

Cuban Olympic Committee mourns the death of Jacques Rogge



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Roberto Leon Richards Aguiar, president of the COC, spoke by telephone with JIT to convey his condolences and those of his institution for the loss of the man he described as a true man of sport and a faithful defender of Olympism.

Richards recalled Rogge's visit to Cuba on the occasion of the 2006 World Congress on Sport for All in Havana, when he greeted Army General Raúl Castro Ruz and shared with the then head of the IOC, José Ramón Fernández Álvarez.

The IOC announced today the death of Rogge at the age of 79, making him its eighth president.

It recalled that in addition to being an athlete, Jacques worked as an orthopedic surgeon, was married and left two children and two grandchildren.

Rogge was a Belgian rugby champion and represented his country with the national team. He won 16 national titles in sailing, a sport in which he reigned supreme worldwide and competed at the Olympic Games in Mexico 1968, Munich 1972 and Montreal 1976, in the Finn class.

After his career as an athlete, he headed the Belgian and European Olympic Committees. He was elected IOC president in 2001, after which he served as special envoy for youth, refugees and sport at the United Nations.

Thomas Bach, the current head of the IOC, said Sunday that "Jacques loved sport and being with athletes, and he transmitted this passion to all who knew him. His joy for sport was contagious."

"He was a consummate president, who helped modernize and transform the IOC. He will be remembered especially for championing youth sport and inaugurating the Youth Olympic Games. He was also a fierce advocate for clean sport and fought tirelessly against the evils of doping," he added.

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