

November 16, 1973

**Speech to the Asian Games Federation Council by
Hassan Rassouli, Secretary-General of the Iranian
Organizing Committee**

Citation:

"Speech to the Asian Games Federation Council by Hassan Rassouli, Secretary-General of the Iranian Organizing Committee", November 16, 1973, Wilson Center Digital Archive, H-FC02-ASIAN/002, The Olympic Studies Centre, Lausanne.
<https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/134619>

Summary:

Hassan Rassouli, secretary-general of the Iranian organizing committee and director-general of the governmental Iranian Physical Education Organization, makes a speech in support of the People's Republic of China's application to the Asian Games Federation. Rassouli offered a pan-Asian discourse that members could use to publically legitimize their pro-PRC decision by claiming that they were fighting against Western paternalism in sports affairs.

Original Language:

English

Contents:

Original Scan

Following is part of a speech made by Mr. Hassan Passoulis, Secretary-General of the Iranian Organizing Committee, at the Special Meeting of the AGF Council held in Tehran on 16 November, 1973.

"..... We have been threatened with sanctions. We have been threatened that the action that we shall take might have very serious consequences. But who are these bodies, who are these superlords, these great gnomes of sports sitting in Europe, these remnants of the old colonial policies of Europe dominating Asia, Africa, Latin America. Who are these self-imposed great personalities sitting and dictating to us what and how we should conduct the affairs of our own destiny. My distinguished colleague Mr. Padilla mentioned that the issue will not end here. I second that. This is the beginning, this is the beginning of our rights or the claiming of our rights with the International Federations. We, gentlemen, are masters of our own destiny, and we have to decide what our destiny is going to be as far as sports in Asia is concerned without being dictated to by International Federations nor the International Olympic Committee. (applause) We have been threatened that the patronage of IOC will be denied us. Let me, Mr. President with your permission, let me quote you some examples and some precedents of this. The All Africa Sports Association in organizing the second All Africa games did not allow the participation of South Africa and Rhodesia. They were threatened by IOC. They were threatened that the IOC patronage will be denied them. What happened. I saw personally Lord Killanin in Lagos, Nigeria, sitting there and I saw the flag of IOC flying in the stadium in Lagos. The International Swimming Federation threatened to boycott and sanction the International Swimming Championship in Belgrade only a few months ago. But did they do so? How can International Sports Federations do anything against the wish of the majority of its members. Gentlemen, you are the International Federations. And Gentlemen, you are the International Olympic Committee. We have heard a great

deal about the relationship between the NOCs, between the IOC and between the ISFs. In the step that you are going to take today you are not alone. Asia is not alone. You have the support of all the continents of Africa. You have the copy of the telegraph sent by Mr. G. The world is watching you today, gentlemen, to see whether the Asian Games Federation is the first organization to take this step forward and as our motto is 'Ever Onward' it is befitting that we should be the first to take this right step for the right belief and for the right ideal. We are not saying that we are going to conduct the Asian Games with complete and total disregard to the International Federations. No we are not. We are going to put our case forward, we are going to try to organize the Asian Games in absolute adherence to the rules of the International Sports Federations. But this is a difficult, and this is a different matter than to say that the International Sports Federations can sit and dictate to us what we should do and how we should do it, who we should have as a member and who we should not have as a member. If the International Amateur Athletic Federation dare, and I say dare, tell a body such as the Asian Games Federation, who they should decide to have as a member otherwise they are going to threaten them with sanction with this and the other then we shall not take it, we shall not stand for it. We can not accept an International Federation to meddle with the internal affairs of the Asian Games Federation. The Marquis of Exeter eminent as he is, an august person as he is, a learned sportsman as he may be, can only deal with the affairs of athletics, the rules of athletics, regulations of the athletic federation, not and I mean he cannot should not dictate to us or to any other regional games bodies how they should conduct their affairs of their own organization. I put to you gentlemen, that you should not take heed of the threats, of boycotts, sanctions of the actions that the International Federations can take or will take or may take, as long as we become united, as long as we stand together not only in Asia but also in Africa and also in other countries such as in Latin America. Then we will have our voice heard not only in this room not within the periphery of the Asian Games Federation movement, but within the whole world sports movement. We must stand firm in our

belief. We must do what our conscience dictate to us to be the right thing to do without taking any recourse, without getting worried or scared about what might happen, who might do what to us at a later date. I believe that the stand that I hope this Council will take today will be a step in the right direction. It is a historical event. The world is watching the Asian Games Federation today to see what positive action you can take in the right direction, in offering the opportunity to the youths of all Asians to come to participate in an atmosphere of friendship, solidarity and peace. We want the true representation of Asia in the Asian Games Federation. And the Asian Games Federation will be meaningless without the active participation of the largest country in Asia. And I, on behalf of the delegation of Iran, would like to put, Mr. President, once more to this house the recommendation of the Executive Committee for their consideration.
....."