

THE ROLE OF SPORTS DIPLOMACY IN CONTEMPORARY INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS: A CASE STUDY OF THE OLYMPIC GAMES

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DECLARATION

I, Etse Delanyo Logo, hereby declare that this dissertation is a product of a study conducted by me under the supervision of Dr. Philip Attuquayefio. I further declare that no part of this dissertation has been presented anywhere for any other purpose.

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DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to my entire family and to everyone who contributed towards its successful completion.

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ACRONYMS/ABBREVIATIONS

AGF	-	Asian Games Federation
AAU	-	American Athletics Union
COOB	-	Olympic Organizing Committee of Barcelona
COC	-	Catalan Olympic Committee
COE	-	Comité Olímpico Español
DMZ	-	Demilitarized Zone
FCCC	-	Foreign Correspondents Club of China
FIFA	-	Federation of International Football Association
GOC	-	Ghana Olympic Committee
IF	-	International Federations
IOC	-	International Olympic Committee
LECIAD	-	Legon Centre for International Affairs and Diplomacy
MFARI	-	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration
NOC	-	National Olympic Committee
UN	-	United Nations
UNOSDP	-	United Nations Office on Sports for Development and Peace
UK	-	United Kingdom
US	-	United States
WADA	-	World Anti-Doping Agency

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ABSTRACT

Actors in the international system have and continue to use conventional diplomacy in interstate relations but have not always been successful in achieving their objectives. Recent times have seen sports utilized by actors as a soft power tool in diplomatic relations between states. Though it is often argued that sports and politics should not mix, the popularity and the socio-economic nature of sports have gained the attention of states and international organizations in the international system. This study sought to examine the relationship between sports and international relations, by exploring sports diplomacy. Using the Olympic Games as a case study, the study explored how actors in international relations harnessed the platform provided by the Olympic Games to advance diplomatic initiatives. Among other things, the study, based on qualitative approach with interviews of persons from different backgrounds in diplomacy and the sports sector finds that participating in the various editions of the Olympic Games have presented nations the opportunity to exhibit their image across the globe and improve its relations with other nations. The study revealed that among the actors that engaged the Olympic Games for diplomatic purposes were North and South Korea at the 2018 Pyeongchang Winter Olympic Games. Among the manifestations of sports diplomacy that emerged from the activities of the above countries was the unification of the women's ice hockey team for the first time in their history, as well as marching together under a unified Korean flag at the opening ceremony of the Games. The study also finds that sports have seen a vast transformation in contemporary times, shifting from the everyday form of exercise to a lucrative industry and this can largely be attributed to major sporting events such as the Olympic Games. On the basis of this, the study concluded that sports plays a key role in international relations and that indeed sports diplomacy is a critical component of the diplomatic platforms available in international relations. It was therefore recommended that Governments should prioritize sports in its foreign policies and assign some focus on harnessing international sporting events to promote their diplomatic objectives. Also, the IOC should put in place initiatives that would promote peaceful relations between warring nations or otherwise conflict regions. Thus, sports should be seriously considered by countries as an alternative form of diplomatic dialogue.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Research Problem

Globalization has accelerated global interdependence characterized by multiple actors acting to maximize their gains. Besides, the United Nations' primary goal of preserving global peace and security, sports as a soft power tool, is being used by states to legitimize their superiority peacefully. It is for this reason that "sports can be considered as one of the most exciting modern phenomena—modern because, in its current form, it was born no longer than 150 years ago, exciting because it wins the interest of millions of people."¹

The international community employs international organizations to involve states in multilateral relations; and through sports, international sporting organizations such as the International Olympic Committee (IOC) serves as the only organization responsible for converging all professional sports and nations in one venue at a given time.² Moreover, the IOC's status as one of the most important actors in the international sporting arena has created the platform for states through the Olympic Games to build their image and acquire superiority. Consequently, the last two decades have seen sports, notably the Olympic Games gain recognition as part of modern social life. From the 2000 Olympic Games in Sydney, Australia, to the Pyeongchang 2018 Olympic Winter Games in South Korea, governments and international organizations have employed sports as a tool of diplomacy to promote global peace and development to the benefits of their respective countries.

Due to its global appeal, the various editions of the Olympic Games have also helped build images of states in the international system and also aided in their transformation in terms of

economic growth and development. Also, the Olympic Games serve as a platform for disparate cultures to convene, and this aids nations in furthering their various objectives in the international system.

Suffice it to say that, being the first to ever nations host the events in their respective continents, South Africa and Brazil in 2010 and 2016 respectively, paved the way for other countries on the continent to host similar events to score varying diplomatic successes. These achievements are certainly notable. Similarly, the international organizations that spearhead the organization of the events are on record to have garnered reasonable global, public good faith through the organization of the event. In the case of the World Cup in South Africa for instance, FIFA Spokesperson Jerome Valcke in an interview after the event affirmed the role the of event in consolidating South Africa's re-entry into international politics as well the role of football in promoting global peace and development.

While traditional forms of diplomacy have been used in relations between states over the years and still continues to be relevant in international relations, Murray suggests that new formats of diplomacy such as sports diplomacy are being established as critical channels for achieving diplomatic objectives.³ Sports diplomacy is a soft power, which according to Nye, uses attractive values and positive attributes to shape preferences by generating admiration and setting examples others wish to follow.⁴ Lusa also defines sport diplomacy as “a range of formal and informal actions focused on implementing foreign policy through sport.”⁵ Generally therefore, sports diplomacy has emerged in modern times as an important part of the foreign policy actions of states by improving communications with other actors in the international system and consolidating state relations.

1.2 Statement of the Research Problem

In the study of international relations, one of the dominant theories, Realism, opines the inherently anarchical nature of the international system. With respective actors behaving in a way that promotes its interest, the potential for conflict is evident in international relations. In recognition of this reality, states and other actors in the international system have and continue to explore non-conflictual avenues to promote their interests. As one of the pre-eminent non-conflictual modes of pursuing international relations, diplomacy has seen the extensive use over the years. As a consequence of its utility, there have been attempts and reasonable successes at exploiting events such as global conferences as platforms to launch diplomatic offensives.

As indicated in the background to the problem statement, one of the platforms that have been harnessed for advancing the diplomatic objectives of states and international organizations is sports. This notwithstanding, the inherently competitive nature of sporting events makes their adoption for diplomatic purpose quite intriguing. Redeker has for instance noted in his scholarly work that, sports and diplomacy are incompatible. He asserts that sport is a myth, and its application in contemporary international relations favours sporting organizations rather than states.⁶ Thus, in his opinion, “sports are political opium, a para-diplomatic theatre where states and their international relations fall victim to the sportive illusion.”⁷ Authors such as Hoberman appear to share the view about the incompatibility of sport and international relations and by extension, diplomacy. For Murray and Pigman however, the linkage between the two is relatively unexplored and therefore any attempt of a conclusive verdict might be an exercise in futility.

The obvious contestation between the two schools of thought on the role of sports in international relations constitutes the research problem. Using the Olympic Games as a case

study, this dissertation explored the role of sport diplomacy in contemporary international relations.

1.3 Research Questions

To address the research problem the study answers to the following questions:

- What is the link between sports and international relations?
- How has the Olympic Games evolved in international relations?
- How has the Olympic Games been used as a platform for sports diplomacy?

1.4 Objectives of the Study

- To explore the link between sports and international relations.
- To provide an overview of the IOC and the development of sports in international relations.
- To establish and analyze the various means that the Olympic Games have been used as a platform for sports diplomacy.

1.5 Rationale of the Study

Actors in the international system must utilize tools such as diplomacy to further their interests. Yet, authors like Levermore suggests that “international relations has barely had an impact on the study of sports in general and on the use of sports in international relations by states in particular”⁸ However, as an effective means of affecting the opinions of the foreign publics, sports in recent times appears to be an imperative factor in inter-state relations. With the dearth of literature exploring the linkages, this dissertation puts the spotlight on what appears to be an important yet unexplored relationship between sports and international relations. By so doing, the study also opens a new frontier in the study of international relations.

