

**INTERNATIONAL 'ACCEPT AND RESPECT' DECLARATION
FOR WOMEN IN SPORT, DEVISED IN OMAN, GOES TO
INTERNATIONAL OLYMPIC COMMITTEE CONFERENCE,
JORDAN, MARCH 8 - 10TH**

Between 11 - 16th February 2008 a study group, held under the aegis of the International Association of Physical Education and Sport for Girls and Women (IAPESGW), was generously hosted by Sultan Qaboos University. The group included scholars, practitioners and administrators in physical education and sport, from 14 countries - Bahrain, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Denmark, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Malaysia, Morocco, Oman, South Africa, Syria, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates and the United Kingdom.

The purpose of the group was both to affirm the value of physical education and sport in the lives of all the people of the world; and, by sharing a range of culturally and nationally diverse experiences, to identify means of improving the opportunities of Muslim women in and through sport and physical education.

The resultant declaration is currently being disseminated around the world and will be presented on behalf of the International Association of Physical Education and Sport for Girls and Women at the 4th International Olympic Committee's Women's Conference on Women and Sport, to be held for the first time in the Middle East - in Jordan 8th - 10th March.

Those presenting the Declaration 'Accept and Respect' will be a delegate from the Oman Study Week, Nour Al-Houda Karfoul from Syria, President of the Sport Association of Arab Women, and Professor Darlene Kluka, President of IAPESGW, Extraordinary Professor, University of Pretoria, S. Africa.

DECLARATION "Accept and Respect":

1. Islam is an enabling religion that endorses women's participation in physical activity.
2. We affirm the importance of physical education and physical activity in the lives of *all* girls and boys, men and women.
3. We emphasise the importance of good quality programmes of physical education and sport within school curriculum time, especially for girls.
4. We emphasise the desirability, in places where many children have limited access to school, of providing other ways of helping children to learn the physical skills and confidence they need to practise sport.
5. We recommend that people working in the sport and education systems accept and respect the diverse ways in which Muslim women and girls practise their religion and participate in sport and physical activity, for example, choices of activity, dress and gender grouping.
6. We urge international sport federations to show their commitment to inclusion by ensuring that their dress codes for competition embrace Islamic requirements, taking into account the principles of propriety, safety and integrity.
7. We recommend national governments and organisations include in their strategies for the development of sport and physical education, structures and systems that encourage women to take positions in teaching and research, coaching, administration and leadership.