



EUROPEAN
COMMISSION



Declaration on supporting the European Paralympic Committee

WE

Ján Figel'

Member of the European Commission responsible for Education, Training, Culture, Youth, Sport and Citizenship

AND

Enrique Sánchez-Guijo Acevedo

President of the European Paralympic Committee

Present in Beijing on the occasion of the 2008 Paralympic Games,

Noting the importance of promoting social inclusion, equal opportunities and active citizenship amongst the people of Europe, especially vis-à-vis citizens with disabilities, as underlined by the White Paper on Sport;

Recognising that sport plays a central role in ensuring a favourable opening for the development of individual talent, rehabilitation and social integration of people with physical, sensorial and mental disabilities;

Recalling that Decision 1904/2006 of the European Parliament and the Council establishing the programme "Europe for Citizens" stresses the role played by civil society organisations in bringing Europe closer to its citizens and enabling them to fully participate in the process of European integration;

Declare that sport constitutes an essential tool that must be used to foster active citizenship and social cohesion based on the values of the European Union and its Member states;

Declare that the spreading of the values promoted by the Paralympic movement can reinforce the action of the European Union in the field of equal opportunities for all;

Affirm the importance of creating a solid partnership between the Paralympic movement and the European Union with a view to strengthening social integration and supporting the active involvement of all citizens in the process of European construction;

Note that the financial support provided by the European Commission to the European Paralympic Committee through the "Europe for Citizens" programme, celebrated here today, represents the tangible sign of such a partnership;

Stress the significance of pursuing our cooperation in view of reinforcing the values promoted by the Paralympic movement as an effective way of building a European society based on tolerance, fair play, inclusion and active citizenship.

Ján Figel'
European Commissioner for
Education, Training, Culture and Youth

Enrique Sánchez-Guijo
President
European Paralympic Committee