1.6 Conceptual Framework

This study was conducted within the framework of Public Diplomacy. In *The public Diplomacy of the Modern Olympic Games and China's soft Power Strategy*, Cull indicates that the use of the term "Public Diplomacy" was first coined by Edmund Gullion, a retired American diplomat, turned college dean of the Fletcher School of Law at Tufts University in 1965, where he unveiled the new terminology to help his countrymen conceptualize the role of communications in foreign relations.⁹

Cull defines public diplomacy as "an international actor's attempt to manage the international environment through engagement with a foreign public".¹⁰ Cull asserts that 'actors' used in this context may refer to a state, multi-national corporations, non-governmental organizations, international organizations, terrorist organization/stateless paramilitary organizations or other players on the world stage.¹¹ Cull sets out to note the five components of public diplomacy, and these include: listening, which he considers the foundation for all successful public diplomacy; also noted are international broadcasting, cultural diplomacy, exchange, and advocacy.¹²

It is imperative note that Nye identifies public diplomacy as an expression of "soft power", which in his view, compliments the conventional form of diplomacy as employed by states in the international system. According to Nye, soft power involves the capacity to establish agenda with the aim of determining how others perceive issues, and also to put forward initiatives to ascertain the perspectives and choices of others, in order to avoid using coercion in tensed situations. Nye contends that soft power is a means of getting others to do what you want by co-opting rather than through force. He further asserts that, public diplomacy serves as a

mechanism for fostering a country's soft power, which relies mainly on its values, culture and foreign policies as its resources.¹³ In his view, public diplomacy is employed by governments as a channel to gain the attention and interest of the citizens of other states rather than their governments.

Nye contends that public diplomacy in the informative age is based on the power of information, in that the abundance of information has led to lack of attention. He posits that "When people are overwhelmed with the volume of information confronting them, it is hard to know what to focus on. Attention rather than information becomes the scarce resource and those who can distinguish valuable information from background clutter gain power."¹⁴

Nye further cites Leonard when he argues that a three-dimensional facet of public diplomacy exists as a result of the blend of direct government information with longstanding cultural connections and its importance in public diplomacy.¹⁵ The first dimension is "daily communications, which involves explaining the context of domestic and foreign policy decisions".¹⁶ He also mentions the second dimension which highlights the use of strategic communication which in his view "develops a set of simple themes much as a political or advertising campaign does. The campaign plans symbolic events and communications over the course of the next year to reinforce central themes or to advance a particular government policy".¹⁷ The last dimension thus focuses on "development of lasting relationships with key individuals over many years through scholarships, exchanges, training, seminars, conferences, and access to media channels."¹⁸

Nonetheless, Nye has identified the fact that opponents regard public diplomacy as mild substitute for propaganda. He, on the other hand contends that although propaganda is usually

considered as implausible and ineffective, public policy is used to circulate information, create a suitable image which can help build relationships that can provide the necessary avenue for governments to promote its policies.

Melissen and Berridge also argue that scholars of traditional diplomacy have criticized public diplomacy as impeding the nature of ‘old school’ diplomacy. Berridge posits that “traditionalists see public diplomacy as a modern name for white propaganda- that is, propaganda admitting its source, and directed mainly at foreign publics, but also at the domestic constituency. Because this ‘fashionable practice’ is not really diplomacy in their view, traditionalists consider public diplomacy a misnomer and a largely overrated and misunderstood activity.”¹⁹

The concept of public diplomacy is essential for this study because sports notwithstanding its inherent nature, serve as a bonding mechanism for people from different cultures, irrespective of factors such as race, class, culture, language and education that serve as its obstacles. Sport, however does set out to provide a platform where public diplomacy determines public opinion and perception, in that, it has been acknowledged as enhancing a country’s image abroad. This argument is supported by the fact that states and non-states actors such as international organizations are now using sports as an instrument for diplomacy and development.

1.7 Literature Review

Berridge in *Diplomacy: Theory and Practice* defines diplomacy as “an essentially political activity and, well-resourced and skillful, a major ingredient of power.”²⁰ He further points out that, through diplomatic initiatives, states secure their foreign policy goals without having to resort to propaganda, coercion or rely on legalities. The activities related to a country’s official

communications with other states are managed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs through which the practices of traditional diplomacy are carried out and this includes the embassies and their diplomatic missions abroad. The missions advance cordial interactions between states and negotiate on official issues on behalf of its governments and citizens with the host authorities, to ensure the policies and interests of their governments and issues of developments in their countries are well deliberated on with authorities in the host country.

Berridge notes that diplomacy can be conducted in different ways and not only through the work of ambassadors. He acknowledges that even though governments make provisions for diplomatic missions in foreign countries to secure their interests in those states, interactions between states are expedited by global conferences, fora, telephones and through consuls. As noted, Berridge argues that there are diverse ways of pursuing diplomacy; the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and their embassies have been noted for its traditional means of conducting international relations and summitry; also there are other approaches such as public diplomacy which constitute a non-traditional form of diplomacy. In his view, the objectives of both the traditional diplomacy and public diplomacy varies in that while the objective of the former is to affect the decisions and policies of other states by dealing with the authorities, the latter tries to achieve the same aim by dealing with non-state actors who have influence in one way or the other over the officials or situations.

With regards to the effectiveness of public diplomacy, there have been some instances where public diplomacy has facilitated interactions between states. These include the spread of Islam to Western societies through the internet, the role played by western radio transmission in making communism obsolete in Europe. Also, the recognition of the effectiveness of soft power initiatives is the reason why Chinese officials to censor the internet.

Berridge however contends that public diplomacy is just another term for propaganda. This is contested by scholars such as Nye who in his work *The Future of Power*, postulates that, there lies a clear distinction between propaganda which was mostly practiced during the Cold War and public diplomacy.²¹

In *Sports diplomacy: The Chinese Experience and Perspective*, Qingmin recognizes the link between sports, politics and diplomacy. He asserts that “sport is defined in political science as an institutionalized competitive activity that involves vigorous physical exertion or the use of relatively complex physical skills by individuals whose participation is motivated by a combination of intrinsic and extrinsic factors”.²² Politics is “concerned with power and interests” and diplomacy on the other hand is “the politics among nations”.²³ In his view, the introduction of international sport competitions has been identified as an appropriate avenue for pursuing international politics thereby facilitating diplomacy. Sports can play a decisive factor in shaping a country’s idea of identity locally, regionally and internationally. Harvey states that, “sport is one of the most significant molders of national unity and collective identity”.²⁴ Besides, Qingmin argues that international sporting competitions coupled with global politics in the modern era have evolved over the years. He identifies the efforts of the creator of the modern Olympic movement, Pierre de Coubertin in aligning the essence of the Olympic Games with the goals of the League of Nations and with the aim of using sports as a platform in preventing another world war. He promoted the Olympic Idea when he stated:

“...sport competitions should substitute wars, and the youth from around the world instead of fighting against each other in the wars should compete on the sports stadiums...”²⁵ He also asserts that “...wars break out because nations do not understand each other and that there will be no peace unless prejudices between different races pass away...”²⁶

Qingmin also examines the relationship between politics, sports and diplomacy. He makes reference to the similarities between the aims and objectives of the IOC as presented in the original Charter of the Olympic Committee and that of the United Nations (UN). The Olympic Charter of the IOC states that:

“The goal of Olympism is to place sport at the service of the harmonious development of humankind, with a view to promoting a peaceful society concerned with the preservation of human dignity. The practice of sport is a human right. Every individual must have the possibility of practicing sport, without discrimination of any kind and in Olympic spirit, which requires mutual understanding with a spirit of friendship, solidarity and fair play”.²⁷

Further, he presents the principles of the UN Charter which states as follows:

- a) “Maintain international peace and security...;
- b) Develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples;
- c) Achieve international cooperation in solving international problems of economic, social, cultural, or humanitarian character, and in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion; and
- d) Be a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations in the attainment of these common ends.”²⁸

It is imperative to note that “the IOC has a closer relationship with the United Nations (UN) and this is seen in the creation of the United Nations Office on Sport for Development and Peace (UNOSDP) in 2001, and in 2009, the General assembly granted the IOC permanent observer status at the UN.”²⁹ The UN Secretary General at the time, Mr. Ban Ki Moon, at the Olympic Congress in Copenhagen highlighted the bond between the UN and the IOC by stating that “Olympic principles are United Nations principles.”³⁰

Qingmin recognizes sports diplomacy as an extension of public diplomacy. He notes that sports can be useful in diplomatic circles in that, firstly, it can heighten confrontation between states when relations between them become poor; also, it can create and accelerate diplomatic momentum. The first instance explains the boycotting of international competitions in order to seek retaliation against another state or protesting against either domestic or international policies. Also, a state's involvement and participation in international sporting competitions can enable it gain international recognition. Thus, the institutes of sport and diplomacy are ubiquitous in scope and character, and working in synchrony can disseminate decisive sporting values such as mutual respect, discipline, resilience and benevolence among rancorous political relationships.³¹

Qingmin argues that sports necessarily compliment other measures, but on its own, it barely promotes either success or failure in diplomacy. He however posits strongly that the increasing development of sports diplomacy is one which validates the changes taking place in the diplomatic arena. His work goes on to show that the objectives of the intergovernmental and international sporting organizations such as the UN and the IOC respectively are in some ways related.

