
FOREWORD

I am deeply honoured and very pleased indeed to have been invited to write the Foreword to this book, especially as the great success of and excitement generated by the Beijing Olympics last Summer is still fresh in all our minds!

This is the first work on this important subject – the Olympic Games having been well described as ‘the greatest sporting show on earth’ – and the author, Alexandre Miguel Mestre, a distinguished Portuguese international sports lawyer, is to be warmly congratulated on producing it.

The book covers the historical development of ‘Olympic Law’ and the current legal status of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) as an NGO (non-governmental organisation) under Public International Law, and its various constituent members and organs. The UN resolutions on the Olympic Truce of which the latest one is published in the book, are of a recommendatory nature (‘soft law’), but well illustrate the wide range of international legal instruments, which constitute the corpus of so-called ‘Olympic Law’, including the inter-State Nairobi Treaty on the Protection of the Olympic Symbol – the famous five interconnected rings.

The book also addresses some contemporary legal issues affecting the Olympic Movement, including eligibility criteria, dual participation in the Olympics and the Paralympics as well as environmental concerns and the protection of the so-called ‘Olympic Properties’ – in other words the valuable intellectual property rights of the IOC including TV rights – without which the Olympic Games could not be financed and staged.

The book also includes a section on the so-called ‘Satellite Organisations’ of the Olympic Movement, including the World Anti Doping Agency; the Court of Arbitration for Sport; the Olympic Congress and Commissions; and the International Foundation for the Olympic Truce.

The book, which is the latest edition to the Asser International Sports Law Series – General Editors, Dr. Robert Siekmann and Dr. Janwillem Soek, to whom congratulations are also due for publishing this ‘pilot study’, a first serious attempt to chart the ‘Olympic Law’ – is well researched, comprehensive and clearly written; and also reproduces several very useful source documents, including the Olympic Charter, the governing regulation of the Olympic Movement, and the all-important IOC Code of Ethics. To have these important documents in one place is an attractive feature of the Book. A Selected Writings section is added to the book.

I am very pleased to commend this book to all those involved in any way in the Olympic Movement and the Olympic Games themselves; and I am sure that the book will find its rightful place on the shelves of many sports lawyers, administrators, event managers and their professional advisers, throughout the world – not

least in China where Sports Law is an ever-developing subject of abiding interest and concern.

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