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EOC Opens EU Office in Brussels

20 February 2009, Brussels – Patrick Hickey, President of the European Olympic Committees celebrated today the opening of his new Brussels EU Office in presence of high representatives of the world of sport like Jacques Rogge, President of the International Olympic Committee, Thomas Bach, President of the German Olympic and Sports Confederation, and Ján Figel', the European Commissioner responsible of sport.

Following the latest developments regarding the European sporting policy, such as the adoption of the European White Paper on Sport and the insertion of an article on sport in the Treaty of Lisbon, the EOC wish to reinforce their commitment and to continue the work of the EU Office of German sports opened in 1993 by the German Sport Confederation, the German Olympic committee and the German regional sport confederations.

About 80 representatives coming from National Olympic Committees and National Sport Confederations of Europe as well as the European institutions could witness a symbolic baton handover between Mr. Bach and Mr. Hickey.

The new EOC EU office will take over the activities of the former EU Office of German sports, namely to represent the interests of the EOC and its members (national and European non governmental sports organisations) towards the European institutions and to inform them of the legal and financial impact of the EU legislation on sport.

The following European issues will definitely have an impact on the sports movement and will be closely followed this year: the financing of sport and safeguard of the integrity of competitions, the definition of the specificity of sport, the implementation of the EU sport budget line 2009, the ratification of the Lisbon Treaty, the elections to the European Parliament and the new incoming European Commission.

The EOC President, M. Hickey, stated that "we are at the edge of a substantial change. Sport may become by the end of the year a field of EU competence, depending on the outcome of the Irish referendum." He also added that "the EOC EU Office is the right



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tool to optimize our dialogue with the European institutions. We believe in a constructive exchange with the European institutions, and we have enough reasons to believe that it is reciprocal.”

More information: info@euoffice.eurolympic.org