Murray and Pigman in their work *Mapping the relationship between international sport and diplomacy* set out to analyze the link between the channels, actors and networks that bring together international sports and diplomacy. In their view, there are two different categories of sports diplomacy; the first is involves cases in which international sport is consciously utilized by governments as a diplomatic tool. The second category, which the authors consider as international-sport-as-diplomacy, involves the diplomatic representation, communication and negotiation between non-state actors that occur as a result of ongoing international sporting competition.³² The former category which they consider as traditional sports diplomacy

involves states using sportsmen and sporting competitions to reinforce a diplomatic message, ease diplomatic relations between states or possibly lead to changes in foreign policies. They argue that governments would seize any opportune moment including sporting events for the achievement of their political aims.

The latter category, which they point out as international-sport-as-diplomacy however involves direct government participation because it is a non-traditional form of sports diplomacy. It includes mediation, negotiation and interaction between non-state actors which is needed to help in the continuity of international sporting events. For competitions to be organized successfully, there needs to be diplomatic activities to facilitate it.

Murray and Pigman believe this category of sport diplomacy has the greater effect because it occurs often, has a much wider recognition and has the tendency to influence the emotions and perspective of the global public. Nonetheless, there are some similarities between the above mentioned categories. Murray and Pigman assert that the creation of the Olympiad was in tandem with the aim of promoting peace, mutual benefits by nations and also enable states show their supremacy using sporting events. They agree with Berridge in his work *Diplomacy: Theory and Practice*, when they argue that, due to the broad nature of diplomacy, it is sometimes compelled to use unorthodox agents and methods to reinforce its message. They further contend that through international competition, states have the opportunity to exhibit their prowess in the field of sports and the supremacy of their ideologies. They are also of the view that the nature of the current international system makes sports diplomacy ideal.

Murray et al. contend that in contemporary times, sports diplomacy can be initiated by non-state actor which is accepted by governments in their quest to achieve a particular diplomatic mission.³³ Reference is however made with regards to the famous 'ping-pong' diplomacy

between the United States (US) and China in 1971. Here, the unofficial interactions between the US table tennis player Glenn Cowan and Chinese world champion Zhuang Zedong at the world tournament in Japan was first initiated. The estranged relations between the two countries was eased when the Mao and Nixon administration of China and U.S respectively suggested that a tour of China by the US team later that year would ultimately help improve diplomatic relations between the two countries. This event influenced the visits by Henry Kissinger, then US National Security Advisor, and President Richard Nixon to China in mid-1971 and 1972 respectively.

Murray et al. agree that one advantage of sports diplomacy is that it traverses all cultures and provides the platform for uniting people from different cultures. They write that:

“Sports diplomacy involves representation and diplomatic activities undertaken by sports people on behalf of and in conjunction with their governments. The practice is facilitated by traditional diplomacy and uses sports people and sporting events to engage, inform and create favourable image among foreign publics and organizations to shape their perceptions in a way that is conducive to the sending governments foreign policy goals. Whiles traditional diplomacy is the means to a state’s foreign policy ends, sports diplomacy is one of the means to the means of those ends.”³⁴

In addition, governments which use sports diplomacy are seen as innovative and successful vis-à-vis their relations with foreign public. They further assert that today’s information age has prompted the foreign publics in taking advantage of sports diplomacy being a form of soft power in situations such as cultural or sporting exchanges.

Murray and Pigman recognize the importance attached to seeking respect for countries in the international community. Winning the rights to host global sporting events such as the Olympic Games, projects a state’s credibility as a member of the comity of nations. Murray and Pigman therefore posit that for host nations, sport events create the avenue to communicate relevant diplomatic messages and attitudes that are important in changing the notions of foreign publics about them. In supporting this assertion, Murray and Pigman make reference to the publicity

the host nations receive from the global media. For instance, it is estimated that close to four billion sports fanatics watched the 2004 Athens Olympic Games while about one billion enthusiasts representing a quarter of the world population viewed the opening ceremony of the Beijing Olympic Games in 2008.³⁵

There are also some commonalities between sportsmen and traditional diplomats as identified by Murray and Pigman. They assert that both professions are governed by rules and tactics, both represent their countries on the international scene, both vocations do not condone mediocrity and; just like diplomats, prominent sports personalities such as Lionel Messi and Didier Drogba are appreciated for their “open genial and civil manner.”³⁶

Irrespective of the arguments made for the importance of sports in diplomacy, it is important to acknowledge that the competitive nature of sport has in some instances led to certain extremities especially in demoting values of fair play to the background in order to win and defend national pride. Murray and Pigman posit that “in international sports, sports fans become emotionally involved with their national team – and the anthems, mass shows of patriotism and symbolism certainly heighten the sense of nationalism”;³⁷ thus, the distinction here, lies between the nobility displayed in diplomacy and the competitive nature as showcased in sporting events.

It is worth noting that, Murray and Pigman’s work is important to this study because it highlights the practice of international diplomacy on two disparate but interconnected levels in that, it examines on one hand, how sports is employed by politicians as a diplomatic tool and on the other hand how non-state actors play a key role in organizing international sporting competitions vis-à-vis its inter-connectedness with the international political system.

In their work *Soft power at home and abroad: Sport diplomacy, politics and peace building*, Nygard and Gates presents are four mechanisms of sport diplomacy and politics through which peace-building and nation-building can be accomplished. These include: image-building; providing a platform for dialogue; trust-building; and reconciliation, consolidation and anti-racism.³⁸ They argue that as a policy instrument, sports can be used domestically or internationally. In their view, sports diplomacy can be employed in different ways such as hosting huge sporting events such as the Olympic Games and the World Cup by developed and developing states; there is also sporting exchange programmes and youth tournaments which may serve as a means of sports diplomacy.³⁹

Nygaard and Gates believe the notion generated by diplomacy and politics involves the process of reciprocity which is fundamentally prudent, in that, “any action one takes, accounts for the actions of others”.⁴⁰ Notwithstanding, there are some features of sports and diplomacy that do not require the deliberate process of reciprocity. Though the above mentioned mechanisms are not compulsorily sports-related, they are rather relevant in understanding sports, politics and diplomacy.

In analyzing the mechanisms of sports diplomacy, the authors assert that image building encompasses a hosting mega sporting competition which enhances a country’s image for a period of time. As a type of soft power, this mechanism is employed by regimes in mobilizing human and capital resources in a very limited time period. They make reference to China, Brazil and South Africa where they used the hosting of the Olympics and FIFA World Cup to make known their status as rising powers.⁴¹ Nygaard and Gates however contend that image building has some limitations in that “in the attempt to portray an efficient, modern and attractive image, the parts of a population that may embarrass the government may be excluded or neglected.”⁴²

Also, the authors posit that building a platform for dialogue has made it possible for states to strengthen ties through major sports competitions such as the World Cup and the Olympic Games. The authors distinguish this mechanism from nation building, in that, even though they both involve hosting of a sporting event, building the stage for a dialogue involves the fostering of a relationship.

In their assertion, Nygard and Gates note that sports can be used to build trust. In tensed diplomatic relations between states, sports can be used as a means to create a sense of trust between the states. They however concede that in some situations, and as with other mechanisms, tensions that rise as a result of sporting events cannot always be controlled.

