



When the United Nations Recognizes the Importance of Fair Play in Sport

Press release,
Brussels, May 19,

By designating May 19, 2025, as an annual International Fair Play Day, the United Nations unmistakably acknowledges the global significance and deeply humanistic nature of this attitude in sport (the world's largest organized "community"), which should become the very essence of civic relations.

Historically championed by the International Fair Play Committee (1963), Panathlon International (1960), and the European Fair Play Movement (1994), the defense of Fair Play has been in good hands. However, a strong global act was needed to materialize the importance of this concept while also providing significant support to the tireless advocates of this mindset.

This has now been achieved: starting in 2025, May 19 will be the official day of celebration worldwide.

Budapest, under the aegis of the CIFP, Lausanne, under the leadership of Panathlon International, and Olympia, through the European Fair Play Movement, will be the focal points of this initiative, followed by dozens of countries worldwide and hundreds of thousands of athletes through their federations.

A day to celebrate Fair Play and, thus, a beautiful way of living together—not only in sport.

The Genesis of World Fair Play Day

The “World Fair Play Day (WFPD)” concept may find its roots in several parallel initiatives, such as those inspired by Panathlon Wallonia-Brussels (PWB), where Fair Play Days have happened annually since 2013 in French-speaking Belgium as well as the discussions held 10+ years ago by CIFP at UNESCO regarding a global mobilization of such an initiative.

A more international version has been put into action. since 2020 to promote Fair Play and Ethical Values in sport. Everyone in sport both on and off the pitch is invited to highlight fair play initiatives, projects and successes every year. On the 7th September, the first global World Fair Play Day was inaugurated in Brussels with both formal signings and local sports activities and events.

The WFPD is coordinated by a joint worldwide partnership between the International Committee for Fair Play, Panathlon International, the European Fair Play Movement.

The idea of the day recognizes that fair play can be promoted by large national initiatives and small simple gestures, so PWB invited all athletes, practitioners, leaders, coaches, trainers, referees, parents, supporters and those around them to join the campaign and take concrete action on the ground and demonstrate exemplary behaviour in all circumstances. To make this day a true celebration of fair play in sports.

The date of 7th September was not chosen at random, because it was on this day in 1963 that the founding members of what was to become the International Committee for Fair Play (CIFP), met on the initiative of



the French Tennis Champion Jean Borotra. The International Olympic Committee later endorsed the CIPF as champion of the values of the Olympic Charter

The key strategic ambition for the day is to enable the values of sports ethics and fair play to be understood as a real component of education both in sport, society and life itself.

The outcomes of the WFPD contribute also to the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations particularly no 4 (Quality Education) and no 17 (Partnerships). In line with International Olympic Committee recommendations the day contributes to the aims of Unesco's International Charter of Physical Education, Physical Activity and Sport and the European Sports Charter of the Council of Europe.

Why have a World Fair Play Day?

- Sport, when it is practiced with fair play values, helps develop better communities and individuals, improves education, and can promote peace and harmony
- Fair Play teaches values such as respect, integrity, solidarity, tolerance, inclusion, fraternity, sharing, exchange, as well as self-control and self-development
- Fair Play impacts on concepts and issues that are wider than sport including integrity, equal opportunities, social inclusion and disability, race and gender equality
- Fair Play also attacks cheating, doping, match fixing, illegal gambling, money laundering, harassment, and any forms of physical and moral violence
- The Olympic values and Olympism itself are achieved through demonstrating fair play Yet there is no "world day" recognising these benefits to society.

The United Nations Dedicates a Day to the Theme of Fair Play

Since 2013, the world of sport has been striving each year to embrace Fair Play a little more.

Thanks to these ongoing efforts, under the aegis of the International Fair Play Committee, supported by its partners Panathlon International and the European Fair Play Movement, the United Nations has proclaimed May 19 of each year as "World Fair Play Day" starting in 2025. The Institution's motivations are largely based on the existence and actions of the CIPF, PI, and EFPM.

The justifications and reasons put forward by the United Nations are therefore crucial to better understanding the progress made... and above all, the essential obligation to do a little more each day, every day, and everywhere in the world to make fair play the foundation of lasting human relations.



Recognizing that sports, the arts and physical activity have the power to change perceptions, prejudices and behaviours, as well as to inspire people, break down racial and political barriers, combat discrimination and defuse conflict, as reflected in the political declaration adopted at the Nelson Mandela Peace Summit in 2018,¹

Recognizing also that the spirit of fair play is deeply rooted in the Olympic ideal,

Welcoming the work carried out by the International Fair Play Committee, and noting its aim to preserve and promote respect for the spirit of fair play and the values it represents in elite sport and in sport for all, as well as in daily life, in particular the observance of rules, respect for the opponent and combating violence and doping,

1. Decides to proclaim 19 May as World Fair Play Day;
2. Invites all Member States, the United Nations system and, in particular, the Division for Inclusive Social Development of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, relevant international organizations and international, regional and national sports organizations, civil society, including non-governmental organizations and the private sector, and all other relevant stakeholders to cooperate, observe and raise awareness of World Fair Play Day to promote the practice of sport with a spirit of friendship, solidarity, tolerance and inclusion and without discrimination;
3. Commends countries that have hosted and will host significant international sporting events, and encourages them to ensure that these events leave a lasting legacy for global peace, sportsmanship and fair play;
4. Stresses that sport, including sport for persons with disabilities, has an important role to play in the promotion of peace and development, community cohesion, respect for human rights, gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, given its universal popularity;
5. Reaffirms the independence and autonomy of sport as well as the mission of the International Olympic Committee in leading the Olympic movement and of the International Paralympic Committee in leading the Paralympic movement;
6. Stresses that the cost of all activities that may arise from the implementation of the present resolution should be met from voluntary contributions;

Requests the Secretary-General to bring the present resolution to the attention of all Member States, the organizations of the United Nations system and other relevant stakeholders for appropriate observance



The “Perpetual Calendar for a Fair Play World” , 364 ideas to support the act of Fair Play

The three institutions—CIFP, Panathlon International, and the European Fair Play Movement—are jointly committed to launching, as of today, a broad awareness campaign within their respective spheres in the world of sports to make a lasting impression and, modestly yet firmly, change the course of events.

To give the entire global sports movement the opportunity to make an original contribution to this day, the three partner institutions, at the initiative of Panathlon Wallonie-Bruxelles, have created a *"Perpetual Calendar for a Fair Play World"* (<https://worldfairplayday.org/the-perpetual-calendar/>), featuring 364 good ideas in support of fair play and, consequently, society as a whole.

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