

Report of the IJF President IJF Congress Tokyo, 22 August 2019



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Distinguished IJF Guests,
Dear EC Members,
Dear Presidents and delegates of IJF Member Federations,
Dear Judo Family,

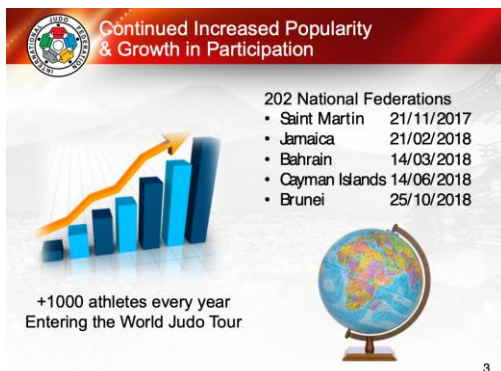
I would like to start my presentation by thanking all of you for the hard work of the past two years and for all your efforts to develop judo globally. Together we achieved good results, we reached important landmarks and we will continue to strive for excellence.



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To begin with, I would like to point out some remarkable aspects of the IJF activity in the past 2 years:

- Through our strong partnerships with some of the most prestigious media agencies in the world, judo is present more than ever on all types of media channels, with most of our diverse activities relayed to a global audience.



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-We report a continued increase in popularity, with more and more athletes competing in IJF competitions and with numerous programs for grassroots initiated around the world. Every year we have approximately 1,000 athletes more entering the IJF World Judo Tour, showing the universality and growing popularity of our sport. In the same way, IJF has now 202 member federations: since 2017 we have welcomed in the IJF Family St. Martin, Jamaica, Bahrain, Cayman Islands, Brunei and Timor Leste.



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-The past two years we focused a lot on the education dimension of judo, revamping and spreading the Judo in Schools program, which was also presented to the entire Olympic Movement, at the Olympism in Action Forum in Buenos Aires, last year.



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- On the same occasion I presented the issue of refugees and immigrants who must be given more and better access to sports.
- Consequently, we introduced 2 custom-made programs for these categories, which constitute the basis of the IOC larger program wishing to spread our initiative to all sports in the Olympic Movement.



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- As leading sports organization, judo is responsive to all issues of humankind that we are facing today on all continents and in all countries. With excellent collaboration with our member federations, we made history in Abu Dhabi by making sure Israeli athletes were allowed to use their national insignia, national flag and national anthem in the judo competition. We will continue to set an example for politicians and other organizations by safeguarding equal rights for all in judo.



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-I would like to briefly mention our project to move the IJF headquarters from Switzerland to Budapest, which has been home of the Presidential Office for more than 10 years now. The Hungarian Government's interest for sport and their national sport strategy, as well as the facilities which they will grant us represent a beneficial move for our organization, but you will find out more details about our intention in a presentation by the Hungarian Government to follow shortly.



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As a quick review of the IJF Calendar, I would like to emphasize the success of the World Judo Tour, currently counting 20 events per year. We have outstanding partnerships with long established destinations and new ones as well, showing a lot of interest and enthusiasm, for which we are thankful. We are equally dedicated to offer the best calendar for all our age categories as well as to the continental events which together compose a solid, reliable strategy for judo.



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I will highlight the World Championships, which is our flagship event, and which registers a constant progress at all levels, for the delight of fans, media and participants equally.

Last year in Baku, 755 athletes from 124 countries competed for the supreme title and 22 countries obtained medals.

This year, in Tokyo, the participation reaches new heights, with 860 athletes registered for the competition from 149 countries. We are expecting an exciting and very high-level competition.



Please enjoy a short video about the high-level event we had in Baku last year.



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We are in the pre-Olympic year and towards the end of the planning phase for Tokyo 2020. Except for minor issues which are related to an overall strategy of budget reduction on the side of the local organizing committee, the preparations are smooth and the collaboration with the organizing committee excellent. The Judo Team is very knowledgeable and hard working. We all look forward to offer an unforgettable competition, with a perfect organization, as we return to Budokan, the home of Olympic Judo and to Japan, the home country of Judo. We are equally proud that Mr. Yasuhiro Yamashita, our colleague and friend, has also become President of the Japanese Olympic Committee.

Since the Olympic Test Events were always a financial burden for participants and not very efficient, a few years ago, IJF proposed to the IOC to replace them with a “real” competition. I am happy to report that the Judo World Championships 2019 are also the Test Event for the Olympic Games.