Finally, the authors acknowledge the importance of sports in building peace within the borders of a country through the mechanism of reconciliation, integration and anti-racism. They make reference to the South African Rugby World Cup in 1996, where Nelson Mandela used sports to enhance reconciliation and integration between South Africans.⁴³ This work is critical to this study because it explores the mechanisms that engage sports diplomacy and politics in promoting peace and nation building as well as explaining how sports diplomacy can also negatively affect a state's objectives in the international system.

Carrard in his work *Sports and politics on the international scene* makes an assertion on the interaction between sports and politics. He bases this interaction on three conceptions and these are as follows:

- In authoritarian regimes, notably former communist states, governments have extensive control in the organization of sporting activities

- In some countries, governments do not interfere in sports or its related activities and is therefore controlled by the private sector
- A number of states, especially in Western Europe have governments determining the general regulatory and legal framework that controls sport but leave the administration of sporting activities to independent bodies.⁴⁴

In the first model, Carrard contends that the first conception still exists in autocratic regimes with very rigid political structures; while in the second model, he asserts that for most countries in the Scandinavian region, this is but a recent event amongst their governments. The third concept, he believes, is a rather becoming a prevalent practice in most countries. He reiterates that the relationship that exists between a country and its sports organizations relies chiefly on the political structures, the education of the youth and the effects of sports activities on the electoral system.

Carrard sets out to examine three importance of sport which makes it appealing to governments and intergovernmental organizations. He, first notes that, the international sporting organizations in organizing global sporting events characterize a wide range of issues such as social and economic which cannot be disregarded in society. Also, major non-state actors in the sporting world do not depend on government for financial support; and the last importance, which is the most fundamental, is that friendships developed through sporting competitions and its resulting effect of good networks makes them essential in uncertain times.

Carrard supports his argument by examining some historical event vis-à-vis the impact of sports in diplomacy. He notes that, just before the 1992 Barcelona Olympic Games, the United Nations through the Security Council Resolution 757 which was adopted on 30th May, 1992, sanctioned

Yugoslavia from participating in international sporting competitions. The sanction was in response to Yugoslavia's failure to comply with the Security Council's earlier resolution. Carrard posits that Section 8 of the resolution provides that all states shall "(b) take necessary steps to prevent the participation in sporting events on the territory of person or groups representing the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro)".⁴⁵

He further notes that the Resolution 757 was not legally binding for the IOC, but unlike Spain which was a United Nations member, was bounded by it. The hosting of the Olympic Games by Spain however made the situation quite tricky; but since the Olympic Games is an IOC organized event, it aided in reaching a solution and "a special 'team' named Independent Athletes were established under the direct control of the IOC. It included all Yugoslavian athletes eligible for the Barcelona Games. They wore white uniforms and their flag was the Olympic flag".⁴⁶ The solution however led to the protection of rights of the athletes and also from being casualties of an inexpedient political sanction.

Finally, Carrard observes that IOC's observer status at the United Nations is essential in bridging the gap between politics and sports though it is too early to conclude what the end result will be of the partnership. He notes that the formation of the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) is as a result of private-public partnership initiative. He argues that "the board of the foundation and all decision making bodies are composed, in equal numbers, of representatives of the governments and intergovernmental organizations on one side, of representatives of the Olympic and sports movement on the other side; neither side has the majority and all decisions, including those relating to finances and budgets, are being debated and reached on the basis of a consensus of both sectors."⁴⁷ Carrard's work is important to this study chiefly because the

three conceptions explains the extent to which states embrace sports and its related activities as well as different circumstances that has resulted in the use of sports by states in diplomacy.

1.8 Sources of Data

This study is mainly library researched and relied mainly on secondary sources of data including information from textbooks, journal articles and e-documents from LECIAD and the Balme Library of the University of Ghana. Other materials such as reports were sourced from the websites of sporting organizations such as the IOC, FIFA, among others. However, primary data was sought from semi-structured interviews with a sports journalist, a retired diplomat, senior officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration (MFARI), as well as the Ghana Olympic Committee (GOC).

1.9 Research Methodology

In order to respond to the research questions and attain the research objectives stated in chapter one, the study hinged on qualitative methods of collecting and analyzing data from selected officials and individuals relevant to the study. Qualitative methods in research studies are constructive and informative and thus sheds more light on a phenomenon. The methods expedited the deeper explanations of the effectiveness of sports diplomacy via the hosting and participating in the Olympic Games by actors in the international community. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to support the secondary data gathered, as they presented reliable, comparable, qualitative data. The data obtained from the interviews provided adequate information and opinions to support the research and were analyzed qualitatively in the form of narrations, descriptions and explanations. The selection of interviewees was done based on the qualities and knowledge of the subject matter or experience regarding the subject matter. Thus

based on the objectives of this study, the purposive sampling method was employed for this research.

1.10 Limitations of the Study

There were some limitations that hindered the search for very critical information needed to fully address the demands of this study. These included the unavailability of some sports officials from the Ministry of Youth and Sports as well as the Ghana Football Association. This was due to their very busy work schedules and impromptu assignments that sent them out of the country. Another limitation was the lack of response from some foreign journalists i had wished to interview with regards to some aspects of the study. Nonetheless, the interviews conducted from the other primary sources are used to support the research to reach substantial findings, conclusions and recommendations.

1.11 Arrangement of Chapters

The research comprises four chapters. Chapter One outlines the Research Design. Chapter Two is an Overview of the IOC and the development of Olympic Games in international relations. Chapter Three discusses sports diplomacy in contemporary international relations with a focus on the Olympic Games and how actors in the international system have utilized the platform for diplomatic purposes. The final Chapter, which is Chapter Four presents the Summary of Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations.

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CHAPTER TWO

THE IOC AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE OLYMPIC GAMES IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS: AN OVERVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter examines the IOC and the evolution of sports through modern history. It begins by examining the historical period where sports was considered as a form of exercise and a way of moral development and discipline for young people. The chapter also captures the current nature of sports in terms of its commercialization and global viewership as well as the development the Olympic Games as a whole.

2.1 The International Olympic Committee

The International Olympic Committee was formed by Pierre de Coubertin on the 23rd of June, 1894. The IOC is the main organizing body of the modern Olympic Games and Youth Olympics, held during the winter and summer seasons, every four years. It is the foremost body of the Olympic Movement which comprises of organizations, athletes and other individuals who accept to be regulated by the principles of the Olympic Charter. The composition of the Olympic Movement and the general organization are governed by chapter one of the Olympic Charter. The Movement encompasses three main units and these include: the IOC, the International Federations (IF) and the National Olympic Committees (NOC).¹

The main objective of the Olympic Movement is to “help promote a peaceful and better world by educating the youth, which is conducted in a manner without discrimination of any kind, in a spirit of friendship, solidarity and fair play.”² Some activities of the Movement include; advancing sports and competitions through channels such as national and international sports

institutions globally and cooperation with public and private institutes to situate sports at the service of humanity. It also provides monetary and educational assistance for developing countries through the IOC institution Olympic Solidarity.³

The IOC is governed by the Olympic Charter, which involves the constitution of the fundamental principles, regulations and bye-laws endorsed by the IOC. The first paragraph of the fundamental principles of the Olympic Charter states:

“Olympism is a philosophy of life, exalting and combining in a balanced whole the qualities of body, will and mind. Blending sport with culture and education, Olympism seeks to create a way of life based on the joy found in effort, the educational value of good example and respect for universal fundamental ethical principles.”⁴

Chapter two of the Olympic Charter states the main mission of the IOC which is to promote Olympics throughout the world and to spearhead the Olympic Movement. The Charter also states the roles of the IOC, which is:

- “To encourage and support the organization, development and coordination of sport and sports competitions;
- To ensure the regular celebration of the Olympic Games;
- To cooperate with the competent public or private organizations and authorities in the endeavour to place sport at the service of humanity and thereby to promote peace;
- To act against any form of discrimination affecting the Olympic Movement;
- To encourage and support the promotion of women in sport at all levels and in all structures with a view to implementing the principle of equality of men and women.”⁵

The general meeting of the members IOC, known as the IOC Session, is held once every year.

