

15 West 38th Street, 11th Floor
New York, N.Y. 10018



Tel. (212) 481-6023
e-mail: mission@cyprusun.org

**PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

United Nations General Assembly- 74th Session

Item 11: Sport for development and peace: building a peaceful and better world through sport and the Olympic Ideal

New York, 9 December 2019

Statement by Ambassador Andreas D. Mavroyiannis, Permanent Representative of Cyprus

Mr. President,

Fully subscribing to the statement of the European Union, I wish to make some additional remarks because of my country's strong links with the Olympic Ideal, formed through Cyprus' city states participation in the Olympic Games since their initiation in antiquity. I would like to thank Japan for bringing forward the resolution on the Olympic Ideal this year and wish it every success in organizing the next Olympiad. I wish also to express appreciation to the President of the International Olympic Committee, Thomas Bach, for his presence here today and his work to promote the ideals that the Olympic Games stand for.

If Olympic ideals were upheld, we would have less need for the United Nations. The creation of a peaceful environment, with the hope that this would have implications more lasting than the duration of the Games themselves, was always consubstantial to the Olympic ideal. The sacred tradition of the Olympic Truce - the cessation of hostilities before, during, and after the Games to ensure the safe passage of athletes - was underpinned by 3 morals: the futility of war, the denunciation of violence and subjugation, and the superiority of pursuits that bring people together: the quest for freedom, shared values, the intrinsically noble character of fairness and synergy; and, the recognition of their contribution to the prosperity of all and to the further development of culture and civilization.

Sport has a unique capacity to bring people together. It is also the most powerful tool to build ethos amongst our youth. Creating a culture of sportsmanship, fair play, hard work and personal sacrifice in pursuit of a goal, dignified rivalry, relishing victory and accepting defeat, can go farther than any knowledge-based education. If we manage to build this values-based culture at the individual, community, and national levels, the mission of the UN to bring peace, development, respect for rules, respect for rights and freedoms, equality, solidarity, tolerance and non-discrimination, social inclusion, health, and many others, can be made so much more feasible.

Cyprus remains committed to the endeavour of promoting peace by bringing to the forefront the virtues of humanity that prove we were created for something more noble than conflict, and striving for the prevalence of culture, peace and security as the core instincts of human civilization.

Thank you, Mr. President.