



at the heart of horse sport

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**FEI World Endurance Forum
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Message from the FEI President

The popularity of Endurance should not be confused with the speed of its growth, which has depended thus far on many diverse factors.

The question that needs to be asked is: is this a discipline or industry that can sustain itself? And should the answer be in the negative then the question as to how to make it sustainable, needs to be answered. We also need to look at horsemanship and welfare questions which have damaged the discipline for many years. In order to address these questions, those inside the industry need to proactively advance the sport to a place where it truly reflects the values on which it is built.

These values surround the extraordinary partnership required between horse and rider in order to conquer long distances safely. In 776 BC when a cousin of our modern endurance discipline was a founding member of the Ancient Olympic Games, it was designed to keep military and soldiers fit, and the 16 days of the Olympiad were solidified by a truce of peace. The Games saw scouts or messengers travelling long distances, as they would in wars. The wreaths would have been given to soldiers who delivered their message whilst preserving the health of their horse.

I am sure that just as the Olympic Truce reined over those Ancient Games that form a proud backbone to your discipline, then harmony and a positive strategy will be found in the many voices of this conference.

It would not be realistic to expect you to devise a concrete strategy in this conference, but I certainly hope, that this is the point at which you start, and the end which you aim to achieve. One thing must come out of these meetings though, and that is that you agree on a common respect for horses, judges, stewards, vets, and all who make the discipline possible for those who take part. This respect will then provide the foundation on which you will evolve and I personally feel strongly that this is the only way forward.

I wish you well in your discussions and I look forward to hearing the progress you have made.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Haya'.

HRH Princess Haya Bint Al Hussein

President
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