Each member has one vote at the Session, where they make decisions on the following:

- “To adopt and amend the Olympic Charter

- To elect the members of the IOC, the Honorary President and the honorary members.
- To elect the President, the Vice-Presidents and all other members of the IOC Executive Board.
- To elect the host city of the Olympic Games”⁶

It is worth mentioning some challenges being faced by the IOC. One of the biggest challenges is the value that countries place on winning, and the means of doing this has led to significant increase in doping among athletes. This is basically cheating at the highest level of sports where countries feel they are competing on an equal platform. There is also the issue of inequality among member countries within the IOC, as the Winter Olympic Games favours European and Asian countries more than African countries, as was evident at the Pyeongchang Winter Games. As of July, 2018, membership of the IOC consists of 97 active members, and 41 of which are honorary members. The organization has Jacques Rogge as the honorary president and Henry Kissinger as an honour member.⁷

2.2 Development of Sports

Sports, as defined in the Oxford English dictionary is “an activity involving physical exertion and skill in which an individual or team competes against another or others for entertainment.”⁸ This definition emphasizes the importance of the physical aspect of sports even though it has been considered by many as an activity for pleasure. According to Wilson, in 19th Century England, sports especially football was used as an instrument for good behaviour and moral development among young boys in public schools.⁹ It is also generally asserted that, sports in England in the late 1800s was employed as a mechanism to keep fit, eliminate boredom and relieve stress from the strenuous working environments at the time. Jim White supports this assertion by noting that one of England’s biggest football clubs, Manchester United, was

originally established as Newton Heath, to cater for the various sporting needs of workers of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Company, which initially served as football and cricket team.¹⁰

Sport has evolved over time and has been transformed from a means of physical well-being, health and as a form of leisure to a very essential part of human life. A sociologist, Eric Dunning has suggested that sports goes beyond the aspect of keeping fit and has rather become a moneymaking venture for all stakeholders. Some sociologists also believe sports form huge part of their social lives.¹¹ This simply implies that the magnitude of the growth of sport in contemporary times has seen it develop into an industry with an extensive outcome at all levels of social life. Modern industrial societies have embraced sports as an essential part of the local, national and international levels. However, its importance in the identity formation of individuals is reliant on how highly sports is appreciated in a given society or group.¹²

Fans, an abbreviated form of the term ‘fanatics’, are people mostly committed to sports and the outcome of any sporting activity such as boxing bout, an athletic race or a football match can influence a country’s mood. It is important to note that sports the above can be emotionally fascinating can be and it allows millions of sports fanatics through a sense of loyalty follow their favorite teams and ultimately nations, across the globe to show support.

2.3 Commercialization and Global Interest of Sport

It is worth acknowledging the business dimension that sports has taken over the past years. Thus, sports has moved beyond the emotional feeling of defeat or victory, and from being an aspect of public school calendar; to being considered a very lucrative industry which comprises large financial sums from media broadcasts, sponsorship deals, and the branding of sports personalities and professional teams. As a result of its appeal and large following, sport is now

highly ranked in terms of viewership across the globe. For example, the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing had a huge global following with the coverage received by an outstanding 4.3 billion people from 220 countries.¹³ To be specific, there were 61,700 hours of television broadcasts exclusively dedicated to the Beijing Olympics. It is essential in noting that 72 percent of these broadcast hours which amounted to 44,454 were freely available on terrestrial channels across the globe while 22 percent of the broadcast hours were given to satellite channels. The Games in Beijing also highlighted the use of the internet and other modern technology which increased viewership and coverage across the world. Mention can be made of the use of live streaming by millions of internet users during the Games even to the point of surpassing television viewership. The Games also launched its own You Tube channel to provide highlights of the day to parts of the world that did not have the rights to watch the Games live from Beijing.¹⁴

Another sporting competition, the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa was considered successful as it achieved identical figures with regards to television and media coverage. An examination of the viewership trends of the 2010 World Cup and a press release from FIFA indicated that viewership had extended as far as the distant regions of Antarctica and the Arctic Circle.¹⁵ According to the FIFA media release, an estimated 3.2 billion viewers representing 46.6 percent of the total human population enjoyed the global showpiece from the comfort of their homes.¹⁶ This marked an 8 percent increase in viewership in contrast to the 2006 World Cup in Germany. The final game between The Netherlands and Spain registered high viewership, with an estimated 617.9 million people viewing it in their homes. The figure rose even further to surpass over 1 billion when those who watched the games out of their homes were included. Thus, the success of the 2010 World Cup can largely be attributed to its global viewership.¹⁷

The next part of this work closely examines the development of the Olympic Games in international relations and some outstanding performances.

2.4 Development of the Olympic Games

The Olympic Games, considered the world's greatest sporting event is organized by the IOC once every four years, and is the most followed sporting event around the world. The Games are organized to honour sporting brilliance and most especially to enhance and nurture peaceful relationships among states and their athletes. The four year rotation of the Games is known as the Olympiad. As described by Kelly, "the Games symbolize one of the largest single gatherings of humans, sporting games, festivals, rituals and grand spectacle all wrapped in one intense, colourful and often controversial extravaganza."¹⁸ Usually organized in the summer and winter seasons of the same year, it gives potential host cities the rights to organize either the Summer or Winter Olympic Games which regularly lasts for nearly a month with athletes participating in the various sporting disciplines.

The Olympic Games originated from Ancient Greece and was organized between 776 B.C and A.D 261 as a five-day ceremony which included competitions for pentathlon running, horse-racing, wrestling, and the chariot races.¹⁹ Scholars have indicated the year 776 B.C as the Olympic year, based on the first drafted reports of Greek Olympic Games.²⁰ The Olympic Games lost its zeal after the English Civil War and it was not until 1896, that French aristocrat, Baron Pierre de Coubertin reestablished the modern Olympic Games in Greece. According to Cashmore, Coubertin believed the youth of the France and most part of Europe neglected the importance of physical health and regarded the Olympic Games as a means of attracting the public to return to the principles that forged Ancient Greece and its Olympic Games.²¹ These principles however prompted Coubertin to draw up the Olympic Charter and believed the

Games were a means of enhancing physical well-being and peace by organizing contests among athletes. In his view, “Peace would be furthered by the Olympic Games...but peace could be the product only of the better world; a better world could be brought about by only better individuals could be developed only the give and take, the buffeting and battering, the stress and strain of fierce competition”²²

Grupe opines that Coubertin’s principle, which involves the hosting of the Games in different venues once every four years, would serve as a means of advancing and diffusing the Olympic spirit of freedom, development and equality throughout the world.²³ In addition, it has been recognized that Coubertin’s principles and objectives have been instrumental in the operational activities of the Games over the years. These include:

- fostering the goals of competitive sport
- providing bequest of facilities that will encourage athletic development which would not have been possible with substandard facilities; and
- improving the profile of the sport involved by presenting excellent opportunities for training as well as venues for national and international events.²⁴

2.4.1 The Olympic Movement

Preparations made for the host cities are meticulously managed by the Olympic movement which comprises four main institutions. The foremost organizing body is the IOC, which oversees all the activities of the Olympic sport and is responsible for selecting the host cities for the Games, which involves a system of voting, preceded by visits to the venues. The winning city is then awarded a contract by the IOC. Membership of the IOC is however drawn from the member nations.

Another institution of the Olympic movement, the International Federations (IF), is in charge of individual sport at the Olympics, determining the conduct of events as well as form directives regarding the building of facilities. The National Olympic Committee (NOC) of member states is in charge of organizing and getting teams ready for every Olympic event.

