



WOA President Joël Bouzou tells Social Business Day Forum about the power of sport

Dhaka, Bangladesh - 28 July 2017

World Olympians Association (WOA) President Joël Bouzou has joined speakers at the Yunus Centre's prestigious **Social Business Day** in Dhaka, Bangladesh today.

Hosted by **Nobel Laureate Professor Muhammad Yunus**, the annual forum invites leading figures and experts from around the world to speak about the emerging field of social business and highlight the advances that have been made in solving ongoing social and economic problems around the world.

This year's theme 'Can Wealth Concentration be Stopped?' looks at innovative ways to narrow the widening wealth gap using the concept of social business. The two-day event, which will welcome more than 2,000 guests from over 36 countries, incorporates panel discussions and first-hand accounts from social business entrepreneurs and activists on the experiences and challenges they face. **Thomas Gass, Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations**, and a key figure in the implementation of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), delivered the keynote speech.

Joël Bouzou, President of the World Olympians Association, spoke on the role sport and Olympians have in promoting wealth distribution and creating a fairer, more equitable society.

WOA President, Joël Bouzou, said:

"I am delighted to be here in Dhaka today, representing the Olympians, as a guest of Professor Muhammad Yunus. Social Business Day is an important forum that reflects on the social and economic challenges facing the world and the opportunity to address those challenges through an innovative, socially-responsible economic approach.

"I believe in the power that sport and Olympians have in society. Sport promotes unity, it drives social development and it brings communities together in a way that little else can. From offering a pathway out of poverty to creating opportunities for Olympians to give back to society, an emphasis on responsible redistribution of wealth is imperative.

“Everyone should have the right to play sport and enjoy its benefits both for themselves and for society. By adapting sports rules and equipment and demonstrating how a fishing net can become a volleyball net or a bundle of rags can become a football, the Peace & Sport devised **Sport Simple** concept can give children all over the world the opportunity to take part in sport and get on a pathway which can lead to a better life and the chance to influence the world around them for the better.”

During the Forum Mr Bouzou praised the International Olympic Committee’s Olympic Solidarity programme, which redistributes broadcast and sponsorship funding to help develop sport in poorer nations, as an important step toward attaining the concept of universality in sport.

He also used the example of 2017 WOA Service to Society grant recipient, the Zimbabwe Olympians Association, which has established a profitable Olympian-run chicken farm that creates jobs in the local community and funds athletes’ education, as embodying the positive ideals of social business in sport.

-ENDS-

Notes to Editors:

About World Olympians Association

WOA is the member organisation for the more than 120,000 Olympians worldwide. Our remit is to work for the benefit of all Olympians at all stages of their lives, empowering them to serve society and help make the world a better place. With 148 member National Olympians Associations (NOAs) spread across all five continents, WOA provides support to Olympian-run events and projects based on the Olympic ideals laid down by the founder of the modern Olympic Games, Pierre de Coubertin.

Image

Please find attached an image of WOA President Joël Bouzou with Nobel Laureate Professor Muhammad Yunus at the 7th annual Social Business Day in Dhaka, Bangladesh

For more information

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