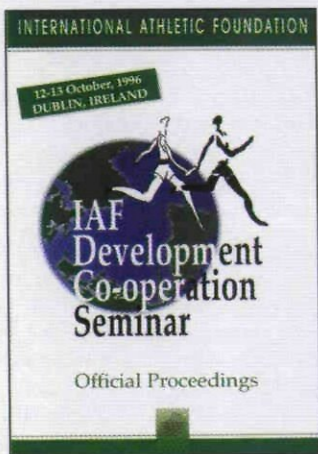


## IAF Development Co-operation Seminar

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Official Proceedings

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The Development Co-operation Seminar was organised by the International Athletic Foundation in Dublin on October 12-13. This attempted not only to examine the various strands of the IAAF's Development Programme but also to raise questions – Have the methods established over the past decade been effective? How can we ensure that the sport remains popular, attractive and viable in the future? The President of the IAF and IAAF, Dr Primo Nebiolo, explained in his opening address: "In this Seminar we hope to encourage a broad range of discussion, starting with the tasks and challenges ahead as we face the next century. Considering that athletics is one of the few truly universal and multi-national sports, we must also look at how we can enable our sport to continue expanding and to improve its appeal for the new generation."

Education programmes as well as the establishment of nine IAAF Regional Development Centres in six continents (Cairo, EGY; Dakar, SEN; Nairobi, KEN; Beijing, CHN; Jakarta, INA; Salinas, PUR; Santa Fe, ARG; Lisbon, POR; Adelaide, AUS) to act as "branch offices" for IAAF policy, have been crucial to the success of development. But the role of the IAAF's Area Group Representatives (covering federations in Africa, Asia, Europe, Oceania, North America Central America and Caribbean, and South America) has also been vital. Their knowledge of local conditions, needs and difficulties helped the IAAF formulate a policy that could be applied universally. Friendly co-operation between IAAF policy makers (the IAAF Council, following advice from the Development Commission), IAAF Area Representatives, the national federations, other local authorities and sometimes other sporting organisations (like the International Olympic Committee through its Olympic Solidarity Programme) has been, and will continue to be, the fuel of real development.

As was revealed in many of the seminar lectures, education remains at the heart of the IAAF Programme. Since 1992 the IAAF has created a Coaches Education and Certification System (with 3 levels of proficiency) a Technical Officials Education and Certification System, has organised Administration, Competition, Management, Medical and Press and Statistics Seminars as well as producing accompanying handbooks and technical literature like the quarterly magazine *New Studies in Athletics*.

Alongside what could be described as the routine programmes organised at the RDCs are the so-called Extraordinary Projects. The first of these, to provide assistance to countries of the former Soviet Union and eastern bloc, was established by the IAAF in 1992. The IAAF "Eastern Countries Project", as it has become known, helped 28 nations maintain their position as athletic powers during a period of dramatic economic and political change. The project offers financial assistance, under strict procedural guidelines, which can be used for office equipment, travel and accommodation costs for competitions, training camps,

administrative costs, contribution to clubs and sports equipment. Extraordinary Projects will now be extended to other Areas with the first project aimed at Africa. One of the interesting statistics to emerge from the Seminar was of the numbers of countries placing in the finals of major competitions:

1991	World Championships	46
1992	Olympic Games	51
1993	World Championships	57
1995	World Championships	58
1996	Olympic Games	62.

This globalisation of athletic success is even more apparent in lists of world top 50 and top 100 athletes. Africa, in particular, has come to dominate distance running. The first eight finishers in the Olympic men's 10,000m final were from Africa and African men owned over half of the world's top 50 best marks at 5000m and 10,000, completing dominating rivals from the other six continental areas.

Yet despite the success stories, this seminar confronted the challenge of development in the 21st century with a sense of realism. In a keynote speech, that is printed in full in this issue of NSA (cf. page 7 ff.) as the Viewpoint, Professor Digel warned of the dangers of complacency. By analysing the sport in depth he concluded that athletics was a competitive sport that had been considered fresh and modern a century ago. To maintain its popularity among the young it needed to compete with hundreds of other sports, many of which seemed more appealing to a new generation that saw athletics as something demanding self discipline, long periods of hard training, individual sacrifice and plenty of opportunity for failure (there is only ever one winner in athletic events). In Digel's view, the sport needed to examine itself ruthlessly to discover ways to maintain its position as a key sport even if this entails radical change to competition formats, rules and facilities as well as to the relationships among athletes, federations, coaches and managers. Athletics must find ways to attract not just new participants but also loyal and enthusiastic fans, TV and media interest and consequently, financial backing from sponsors. The key task for athletic development programmes is to accept that since society is changing fast the sport must change too.

The proceedings contain all presentations of the three sessions inclusive the prior and post speeches. **Session 1** started with the "Opening Lectures" by Helmut Digel (International Athletics at the Threshold of the 21st Century) and Björn Wangemann (The IAAF Development Strategy), followed by information on "The IAAF Education Programme" by Peter Thompson (Coaches Education and Certification System), Tiziano Campedelli

(Technical Officials Education and Certification System) and Bill Glad (Educational Activities for Specialist Personnel) and on the IAAF "Projects" by Elio Locatelli (Extraordinary Projects) and Istvan Gyulai (Eastern Countries Project).

**Session 2** analysed the "Situation of the six IAAF Areas": Africa by Hassan Agabani, Asia (written report), Europe by Carl-Olaf Homen, NACAC by Amadeo Francis, Oceania by Arthur Eustace, South America by Roberto Gesta de Melo. A special focus on the development of women's athletics was given, in the lead up to the IAAF's Year of Women in 1998, by Ilse Bechtold (Women in Athletics).

**Session 3** saw "Reports from selected Member Federations" (chosen according to their answers to a questionnaire of the IAAF): Sweden (Toralf Nilsson), France (François Juillard), South Africa (Banele Sindani), Burkina Faso (Yentéma Combar), Australia (Neil King), Bahrain (Mohamed Ali Ahmed), Uruguay (Carlos Bobba Bonatti), Jamaica (Neville McCook) and El Salvador (Raúl Leiva Navidad). Another section covered the "International Co-operation" with CONFEJES (Confederation of Ministers of Youth and Sport) by Michel Déronzier, The Athletics System at US Universities by Victor Lopez and Olympic Solidarity (written report).

The congress finished with "Final Conclusions", made by IAAF Senior Vice President Lamine Diack. The report concludes with two additional "Annexes", the seminar programme and notes on the contributors and chairmen.

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