Building on the legendary Judo roots of Japan, we implemented a strong promotion and media strategy, to make sure that Judo will be at the heart of Tokyo 2020. We are witnessing a very high interest and focus on our sport from all over the world and we hope that we can capitalize on this privileged position.

In line with the IJF and IOC strategy for refugee athletes, we are working hard and investing to have a Refugee Team in the Olympic Mixed Team Event, showing the world an example of solidarity and respect and applying the principles of mutual aid and prosperity which are the essence of Judo. IJF is financing the entire program until after the Olympic Games, including the salaries.



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I mention the work that our IJF Competition Team is doing, from competition to competition, ensuring the success of our events, at all levels. This slide shows you the number of departments that work together, in order to achieve this and we are currently counting a total of 70-100 persons for each event.



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With a complex range of IJF activities, we are actively partnering with different external institutions. I would like to highlight that Olympic Solidarity is an excellent partner for the IJF Academy, contributing to expenses for a number of projects, in cooperation with the different NOCs concerned; furthermore we are renewing the partnerships with USIP, CISM and IBSA Judo, in order to support their activities and hopefully help our National Federations implement more diversified activities for a wider range of judoka.

We are equally proud to have the support of the IOC and the United Nations for our revolutionary Refugee and Immigrant programs which create equal conditions and inclusion opportunities for these social categories and for all the children of the world.



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We must mention here the numerous Judo in School agreements, where Ministries of Sport or Education are partnering with us and our National Federations in order to deliver a successful judo and education product for the youth in their countries.

Development		
	2018	2019
• TOTAL IJF DONATIONS	7.863.044 USD	5.885.017 USD
• Equipment	2.297.822 USD	1.491.031 USD
• Financial	1.623.848 USD	1.100.000 USD
• Gyms		2 delivered
• Participation to events	1.623.699 USD	1.122.117 USD
• IJF experts and coaches	848.530 USD	972.000 USD
• Judo in Schools	356.888 USD	708.000 USD
• Building Dojos 2 countries : Zambia & Mali	481.548 USD	54.557 USD
• Other development activities:		
- Judo for the World	216.194 USD	122.717 USD
- Kitzbuehel Seminar	70.520 USD	110.000 USD
- IJF Academy	344.515 USD	204.595 USD
• TOTAL COUNTRIES	65	45

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One of the main focuses for the IJF is Development. Under Development we understand all the activities proposed to National Federations and all the investments into the IJF Members, in order to raise the level of judo in all regions of the world, to increase the popularity of our sport and to give means to our federations to support themselves and grow in line with the IJF. As you may see, IJF is annually investing a huge amount, almost 8 million USD per year, in order to expand as much as possible our development reach. The annual supported countries represent a quarter of our total membership.

The numbers you see on the screen are self-explanatory and I can assure you that in comparison with other top Olympic International Federations, IJF leads the way when it comes to this kind of direct support and input into the development of its membership.



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Judo remains the most educational sport on the Olympic programme. In our various efforts to develop our sport and actively contribute to society, we managed to create programs and activities which concentrate around Judo's extraordinary values.



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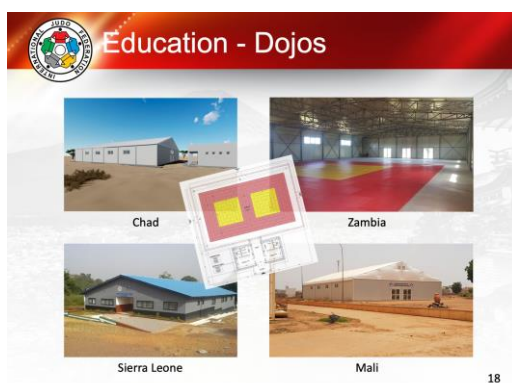
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As in any family or society, one of the most important factors in the judo family is education. This can come in the form of various seminars which IJF organized in collaboration with you, our members, or with NOCs, clubs and Ministries. The biggest event of this kind is taking place in Kitzbuehel, Austria, at the beginning of every year. This is a good moment and proper environment for all of us – athletes, coaches, referees, Executive Committee Members, to meet and align our plans, think and learn together in order to be able to work and obtain the best results every year.



