as well will have a section to which our sports, our NPCs and IOSDs can contribute. Therefore, it will be up to each and every one of you to send in updates on what is happening within your own constituency. The IOC does this on a weekly basis and from their perspective it is an effective way of communicating with the Olympic movement.

6. Clarification of Roles, Responsibilities and Authorities

Over the next few weeks, I will work with both our HQ staff and the MC, to more clearly articulate the specific roles and responsibilities of each of the positions, along with their authorities and accountabilities. This will not be an easy task as we are in a significant growth period and our roles and responsibilities are evolving. We will, however, attempt to put thoughts on paper, for your consideration.

7. Future structure of the IPC Executive Committee (EC)

There was much discussion with regard to the future structure of the IPC EC. I spoke to a number of people at great length during the Congress and listened carefully to what was being said. There seemed to be two or three very important consensus recommendations. First of all, there was an overwhelming consensus that the current EC structure is not acceptable; and, therefore, needs to be significantly reduced in size in order to be more manageable and effective and in order to fit within the changing times. Secondly, there

seemed to be a strong consensus that this needs to be done immediately, even brought into effect during our upcoming General Assembly (GA) in December 2001 in Athens. As I spoke to many of you throughout the Congress, there were many very good ideas as to the actual structure of the future EC. I would like to take this opportunity to put before you a structure which seems to have captured many of the suggestions that came forward during the Congress.

If we are going to implement a new structure, it will be important to submit a nomination process with appropriate forms to the membership by the second week in June in order for the recommendation/motion to be included and considered on the Agenda for the GA in Athens. The reason being that we currently have a process and forms in place for nominations that will go forward based on our existing Constitution. But if we are planning to change the Constitution to change to a new EC (Executive Board) structure, then we will need to be proactive in sending out a call for nominations for this new structure so that it can be implemented at our GA this fall. Therefore, based on input from a number of individuals during the Congress, the following new Executive Board structure is placed here before you for your consideration:

1. President (elected by the GA)
2. Six (6) Vice Presidents (elected by the GA)
3. Athlete representative (elected by the Athletes Committee)
4. Two (2) Sport representatives (one Winter and one Summer - elected by the Sports)
5. Chief Operating Officer (COO) - Ex officio

You will notice that the six (6) Vice Presidents do not have designated titles or responsibilities. The reason for this is due to the fact that some people feel it is in the best interest of the Paralympic movement, during its current state of development, to nominate and elect the six (6) of the very best people possible to which the Executive Board can then assign specific areas, as they would be responsible for providing specific leadership. Further, we could create six (6) areas of responsibility or departments within the Executive Board for the Vice Presidents to lead. You will notice that these areas of responsibility are very similar to the existing positions on the MC, such as Secretary General, Technical Officer, Medical Officer and the like. The only difference is that they are of a Vice President status and are not elected to a specific title/position.

- a) HQ Administration, including Planning, Financial and NPC Services
- b) Development and Solidarity
- c) Marketing
- d) Sport
- e) Medical, Research and Education
- f) Legal & Games Liaison

Each department would have significant appointed and elected membership with specific interests and expertise. As well, it would be essential that athletes, sports and NPCs be represented on all departments and IOSDs and Regions where appropriate.

For example, on the Department of Development and Solidarity I could see not only representation from athletes, sports and NPCs but also the IOSDs and the Regions. Whereas within the Marketing we would include professional experts from the marketing industry besides athletes, sports and NPCs. Each department would meet its unique membership requirements, but, they would be more inclusive than exclusive.

8. Sports

Over the past 12 years, I believe that each of our Paralympic sports, which includes IPC sports, IOSD sports and independent sports, has gone through a very complicated and unique history. It seemed to be the opinion of many of the delegates, that our sport committees should have full membership within the IPC. At the present time, we have included them as an integral part of our movement with voting privileges in our GA. They do not, however, have full membership status, like the NPCs and IOSDs. In order to achieve full membership status, I believe that it is going to take a concerted amount of time and it will not be an easy process. We have received a lot of helpful advice in the past from various legal counsel and they are not sure how the sports will be able to achieve full membership given the legal status of their committees. We have to appreciate the fact that each sport has undergone difficult changes throughout their history, and their status regarding their legal entities are quite different. For example, sports such as Athletics and Swimming are multi-disability sport committees that have come under the direct responsibility of IPC. There are other sports, such as Goalball and Boccia that are sport committees embedded in one of the IOSDs and over which IPC has no direct control or influence. As well, there are other sports which have an even further unique situation, such as Wheelchair Basketball which is a fully independent federation unto itself. Finally, there are sports which fall into the category of fully integrated international federations, such as Tennis which is an integral part of the International Tennis Federation (ITF).