The Olympic Organizing Committee of the host city is responsible for organizing the event, providing facilities and supporting the infrastructure. Every stage of the planning and administration of the Games is carried out in accordance with the rules and directives of the IOC. The funding needed for organizing the Games is handled by the Olympic Organizing Committee of the host city and in most cases supported by the national government. In recent times, the costs involved in staging the Games have been compensated with substantial revenues through television rights, corporate sponsorship, ticket sales and merchandizing.²⁵

2.4.2 The Summer Olympic Games

113 athletes from 13 nations participated in the first modern Olympic Games in Athens, Greece, which was organized between the 6th and the 15th of April, 1896. According to Robert C. Paul Jnr, an American athlete, James Connolly, emerged top athlete amongst other invited athletes and became the first person to win an Olympic medal ever since a ban was placed on the Games by the Roman Empire in 394 A.D.²⁶ The period after 1896 saw the Games being held every four years and hosted by different cities. These included Paris in 1900, followed by St. Louis in 1904, London in 1908, and then Stockholm in 1912. The successive run of Olympic Games came to a halt in 1914 as a result of the outbreak of the First World War which disrupted the organization of the 1916 edition in Antwerp, Belgium. Subsequently, the 1940 and 1944 Games were hindered by the Second World War in 1939 and since then, the Games have had a successive run without any interference.

However, it has been contended by Chalkley and Essex that the intricacies and costs incurred during the 1960 Rome Olympic Games raised concerns for the cancellation of subsequent Games. As a result of this, the period between 1964 and 1984 saw fewer proposals submitted for the rights to host the Games. The authors therefore assert that the decline in interest was as a result of high costs incurred in hosting the Games.²⁷ Nonetheless, the tradition of hosting the Games in different cities on different continents has given opportunities to cities such as Melbourne and Tokyo to host the Summer Games in 1956 and 1964 respectively.²⁸ This evidently portrays the global nature of the Olympic Games over the years.

2.4.3 The Winter Olympic Games

The IOC is also in charge of organizing the Winter Olympic Games. The Winter Games is a major international sporting competition held once every four years for sports practiced on ice and snow. The first Winter Games was hosted by the city of Chamonix, France in 1924, with St. Moritz, Switzerland, hosting it four years later in 1928. However, just like the Summer Games, the period between 1936 and 1948 was disrupted by the emergence of the Second World War which denied spectators and fanatics the chance to experience the Games. Also, it is critical to note that the regular four year pattern was abolished after the 1992 Winter Games in Albertville, France. This was as a result of a previous voting session in 1986 which put a stop to the simultaneous game format, according to the IOC.²⁹ After the new format was laid out, the first Games that was organized was held between the 12th and 27th of February, 1994 in the city of Lillehammer, Norway and since then, the Winter Games have been held once every four years in patterns that occur every two years after the Summer Games.

Beijing, China will be the host the next Winter Olympic Games in 2022. In July 2015, it edged out other bidding cities such as Oslo, Norway and Almaty in Kazakhstan at the 128th IOC Session in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. However, the Beijing Winter Games will be the fourth Winter Olympics to be held in East Asia, after it was previously held in Sapporo (1972), Nagano (1998) and Pyeongchang (2018). Beijing will be the first city ever to have hosted both versions of the Olympic Games, having previously hosted the 2008 Summer Games.

2.4.4 Olympic Sports

Over the years, the IOC has acknowledged certain sports and disciplines as Olympic sports which are participated and competed for by athletes in both the Summer and Winter Olympic Games.

The Summer Olympic Games recognizes thirty different sports such as athletics, thus track and field, boxing, cycling, gymnastics, swimming, field hockey, wrestling, weightlifting, volleyball among others. These disciplines can be contested for either as teams or individuals depending on the type of discipline.

The Winter Games have evolved since its inception and now includes some sports and disciplines such as alpine skiing, luge, freestyle skiing, snowboarding, among others which have earned permanent spot on the Olympic programme. It is however worth noting that some disciplines such as football, tennis and taekwondo were initially not part of the Olympic programme have recently been incorporated as part of Olympic sports.

With regards to the Olympic sports, they are only acknowledged by the IOC on the following condition: thus at the minimum, seventy-five member countries must have male athletes

participating in that discipline and fifty member countries must also have female athletes participating in that same discipline.

The addition of new sports into the Olympic programme of the Winter Games has broadened its appeal which goes beyond North America and Europe. Countries such as South Korea, Canada and Australia are beginning to achieve some level of success in these events irrespective of the dominance of European giants such as Germany and Norway in the traditional Winter Olympic Games. The results are evidently seen in the balanced nature of the national medal table, the remarkable interest shown in the Games as well as its high global television ratings.³⁰

2.4.5 Outstanding Performances at the Olympic Games

It is important to examine some outstanding performances and moments in the Olympic Games over the years. The euphoric and passionate nature of the Olympic Games has produced some top notch individual and team performances over the years with fans and spectators savoring memories of sheer brilliance of their favourite athletes.

The 1936 Olympic Games in Berlin, Germany saw African American Jesse Owens win four gold medals in both the sprint and long jump events. It is imperative to note that Owens suffered racial abuse at the hands of the German crowd under the leadership of Adolf Hitler. This was in the wake of Hitler's proclamation that the Aryan race was far superior to that of the Jews and Blacks. Irrespective of this, Owens' remarkable performance has been considered noteworthy in bringing to attention the issue of racial equality especially at the dawn of the Second World War.

The 1972 Summer Olympic Games in Munich, Germany produced some outstanding performances from the athletes, but this was over shadowed by the terrorist strike on eleven Israeli athletes and coaches at the Olympic village by Palestinian terrorists. As the second Summer Olympics to be held in Germany, after the 1936 Berlin Games in Nazi Germany, the government of West Germany planned on using the Munich Olympics to showcase to the world a democratic Germany as portrayed by the official motto of the Games, “the cheerful games.” Nonetheless, the Games still produced some memorable sporting spectacles. American swimmer, Mark Spitz was the competition’s talking point as he chalked successes in the 100 and 200 metre freestyle and butterfly contests as well as three relay races with the American swimming squad. Spitz won seven gold medals in all, but his success was curtailed by the terrorist attacks and had to leave the Games for London, for his own safety because of his Jewish roots.

Olympic Games in the 80s were marred by boycotts from a political angle. Paul Jnr notes that these boycotts were led by the Soviet Union and the United States due to the dynamics of the Cold War going on at the time.³¹ The political actions of these two powers subsequently disrupted the 1980 and 1984 Games in Moscow and Atlanta respectively thereby preventing a lot of countries from competing in these Olympic events. The political actions of the two powers vis-à-vis sports will be further examined in chapter three of this work.

There were also some exceptional performances from some of the athletes who managed to participate in the Games in the 1980s. Edwin Moses and Carl Lewis both of the United States were brilliant in the 400 men’s hurdles and sprints respectively, with Lewis winning four gold medals in the 100 metre and 200 metre dash as well as the 400 x 100 metre relay. This made him the joint record holder of four gold medals in one edition of the Games, which was

previously held by Jesse Owens in the 196 Berlin Games in Germany. Lewis continued his Olympic winning streak in Seoul, South Korea four years later when he won the 100 metres under rather unexpected circumstances; the champion, Ben Johnson of Canada was ruled out on the charges of using performance-enhancing drugs, and the winner's medal handed over to Carl Lewis.³²

This incident propelled the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) in laying down stringent measures in dealing with doping activities in sports especially athletics. The Agency intensified the doping tests of athletes in the course of major international competitions. Some well-known athletes have been found guilty of doping in the past. They include: Marion Jones and Justin Gatlin, both of the United States, as well as Dwayne Chambers of the United Kingdom. Offenders are either given lengthy bans or their medals stripped from them or both. The activities by WADA seek to limit the use of synthetic drugs such as performance-enhancing ones and to eliminate the new markets that manufacture and supply these drugs.

The 1990s and the period that followed was an immense one for African athletes. The 1992 Barcelona Games saw Ethiopia's Derartu Tulu become the first African woman to win a gold medal when she won the 10,000 metre race. The most memorable part of that that event was her lap of honour with her South African competitor Elana Mayer, as this act signified the reappearance of South Africa in global sports after the apartheid years. It is important to note that sports created a platform for South Africa to regain its status in the international community.

