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Media Release

ICF Clarifies Position on Women's Canoe Category and Gender Equity

No increase in athlete quota for Canoeing at the Olympic Games but discussions underway

Lausanne, Switzerland 20 November 2012 – The International Canoe Federation (ICF) would like to clarify its position on the Women's Canoe category, in light of the incorrect conclusions drawn from the ICF Congress held in St. Petersburg, Russia.

At the Congress ICF President Jose Perurena reported that the IOC would not be increasing Canoeing's quota at the next Olympic Games in Rio. This means that the same number (330) of Canoeing athletes that participated at the London Games will compete in Rio.

At no point during his report to the Congress did the President or any representative of the ICF, say that Women's Canoe will not be included in Rio 2016. On the contrary the President informed Congress that he would continue to have discussions with the IOC about the inclusion of Women's Canoe in the Canoe Slalom Olympic Programme in 2016.

The ICF is in the process of recruiting two Technical Directors for Canoe Sprint and Canoe Slalom respectively and they will be responsible for developing and monitoring the programme. The ICF is working to develop the Women's Canoe Category Programme in 3 steps: the first was the inclusion of the Women's Canoe category in both Canoe Sprint and Canoe Slalom at the 2014 Youth Olympic Games in Nanjing, China. The second step is to conduct Training Camps every year in Sprint and Slalom to increase the level of performance at Junior & U23 World Championships and at Senior World Championships. The final stage is to include the Women's Canoe category at the Olympic Games.

The ICF would like to point out that on a global scale, few National Federations are developing the Women's Canoe category in the Canoe Sprint discipline whereas much progress is being made in the development of the Women's Canoe category in Canoe Slalom.

"The goal remains to have an equal number of women and men's medals at the 2020 and/or 2024 Olympic Games, but progress is made in stages and the ICF is taking the necessary steps to close the gap between male and female participation in the sport, not only at an elite level but also at a development level. In the next Congress in 2014 in Warsaw, we will set the programme for 2020 and/or 2024 and this is a plan that all the National Federations unanimously approved.

"We have to look at where we were 5 years ago, to see that the women in Canoeing are in a stronger position now. There are more women in leadership positions on every Continent, not just in North America and Europe, and a lot of progress has been made also in terms of participation at competitions.

"The IOC accepted the ICF's proposal to include a Women's Canoe Category at the next Youth Olympic Games in both the Canoe Sprint and Canoe Slalom competitions, and we still endeavour to have Women's Canoe in the Slalom programme in Rio. Even at London 2012 we added a new women's event in Canoe Sprint - the K1 200m.

“It is good that people are mindful of gender equity in our sport, but it is equally important that people acknowledge the progress that has been made, and even though they wish it could all happen faster, or happen all at once, they have to recognize that Rome wasn’t built in one day.”

Speculation has been rife on the election of the 2nd Vice President at the Congress, where Joao da Costa Alegre (STP) defeated Richard Fox (AUS), but Mr. Perurena said that this was a decision taken by the Congress and not the ICF Executive Committee.

“There were two candidates in that election, Joao da Costa Alegre and Richard Fox, and both of them presented their programme for election to the Congress,” said the ICF President. “Ninety-three countries voted, it was a democratic election, a secret ballot. The Congress decided for the next four years that the 2nd Vice President of the ICF will be Joao da Costa Alegre. This is very simple”

The ICF will continue to keep the Canoeing Family informed about new developments in the Women’s Canoe category. Following the inclusion of the Women’s K1 200m (Canoe Sprint) at London 2012, the ICF is now committed to having Women’s C1 (Canoe Slalom) included in the Sport Programme of the Rio 2016 Olympic Games.

Videos

YouTube: www.youtube.com/CanoeKayaktv

Photos

For an extensive selection of Canoeing photos visit: www.canoephoto.com

Social Media

For information about the ICF and its activities, please follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [YouTube](#).

About ICF:

The International Canoe Federation (ICF) is the world governing body responsible for administering the sport of Canoeing, which includes both canoeing and kayaking. The ICF governs eight disciplines, two of which are Olympic sports (Canoe Sprint and Canoe Slalom). The competition categories of these two disciplines include Men’s Kayak, Men’s Canoe, Women’s Kayak and Women’s Canoe. The ICF has 157 member associations and is headquartered in Lausanne, Switzerland. Its current President is José Perurena López (ESP). To learn more about the ICF visit: www.canoeicf.com.

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