It is my understanding, from various legal advice, that in order for our sports to have full membership status within the IPC, it will be essential for them to have an independent legal status. This may or may not be what the sport committees want to achieve over the next few months or years. As we also know, each sport is basically governed by the nations which belong to these sports and who are responsible for the development of the sport as well as control of their operations and technical elements.

The other matter regarding sports, deals with their interest in inclusion and integration. During the Arnhem Seminar in 1987 there was a very strong commitment to integrate our sports within the able-bodied sport federations (IFs), and it was evident again during our Congress that there is still a very strong commitment to development and creating opportunities for integration with international sports federations for able-bodied sport. I, personally, have had an opportunity to discuss this matter on many occasions with Presidents of many IFs, and I can tell you quite candidly that there is an interest among the international federations to help our sports grow and develop, and also to create a very special relationship within their organizations for our sports. This topic will certainly not be resolved overnight, so you will have to give the President and MC, and Sports Chairmen, an opportunity to discuss a strategy and to work through this process over time.

9. IOSDs

From the discussions that were taking place throughout the Congress, there was a strong feeling that there is an important role for the IOSDs to play within the IPC. There is no question that even though they are founding, full members of the IPC, they still have their own autonomy and independence and it will be up to their member nations to decide how they will be structured, how they will be governed, and ultimately, what will be their roles and responsibilities. However, there was a strong recommendation that the IOSDs evaluate their own organization and determine what their future will be, by redefining their roles and responsibilities. Ultimately, if IPC takes on the leadership for high performance sport, as it relates to Paralympic Games and multi-disability World Championships, then the IOSDs have a greater role to play in development, particularly development at the grassroots level and within the nations, especially developing nations.

It is my hope that the IOSDs will pick up this recommendation and move towards the redefinition of their future roles and responsibilities, and if IPC can assist in this process at all, we will always be available.

10. Regional Development

It occurred to me that throughout the discussions within the plenary sessions as well as the break-out sessions, the most important aspect regarding the different Regions, will be the role played by the NPCs towards development. It seemed to me that the NPCs need to take a greater role in assisting the regions in their development, by assisting developing nations, by developing programmes and by creating more regional sport competition opportunities. Whether the IPC is divided into five, six or more regions seems to be a topic that could be continued in the future.

11. IOC Agreement

There were many questions raised with regard to the current and future relationship between the IOC and the IPC. As a result of the various questions raised during the Congress, I spent a significant amount of time in my Closing Ceremonies' speech, explaining the current relationship and future opportunities.

Please permit me to summarize our current and future relationships. In principle, I firmly believe that without the IOC and their cooperation, it will be impossible for us to organize the Paralympic Games on our own. Therefore, it is essential that we have a very good and cooperative relationship with the Olympic movement. I have spent the last 15 years, not only developing a close personal relationship with the current President of the IOC, but I have also spent a significant amount of my time developing relationships with IOC Members and many of the NOCs. I believe these relationships are absolutely essential if we are to maintain and improve our credibility, our profile and our visibility within the Olympic movement. At the present time, we enjoy a very good and unique relationship with the Olympic movement and all of its members. As a result of our relationships, you will remember that President Samaranch and I signed an IOC and IPC Cooperation Agreement, on October 20th, 2000, in Sydney Australia. Basically, this Agreement was aimed at further strengthening our relationship and joint efforts, because we share a common belief in the fundamental right of every human being to pursue their

physical and intellectual development. We further believe that we must exercise our international roles in accordance with our respective mandates and principles.

This Cooperation Agreement further outlined some of the basic principles on which we have agreed. The Agreement was made a public document and circulated extensively through the media last October. We have now just completed the negotiations for Part II of this Cooperation Agreement, which deals specifically and only with the organization of future Olympic and Paralympic Games. It will be important that this Agreement be signed prior to the 13th of July, in order for it to be implemented for the 2008 Olympic and Paralympic Summer Games. If we can sign this agreement by July 13th, it will be incorporated as part of the Host Organizing Committee's contract. As a result, it is my hope that the terms of this Agreement are acceptable to both organizations. Your EC has met and discussed the Agreement, and have given positive suggestions for improvement. These suggestions have been incorporated into the Agreement and if they are acceptable to the IOC, we will move into the next stage, of signing the document.

