

FIRST EDITION OF "CISM" WINTER MILITARY WORLD GAMES

AOSTA VALLEY 20th – 25th March 2010

On Saturday the 20th the Forum "Sport and Peace" will take place in the morning as the opening event of the Winter Games and then the opening ceremony will follow at 5 pm in Piazza Chanoux.

For five days Sport will play the leading role in Brusson, Cogne, Courmayeur, Gressoney St.Jean, Flassin and Pila.

(Aosta, March 16th 2010)- On Saturday March 20th at 5 p.m., in Piazza Chanoux in Aosta, the Opening Ceremony will officially open the first edition of the Winter Military World Games Aosta Valley 2010.

It is a great sport event promoted by Aosta Valley, which was presented today during a press conference at the Regional Council of Aosta Valley. The conference was attended by **Augusto Rollandin**, President of the self-government region Aosta Valley, **Aurelio Marguerettaz**, Councillor of Tourism, Sport and Trade, General **Gianni Gola**, President of the International Military Sport Council (CISM), **Rinaldo Sestili**, Chief of the Italian Delegation for CISM and Sport Manager of Stato Maggiore della Difesa Generale and **Luigi Roth**, President of the Organizing Committee.

Augusto Rollandin highlighted that the Winter Military World Games are a great opportunity for Aosta Valley to be in the spotlight for one of the greatest international sport events. He added that Aosta Valley is able to reach this target. Moreover he wanted to thank Luigi Roth for the excellent job done during these months in the sports venue and Gianni Gola, who chose Aosta Valley to host this very first edition. He concluded saying that the region is ready to welcome the athletes and their team-managers; it will be a great and wonderful sports event.

Aurelio Marguerettaz emphasized the importance of welcoming, saying that welcoming and friendship are typical characteristics of mountain and local populations. Peace needs friendship among people and he is confident that the region will give a great example of friendship and welcoming to all the athletes and their team-managers, who will arrive these days to Aosta, and to the other six competition venues.

Luigi Roth has also underlined the importance of the cooperation between Aosta and the other six competition venues, which are ready to host 800 athletes and their team-managers coming from 42 countries, who will compete in this first edition of the Winter World Military Games. He added that these Games are the result of the commitment of Aosta Valley hoping that this event will give the region a better recognition.

Rinaldo Sestili sent his best regards to Chile, which should have been the 43th country involved in these Games. He said: "the earthquake that hit this country obliged the delegation of Chile to renounce the participation to the Winter Military World Games. During these Games we want to show what we really are, namely citizens that are trying their best to accomplish an institutional duty. Sestili as well sent a peace message: "We want peace surrounded by justice and the military sport is the best means to reach this target. Sport is the unifying element among people and we are looking for peace through sport, as a great military athlete said in 1924."

Gianni Gola emphasized the importance of peace, adding that for 62 years CISM has never had religious problems because military sport is against the intolerance.

Through sport CISM is representing 132 countries and armed forces that will compete in the sporting "battlefield" of competition. This will be the main theme of the "Sport and Peace" Forum, which will gather the Mission Chiefs of the nations involved in the games on Saturday the 20th at 9 a.m. in "Palazzo Regionale", Deffeyes square 1, Aosta. It will collect the direct experiences of those who are responsible for the international peace missions to reach a final resolution about the sport as a way to end conflicts. Gianni Gola, who is in charge of opening the Games, and Mario Pescante, Vice-President of CIO, will be welcomed by Augusto Rollandin. The representatives of UN, NATO, Sport and Peace Foundation, Papal Council for the lay state and CISM will bring their own experiences about peacekeeping missions linked to military sports.

In conclusion General Gola thanked Rollandin because he looks ahead, he believes in sports and he welcomed the Winter Military World Games in Aosta Valley during the crises that the world is facing. Nowadays this is a positive message.

General Gola announced that on Sunday, March 21st at 9 a.m., a demonstrative competition of cross-country race will take place to introduce a discipline that will be included in the next edition of the Winter Olympic Games in Sochi in 2014.

Annecy could host the second edition of Winter Military World Games in 2013. This decision will be taken by the Major of Annecy during the annual assembly in May, he will be an observer in Aosta during these competitions.