

# Relayons la flamme francophone



## Vancouver 2010

“Passing the francophone torch”



**French**, like English, is an official Olympic language as stipulated in Rule 24 of the Olympic Charter. It is also an official language of Canada. It will be at the heart of several events held in Vancouver and Whistler during the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games, many of which are the initiative of the International Organisation of La Francophonie (IOF) and the Great Witness of La Francophonie at the 2010 Winter Games.

Abdou Diouf, former President of Senegal and Secretary General of La Francophonie, and Pascal Couchepin, President of the Swiss Confederation in 2003 and 2008, and Great Witness of La Francophonie at the Vancouver Games, will preside over a major francophone event on February 13th at the Fairmont Hotel in Whistler, assembling francophone heads of state and government and the Olympic family in the presence of Jacques Rogge, President of the IOC and John Furlong, Chief Executive Officer of VANOC.

The Great Witness of La Francophonie, Pascal Couchepin, will be in Vancouver from February 10th to 23rd to observe the respecting of bilingualism and to promote international francophony, its youth and its diversity. He will return to Vancouver in March to continue his work during the Paralympic Games. A convention between IOF and VANOC signed by Pascal Couchepin and John Furlong provides for several joint actions under the slogan “Vancouver 2010: passing the francophone torch” to ensure that the 2010 Games are a perfect bilingual event.

For the first time, IOF is taking part in the Cultural Olympiad by ensuring the participation of international artists from several francophone countries who will perform on the Place de la Francophonie in Vancouver.

## The highlights of the “Passing the francophone torch” program

- **On February 13th in Whistler**, Abdou Diouf and Pascal Couchepin will assemble francophone heads of state and governments as well as the Olympic family in the presence of Jacques Rogge and John Furlong. Some 45 francophone countries are taking part in the Vancouver Games.
- **On February 14th at the Place de la Francophonie in Vancouver**, a francophone celebration will be held including parades, food tasting and a concert at 7.30pm by Angélique Kidjo and young international artists: Valérie Sadjik, Nicolas Fraissinet, Linda Thalye, Alpha Yaya Diallo, Carlos Placeres.
- **Ivorian athlete Youssef Ben Meite**, double gold medallist in the 100m and 200m at the 2009 6th Francophone Games in Beirut, has been invited to attend the Olympic Games by Pascal Couchepin.
- **Throughout the Games**, young prizewinning artists rewarded at the 6th Francophone Games will hold exhibitions and artist-in-residence programs (singing, story-telling, painting, photography and sculpture).
- **After the Games, the IOF and VANOC** will present the IOC and the organisers of the next Olympic Games in London, Sochi and Rio de Janeiro with a “Guide to good linguistic practices”.



The International Organisation of La Francophonie (IOF) is an institution based on the sharing of the French language and of common cultural values. It currently comprises fifty-six member states and governments and fourteen observers, which together represent 870 million people, including 200 million French-speakers. IOF is represented on all five continents and its members account for close to one-third of the United Nation's member states. The IOF has four principle missions: promoting the French language and cultural and linguistic diversity; fostering peace, democracy and Human Rights; supporting education, training, higher education and research; developing cooperation to ensure sustainable development and solidarity. In all of the IOF's activities there is a strong focus on young people and women as well as on access to information and communication technologies. The IOF was created in 1970 in Niamey (Niger) and celebrates its fortieth anniversary in 2010.

#### **56 member states and governments**

Albania • Principality of Andorra • Armenia • Kingdom of Belgium • Benin • Bulgaria • Burkina Faso • Burundi • Cambodia • Cameroon • Canada • Canada-New-Brunswick • Canada-Quebec • Cape Verde • Central African Republic • Cyprus • French Community of Belgium • Comoros • Congo • Democratic Republic of Congo • Ivory Coast • Djibouti • Dominican Republic • Egypt • Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia • France • Gabon • Ghana • Greece • Guinea • Guinea-Bissau • Equatorial Guinea • Haiti • Laos • Lebanon • Luxembourg • Madagascar • Mali • Morocco • Mauritius • Mauritania • Moldavia • Principality of Monaco • Niger • Romania • Rwanda • Saint-Lucia • Sao Tomé and Príncipe • Senegal • Seychelles • Switzerland • Chad • Togo • Tunisia • Vanuatu • Vietnam.

#### **14 observers**

Austria • Croatia • Georgia • Hungary • Latvia • Lithuania • Mozambique • Poland • Czech Republic • Serbia • Slovakia • Slovenia • Thailand • Ukraine.

**[www.francophonie.org](http://www.francophonie.org)**

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