It was in Atlanta, United States, that the Games of the XXVI Olympiad took place in 1996. The 1996 Summer Games is worth noting because it was the first to be organized in a different year from the Winter Games. Spectators and fans alike were thrilled at the exploits of American

athlete Michael Johnson, who won the 200 and 400 metre sprints while seasoned Olympian, Carl Lewis claimed four gold medals in the long jump event.³³

Also, China's Liu Xiang's exceptional performance at the Games earned him a gold medal in the 110 metre men's hurdle event. This achievement was critical in furthering China's quest to raise its profile on the international scene and this is akin to the case of Cathy Freeman and South Africa. This became rather important in underlining the country's preparedness towards hosting of the Games in 2008. The Olympic Games in 2008, also known as the Games of the XXIX Olympiad, was held in Beijing, China. This was the first Games the East Asian country of China had hosted, but it was the third of its kind in the region, the previous ones being hosted by Tokyo, Japan in 1964 and Seoul in South Korea in 1988. The star performer of the competition was Jamaican athlete Usain Bolt, who lit up the Olympic stadium by winning the men's 100 metre, 200 metre and 4 x 100 metre relay. He set a personal best record of 19.30 seconds for the 200 metre dash breaking the world record held by American athlete, Michael Johnson. He also graciously set a new world record in the men's 100 metre final in a new time of 9.69 seconds.³⁴

The Jamaican female athletes also put in a solid performance in the women's 100 metre final where Shirley-Ann Fraser, Sherone Simpson and Kerone Stewart won gold, silver and bronze respectively. This exceptional display of talents and supremacy brought to light Jamaica's competence vis-à-vis athletics in world sports. The country can now pride itself in its extraordinary athletes such as Asafa Powell, Yohan Blake and Bolt in challenging for honours with the likes of the United States.³⁵

2.5 Conclusion

In conclusion, the development of sports over the years has seen it transform from being a form of exercise and recreation to a large lucrative industry. The commercialization of sports has led to its appeal in the international system ranging from the global viewership of some editions of the Olympic Games to experiencing the culture and values of host countries. The IOC's organization of the Summer and Winter Olympic Games has provided host cities the platform to showcase some of the greatest editions of the Games over the years. The next chapter of this study examines the role of sport diplomacy in international relations, within the context of the Olympic Games.

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CHAPTER THREE

SPORTS DIPLOMACY IN CONTEMPORARY INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS: AN EXAMINATION OF THE OLYMPIC GAMES

3.0 Introduction

In the previous chapter, the study presented an overview of the IOC and the development of sports in international relations. This chapter explores the use of sports diplomacy using the Olympic Games as a case study. In examining the use of sports diplomacy within the context of the Olympic Games, the study identifies three main manifestations, which include the use of the Olympic Games for purposes of nationalism, as a foreign policy tool and thirdly as a tool for building the image of states. This is preceded by an examination of the relationship between sports diplomacy and international relations and the resulting consolidation of sports diplomacy.

3.1 Sports Diplomacy and International Relations

Satow defines diplomacy as “the application of intelligence and tact to the conduct of officials between governments of independent states extending sometimes also to their relations with dependent territories, and between governments and international institutions.”¹ This definition underlines the fact that diplomacy is imperative because of the self-help nature of the international system, where states would have to find their own means of achieving one objective or the other. The desire to do away with conflicts and consolidate state relations makes diplomacy very essential because it presents a range of options such as negotiations and persuasions that states use in achieving cooperation. Though conventional forms of diplomacy have a higher success rate than coercion and force, it can be flawed by intense hostilities, tension and the reluctance to leave entrenched positions, which may result in making peaceful practices

like diplomacy inefficient. However, this is where sports exhibits its usefulness in inter-state relations by bridging embittered relations as well as consolidating existing congenial ones.

According to Tatz, “sports is always serious, it is organized: it is an industry; it is business, money, vested interests: it is a medium of and for ideology, prestige, status, nationalism, diplomacy and war”² Due to its commercialization, sports has evolved into a lucrative business and creates opportunities for sports personalities to earn millions through sponsorship and advertisement deals. For advertisers, sport broadcasts have become one of the most profit-making platforms to expand their brands. The massive recognition of sport could not be overlooked by the political world. Thus, the popularity and achievements of sport personalities, local and national teams in various sports persuasions are often harnessed by politicians, individuals with political ambitions or even sports personalities for political purposes including fostering national pride, search for support of voters during elections and for states seeking to accentuate their dominance in the international system.³

As a social phenomenon, sport is competed at three different levels. These are the regional, national and international levels, and it is at the international level that the relationship between international relations and sports can be assessed. This is primarily because sports events can occasionally influence world politics and vice versa.

The emergence of present-day sport in the mid nineteenth century had little or no significance on international relations due to its unpopular and amateur nature. However, the IOC and the Olympic Games played a major role in transforming sports to a more advanced level in the first half of the twentieth century. The boost in popularity was attributed to the increasing number of athletes that competed in the Games over the years, and also through the media at the time.⁴

For instance, in 1924, British Newspaper, *The People* sold 600,000 copies which included four pages of sport, while 4,600,000 copies were sold in 1946, with over one third of each issue devoted to sport.⁵ This drastic increase in the passion for sport reinforced the role of sports in international relations.

As a socioeconomic phenomenon, there is an increased government interest in sports, mainly because sports affect a significant fraction of the populace.⁶ Thus, the immense popularity gained by sport, established a mutual influence between the two fields, therefore creating a beneficial platform for sports personalities and politicians. The role of sport in international relations can be assessed in different ways. First, sport has the potential to be utilized by geopolitical blocks to exhibit their superiority in the international system. As the most common and most important type, governments may seek athletic achievements to signify a state's power as well as political and economic prowess. Another similar dimension to athletic victories is the hosting of huge sporting events such as the Olympics and the World Cup among others. The most wealthy and powerful nations use this opportunity to organize some of the best sporting events in history and to showcase their supremacy to the world.⁷ Secondly, the link between sport and international relations can be attributed to participation in sport.

Even though sport involves athletes competing against each other, some political interests can be gained by participating or deciding not to participate in international sporting events. For new emerging states, participating in sport can influence their recognition and status in the international system, and contrarily, abandoning sporting events through boycotts can be utilized as powerful diplomatic tool in influencing actors such as states and international sporting organizations.⁸ Participation in sport is an essential aspect of international relations, as it provides an opportunity for states to compete at the highest level of international repute. For

states that have no universal diplomatic recognition, they often try to persuade international sporting organizations that pursue peace and cooperation such as the IOC to include them in Games or at best grant them the hosting rights. Thus, the chance to participate on the world stage can propel emerging states into the international community to further its diplomatic ties.⁹

The use of table tennis by the United States and China to promote ties between the two states in the Cold War era presents a relevant instance of how sports diplomacy has played a role in building ties among nations. In 1971, U.S. President Richard Nixon decided to utilize the ‘détente’ approach in an attempt to bridge the gap between its rivals namely China and the Soviet Union. However, this proved to be extremely difficult due to the intense nature of the Cold War which manifested in proxy wars and ideological differences.¹⁰

There was however a breakthrough in April, 1971 when the U.S. Table Tennis team received an invitation from the Chinese government to participate in a set of exhibition contests with their Chinese counterparts. The American team arrived in China on 14th April 1971, and was received by the Chinese Prime Minister. This became a historic moment for both states since it was the first time that a group of American citizens had visited China after its 1949 Communist takeover. At a reception organized by the Chinese government to welcome the American team, the Chinese Premier Zhou En-lai stated:

“You have opened a new chapter in the relations of the American and Chinese people...I am confident that this beginning again of our friendship will certainly meet with majority support of our two peoples”.¹¹

This was a significant turning point for both governments as it created the opportunity to interact and focus on issues of mutual interest. For the athletic team, it was an opportunity for them to experience some of the beautiful tourist sights in China. The ‘ping-pong’ diplomacy, as it is commonly known thawed the relations between the two states and paved way for a

subsequent visit by the American basketball team for exhibition games in China later that year.