In addition to the two Agreements, let me also indicate to you the cooperative spirit that we have enjoyed thus far with the IOC. At the present time, we have full membership status within 13 IOC Commissions. The following Commissions and people have been approved:

Commissions for Culture and Olympic Education	Carol Mushett
Athletes Commission	Kjartan Haugen
Women in Sport Working Group	Beatrice Hess
Medical Commission	Dr. Michael Riding
Press Commission	Dr. Nabil Salem
Radio and Television Commission	Dr. York Chow
Sport and Law Commission	Dr. Jens Bromann
Sport and Environment Commission	Dr. Robert D. Steadward
Sport for All Commission	André Auberger
Coordination Commission for Olympic Games:	
2002	Thomas Reinecke
2004	Miguel Sagarra
2006	François Terranova
Evaluation Commission for the Games of the XXIX Olympiad	
2008	Bob McCullough

In addition, the IPC has created four (4) Commissions. These four Commissions also include representatives from the IOC, who have yet to be confirmed.

Women in Sport
Development
Athletes with Severe Disabilities
Ethics

As well as the activity that we enjoy on the various Commissions, I was very fortunate to have been appointed by President Samaranch, to sit on the IOC Olympic Truce Foundation. Also, we are always invited to participate within a number of their

congresses, such as Doping in Sport, Sport for All, Sport and the New Media, Development and the like. As a result of the IOC Cooperation Agreement, other agreements are now beginning to be formally developed between the NOCs and NPCs. A good example occurred in Sydney at the XI Paralympic Summer Games 2000, when a Cooperation Agreement was signed between the Netherlands NPC and their NOC. It is my hope that these types of agreements will occur more frequently between NOCs and NPCs throughout the world. Further initiatives have included a very special relationship which developed between the Americas Region and the Pan American Sports Organization (PASO). It was unanimously supported by PASO last year that in the future, the Pan American Games will be organized in a similar way to the Olympic and Paralympic Games, in that the Para Pan American Games will be held a week to 10 days following the Pan American Games. This is a wonderful accomplishment, and again, I hope it will occur within other regions.

Lastly, I just wanted to let you know that at the present time, we are receiving approximately \$500,000 USD per year from the IOC, \$300,000 of which is directed towards Administration and \$200,000 directed towards development projects and solidarity. In the future, we will see greater linkages between the IOC and IPC, such as programmes of exchange between the Headquarters staff of our two organizations.

12. NPCs - Constitution

I believe that each of our NPCs have a tremendous role and responsibility to exercise within the Paralympic movement. Not only should we rely on the nations to provide us with their expertise and advice, but we should all be contributing together as members of our movement. In order for us to grow in strength and gain greater profile and credibility in each of our countries, it will be important for each member nation to submit their respective Constitutions and By Laws to the IPC Headquarters, so that we can determine if there is consistency between and among the various nations. Then, for clarity, continuity and identity, for each nation to change and adapt their current 'name' to become a 'National Paralympic Committee'. This is taking place throughout the world, but we need to try to achieve completion of this task by the end of this year. I believe this will send a clear message to the world that we are one, united organization, committed to reducing the focus on rehabilitation and disability, and to fulfilling the ideals of high performance sport as it relates to the Paralympic Games and other multi disability world and regional championships.

Thank you, once again, for your participation in the Congress. I ask you not to read this document and analyze it 'word for word', because it consists only of my thoughts and observations as I listened to the discussions which took place in Kuala Lumpur. However, because I am so very passionate about the IPC and the Paralympic movement; and because I detected from the Congress delegates that they wish to see changes occur as soon as possible, both timing and process will be very important.

Therefore, those changes which can be implemented without affecting our Constitution and By Laws will occur as soon as possible. However, your feedback, advice and wisdom would be welcome before we consider changes that will affect our Constitution. In the meantime, I want to encourage each and every one of you to provide me with your

very important input on this document, at your earliest possible convenience. You will still have a further opportunity to give more explicit input once you receive the summary document and questionnaire from Dr. Chow.

This report is respectfully submitted to you from me as your leader and as your President, in order that you will be aware of my thoughts and observations and my feelings concerning the overall consensus points resulting from the Congress.

You can be assured that my motives are very simple: to make the best decisions possible for the well-being of our movement and our athletes.

Thank you.

Dr. Robert D. Steadward, O.C., LL.D (Hons)
IPC President and IOC Member

RDS/bc