



With the Olympics just finishing and the Paralympics about to begin, the 2012 London Games are demonstrating once again how sport can be used for humanitarian, development and peacebuilding efforts.

The UN Office on Sport for Development and Peace (UNOSDP), with offices in Geneva and New York, has been part of these efforts, working closely with UN system sister organizations, the London Games Organizing Committee, the UK Government and the International Olympic and Paralympic Committees to channel the publicity and excitement of the Games for the promotion of development and peacebuilding initiatives.

In connection with the world event, a number of initiatives are being carried out by UN system organizations, such as the Giving is Winning project by UNHCR, where clothing is collected and sent to refugee camps, UNESCO's presentation of the documentary *The War on Doping*, UNEP's work on making the Games more sustainable and environmentally-friendly, WHO's contribution to disease prevention and control, and UNICEF's UK active contribution to the London 2012 official legacy programme 'International Inspiration'.

These are great examples of how the UN system can get involved and take advantage of the popularity of the Games. During the upcoming Paralympic Games, more activities are planned, in particular highlighting and fostering issues pertaining to the well-being, empowerment and inclusion of persons living with a disability.

Attending the opening of the Olympics at the end of last month were several UN Officials, including Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and his Special Adviser on Sport for Development and Peace Wilfried Lemke, with both also taking part in the traditional Olympic torch run.

They made great efforts to raise awareness to the Olympic Truce Resolution, which was adopted and co-sponsored by all 193 UN Member States for the 2012 Games. This Resolution called for all warring parties to lay down their weapons during the Olympic and Paralympic Games and focus on unity and reconciliation.

The SG also recorded a video message which was played in the stadium during the Opening Ceremony of the Olympic Games, highlighting the power of the Olympic Truce. In his words, "one day of peace can lead to a week of peace, a month of peace and eventually an end to war."

"This office is excited to work with UN partners and with the organizers of future mega-sport events such as the Olympic and Paralympic Games and the football World Cup to make sure these events are catalysts for positive change in the host countries and around the world, ranging from sustainable development to social inclusion and peace," said Mr. Lemke.

The UNOSDP staff works to promote and mobilize sport and physical activity as cost-efficient tools to advance the UN's goals, missions and values throughout the world. This ranges from coordinating collaboration efforts between the UN system, Member States, inter-governmental organizations and other key stakeholders to sharing information with programmes, organizations and the media about best practices.

- Learn about [UNOSDP](#) and read the [2011 Annual Report](#) .
- Read more about UN system's and UNOSDP's [activities](#) at and around the London Games, including photos and videos.

Source: [Geneva \(UNOSDP\)](#)