

VIDEO MESSAGE FROM IOC
PRESIDENT JACQUES ROGGE
ACCEPTANCE SPEECH FOR THE
2007 UNEP CHAMPIONS OF THE EARTH AWARD

Ladies and gentlemen, dear friends,

I am proud, on behalf of the International Olympic Committee, to accept the Champions of the Earth Special Award as a recognition of the IOC's work in this field.

It is also a privilege for me to join the six other distinguished recipients of this prestigious UNEP Award. I would like to extend my congratulations to them, and wish them further success in their undertakings.

I also take this opportunity to thank UNEP, our partner since 1994, for its ongoing commitment and for all the good advice and expert counsel it has given us over the years in this field.

The IOC has taken the environmental concerns seriously since the early 1990s, when it created its Sport and Environment Commission chaired by my colleague Pál Schmitt, who is representing me today at this ceremony with IOC member Ser Miang Ng.

The IOC has today incorporated all the fundamentals of sustainable development, taking into account the environment, linked to social and economic benefits. This fundamental principle guides all our programmes and projects.

With the upcoming Olympic Games in Beijing, Vancouver and London, we have important challenges ahead of us. We are glad that we can meet them with the Organising Committees in the host country and host cities that are taking our concerns seriously. We have asked them to place the bar very high, and are challenging them with strict criteria to be respected.

The IOC also has the chance and opportunity to raise awareness among its network of 203 National Olympic Committees about environmental challenges. We see this as a responsibility. Many concrete programmes based on clear

guidelines and presented in user-friendly handbooks have been developed and activated with the help of UNEP.

Indeed, this year in Beijing, the IOC and the Beijing Organising Committee, in association with UNEP, will be organising the 7th World Conference on Sport and the Environment, which would be hailed as a milestone in the quest to place sport everywhere at the service of harmonious development of humanity and our environment.

We are fully aware that there are other enormous challenges awaiting us, and that much more can and must be done. We owe this to sport and to future generations.

Thank you.