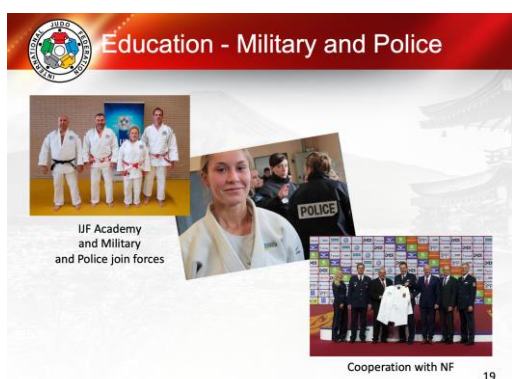
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Our most effective tool to really understand our Judo roots is Kata. With this in mind, special attention and energy is given to developing the practice of Kata and this year, the World Championships are taking place within the World Martial Arts Masterships in Korea, under the High Patronage of Mr. Ban Ki Moon, immediately after the World Championships here in Tokyo.



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There are many ways and resources which we can activate in order to educate through Judo, and it always starts from the dojo. This is why we found it important to assist and help some federations with the building of dojos, proposing a custom-made, cost-effective and professional solution.



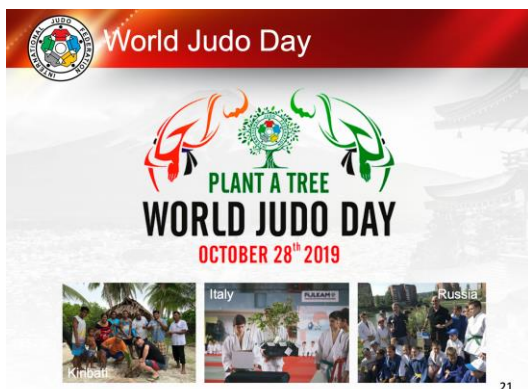
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In many countries we managed to develop judo programs dedicated to the police and military forces. We are actively contributing to better and safer societies, bringing more knowledge and more values in the general protection of citizens.



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In other countries, we chose another way to educate through Judo: educational journeys. In partnership with our National Federations and their respective NOCs, as well as various Judo Champions who are joining these journeys, we are spreading the presence and notoriety of judo. The last Judo Education Tour was in Iran, in 2018 and it gained a lot of success and attention from media, authorities and public as well.



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I would also like to mention our World Judo Day activities, with **Friendship** being the theme for 2018 and **Plant a Tree** for 2019. The judo community has a tremendous interest in this special celebration day and for 2019, we would like to leverage this in order to contribute to a better environment, to a cleaner and healthier planet. We all know the Earth is in a serious ecological crisis, therefore, I take this opportunity to urge you all to give a hand and be part of this activity.



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When we talk about education, IJF has developed and runs various projects that bring important contributions and benefits both to judokas and National Federations, as well as society on a greater scale.

- One of the main IJF programs, which so far has reached over 50 countries, is Judo In Schools.
- The IJF Academy is one of the most useful tools we have in order to ensure a good future for our sport, professional coaches and knowledgeable athletes that will surely reach remarkable results in the world of sports and in their lives as well.
- Our longest running education program is Judo for Peace – where judo becomes instrumental to bring societies together, show an example of peace and mutual friendship and respect between people.

For a more detailed presentation of these three specific programs, I will give the floor to Mr. Ruben Houkes, Mr. Envic Galea and Mr. Nicolas Messner, Project Coordinators of the IJF.

But before that, I have the pleasure to give the floor to Mr. Vlad Marinescu, who has joined again the IJF Family as Chief Marketing and Media Officer, to present the communication, marketing and IT activities of the IJF.



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I would like to point out that our future objectives are clear and our targets are set high: we wish to achieve excellence here in Tokyo, at our World Championships this year and at our “home” Olympic Games in 2020 as well. We also hope to increase media interest around our unique and outstanding athletes as never before.

Our mission is not only to develop our sport, our athletes and manage our assets. Our mission reaches much further than our own interests and the measure of success will be the contribution we can make to a better world, with more peace and better citizens, through the means of sport, and especially Judo.



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Finally, I would like to conclude with an invitation for all of you, to the IJF Gala to take place tomorrow from 5 pm to 9 pm at the Grand Prince Takanawa Hotel.



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Thank you all for your attention, but mainly, for your work and contribution to the development of judo, to the progress of humankind and societies all over the world.