

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE OPERATION OF ICAS HELLAS**

**At a special event - a press conference at a central hotel, the foundation of ICAS Hellas was announced on Wednesday 28 February in Athens.**

**ICAS Hellas is the Greek section of ICAS WORLD, the World Council of Amateur Sports, one of the largest independent amateur sport and culture organizations in the world.**

The Press Conference of the newly established ICAS HELLAS, was attended by Minister Mr. G. Tsironis, representatives of the Ministries of Sports, Tourism and Maritime Affairs, Mayor of Veria, the President of the Municipal Council of Piraeus, presidents of sports, business and tourism federations and associations and crowd distinguished guests, celebrities of the sporting, social, cultural and business life of our country.

ICAS Hellas aims to promote amateur sport in Greece through the organization of Annual World Sports and Cultural Events in collaboration and with the support of the ICAS WORLD International Federation. With the parallel support of other institutional sports and social players in the country, more than 100,000 people are expected to visit Greece each year to participate in more than 30 sports in similar cities in our country, capitalizing on the advantages and highlights of the beauty of each of them.

At the same time a series of cultural events will accompany each of the respective sports events and will be followed by international workshops, conferences, forums with themes that will relate to the specificities of each city that will host the events.

At the press conference, Mr. Nikos Papadakos, President of ICAS GREECE, welcomed the distinguished guests, he developed the important role that ICAS has to play not only in the field of amateur sport but also in the tourist development of the country since the events that it organizes every year are expected to bring together hundreds of thousands of athletes, escorts and fans from all over the world, boosting tourism throughout Greece, especially during low season.

The President of ICAS GREECE then thanked the Minister of Shipping and Island Policy, Mr. Panagiotis Kourouplis, and the Minister of Tourism, Mr. Elena Kountoura, for the granting of their Ministries' official support to the First World Swimming and open water Games, to be held ICAS in the first ten days of June in Athens as well as to the Minister and Deputy Minister of Culture and Sports Mrs Lydia Koniordou and Mr. Giorgos Vasiliadis for their support.

Mr. Vladimir Fomin, Secretary General of ICAS WORLD, a veteran swimmer himself, talked about the joy of amateur athletes coming from all over the world, competing for the common purpose that is no other than that of developing strong bonds of friendship .

The Minister for Agricultural Development, Mr. Yiannis Tsironis, expressed his enthusiasm for the ICAS idea as he said "the joy of the effort has been lost. Its important to be on the spot when people try."

The Mayor of Veria, Mr. Vorgiazidis, assured the participants about the readiness of the city to accept the Handball Games and athletes from all over the world, as his city said it was and will be "the city of many cultures and religions".

The Chairman of the Municipal Council of the Municipality of Piraeus Mr. Davakis expressed his support for the municipality's effort and intent to work with the organization in the realization of its objectives and especially in the conduct of offshore races within the limits of the Municipality.

The President of the Panhellenic Association of Tourist and Travel Agencies of Greece, Mr Tsilidis, expressed the certainty that our country's tourist infrastructure, is ready to meet the ICAS challenge by providing high quality services to visitors.

The President of the Panhellenic Federation of Pangratio Mr Mazarakis referred to the cultural dimension of the Games and the role that our country should play in the return of sport to its true amateur base.

Finally, ICAS World Sport Coordinator Mr. Fylaktou announced the intention of the World Federation to support with all its might the vision of Greece becoming the center of global amateur sport, announcing at the same time a series of sporting events in Cyprus.

**As part of the ongoing international amateur games in Greece, the speakers finally announced some details of the first World Swimming and Water Sports Games to be held at OAKA stadium in the period 6-9 June 2018 (official support by the**

**Ministry of Tourism) and open water sports on the 10th of June (official support by the Ministry of Maritime Affairs) and the intention to organize Handball games in the city of Veria during the last ten days of June.**

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