However, the results of the exhibition games were not relevant to both states. It became an avenue for forging the relations between the citizens and governments of both states. For both the U.S. and China, 'ping-pong' diplomacy paved way for improved relations. In 1972, President Nixon embarked on a state visit to China, and seven years after, Chinese Prime Minister Deng Xiaopeng visited the U.S although as a guest to then Vice-President Jimmy Carter. Approximately four weeks after that visit, China and the U.S officially initiated diplomatic ties. During the 40th anniversary of 'ping-pong' diplomacy in 2011, both governments reiterated the significance of the event and expressed satisfaction with their diplomatic ties. Xi Jinping, the Vice-President of China is on record to have stated that "the two countries must fully draw on historic experience and strengthen dialogue, mutual trust and cooperation."¹²

Boycotting Games also sends a strong political statement to the international community. The most notable one is the one which occurred at the 1980 and 1984 Games in Moscow and Los Angeles respectively. As part of the Cold War politics, the US and its allies boycotted the Moscow Games as a result of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.¹³ The Los Angeles Olympic Games four years later was boycotted by the Soviet Union who cited security concerns as its reason for not participating, although it was possibly an issue of vengeance.¹⁴

States struggle for victories at major sporting events to further their political objectives, and this has over the years promoted the role of sports diplomacy in international relations. However, due to the cosmopolitan, commercial and professional nature of sports, it has become

increasingly challenging to attain sports success on the international scale. Hence, not every country is able enough to attain success at the highest level in sport, and for countries incapable of doing so, the quest to win can be intense. The Olympics medal table count, which forms an essential aspect of sport victories, has often been used as one of the most effective tools in furthering political objectives. Though the table takes into consideration the number of medals awarded a country during the Olympics, the IOC maintains that the Olympic Games is a competition between individuals and not countries.¹⁵ Sport at the end of the Cold War became a matter of international recognition with the United States and Soviet Union fighting for supremacy in the international system. The two blocks spearheaded the Olympic medal table, either often ranked first or second, with the Soviets gaining an upper hand.¹⁶ It became evident at the beginning of the 1960s, that the Soviet Union and its satellite states were gaining international prestige, and the Americans responded to this power shift by winning the most gold medals at the 1964 and 1968 Olympics to enhance its power. However, the individual victories by the Americans did not certainly mean losses by the communist states.¹⁷

Aside the Olympic Games, other sporting events such as the World football championships and the Commonwealth Games are of political importance. But the most relevant to international relations, is the athletic competitions which involves illustrious victories over rivals who are considered political adversaries. Such sporting events induce tremendous emotions among spectators and athletes, and a victory is regarded not only as the victory of an athlete or a team but of a whole country. The period during the Cold War witnessed a prevalence of politically motivated contests, and notable among them were the Soviet-American encounters which surprised fans and spectators. Mention can be made of the basketball final between the two countries at the 1972 Munich Olympic Games, where the Americans protested after a controversial referee's decision, which was suspended after a 14 hour deliberation. A jury made

up of Polish, Hungarian, Cuban, Italian and Puerto Rican members voted 3-2 in favour of the Soviet Union.¹⁸ Kobierecki notes that although voting was conducted in a confidential manner, the nationalities of the jurors may have played a part.¹⁹ The American athletes refused to accept their silver medals, and the result of that game is still considered by Americans as biased.²⁰

Hosting huge sporting events is an extensive way of demonstrating that the relationship between sport and international relations is a two-way one. It is not only international relations that influence sport, but to some extent, the world of sport also affects states in the international system. Objectives can be attained by hosting sport events, and it may be very critical for governments to have the platform to further their aims. Sporting federations and organizations are responsible for choosing a host city or country for an event. The criteria used by sporting organizations for the selection of cities include geographic, political, economic and the country's ability to organize the event. Awarding a state the rights to host a sporting event can be based on political reasons. For instance, the IOC awarded Tokyo the rights to host the 1964 Summer Olympics as the first Asian host city. This was after the Second World War where Japan needed the Games to regain its recognition in the international system. Japan signed a peace treaty with the Second World War allies in 1951, and joined the United Nations in 1956. The IOC supported this landmark and in 1958, awarded Tokyo the Summer Olympics.²¹

It is evident that sports have political importance and this is mainly attributed to some factors. Thus, sports are a universally accepted phenomenon which create interest in a lot of people and allows for the realistic use of sports for political reasons. Also, due to its competitive nature, sport provides a non-political environment for states to contest for superiority, which may be essential particularly in situations when some form of hostility occurs between states, but alternative channels of competition, such as conflicts, are not prudent.

In light of the above, there are some instances that indicate an existing commensal relationship between sports and international relations and by extension diplomacy. Some sporting events such as the Olympic Games have exhibited how nations depend on sports as a tool to express their dominance over others, as well use the events as a platform for soft power. Evidently, hosting of international sporting competitions such as the Olympic Games has increasingly taken on the form of diplomatic discussions at the highest level of governments. Imperatively, the use of lobbying by states in their quest to win the rights to host international sporting events has been prevalent in recent times. Most states employ seasoned sportsmen as ambassadors to spearhead campaigns during the voting process in order to enhance its chances of being awarded the hosting rights. The use of sports personalities by states or to large extents, regional bodies in the quest to host global sporting competitions, highlights one of the means by which sports and international relations are connected. Though, recent times has seen economics serve as the main area of competition among states due to the multilateral dimension of international relations, sports diplomacy can still serve as a significant means of displaying power by boosting the domestic economy through hosting of major sporting competitions. This inherently increases the ambitions of governments to compete for hosting rights of major sporting events. Once sports attained a certain level of popularity, it became an imperative means in world politics, playing an important role in the propaganda and in changing the structure of international relations.²²

3.2 The Olympic Games and Nationalism

Within the context of sports diplomacy, the Olympic Games have been used at particular times in history as a tool for the expression of nationalist beliefs. Such expressions have been targeted at nation building, promoting national interests or encouraging the actions of separatist movement among others. Nationalism in its benign form can be regarded as a genial and doting

feeling of loyalty, patriotism and pride. Thus, in contemporary international relations, a small measure of nationalism is almost important to a citizen of any nation, and a lack of it therefore engenders animosity. As stated by former IOC president, Avery Brundage:

“Sport as well as music and fine arts can be paled the political and ethnical boundaries; we can stay together through sport, and politic or business never be realized this cohesion, lonely”.²³

Hosting of the Olympic Games is one of the essential aspects that constitute the expression of nationalism and strengthening the national identity of emerging states in the international system. According to Anderson, “nationalism represents a systematic transformation of this sense of communal difference between groups of people into an antagonistic orientation to other peoples, nations and states, defining them as rivals and enemies, or as oppressors, or as subordinates and inferiors.”²⁴ Similarly, Malia opines that, it is entirely impossible to disassociate nationalism from competition because the foundation of the Olympic Games is built on the assumption of nation-states and national organizations albeit emphasizing the spirit of the Games as human unity.²⁵

The use of Olympic Games as soft power tool in the diplomatic relations between emerging states creates the avenue for nationalism and national identity, and emphasizes the role of nation-states in the international system. The founder of modern Olympics, Pierre de Coubertin, developed fundamental principles which were ingrained in the Olympic Charter, aimed at prohibiting any form of propaganda vis-à-vis any political, religious or racial issues. Lusa posits that this approach has changed and has created a simple avenue for the Olympic idea to be used to influence public opinion.²⁶

Acts of nationalism puts host nations under two different types of pressures. The first, considered as tactical, involves drawing attention away from sports to focus rather on local and

international issues. The second, regarded as ideational, involves reaching out to mostly authoritarian regimes for the differences between nationalism and the Olympic values. For instance, the period that saw Brazil's elected President, Dilma Roussef suspended on allegations of fiscal mismanagement, led to concerns by the general public who desired to use the Rio Olympic Games to accentuate their resentments, but both the Olympic Committee and the government of Brazil prohibited any political acts in the Olympic venues.²⁷

Initially envisioned to encourage unity, cooperation, and global understanding, the Olympic Games have been used as a tool of diplomacy by emerging host nations to promote different nationalistic agendas on the international scene. Thus, the Games encompass an aura of excitement with regards to its participation, as well as the competitive nature that representatives of nations exhibit.

The 1936 Olympic Games in Berlin presents a vital example of how the hosting of the Olympic Games can be used by states to exude nationalistic tendencies. In the years that preceded the event, there was prevalent, often vicious antagonism towards any opponent of the Nazi regime. Minority groups within the country were oppressed, particularly the Jews. As word of Nazi oppression continued to spread across the world, there were concerns from potential participants to boycott the Games. The U.S Olympic Committee president, Avery Brundage in a bid to prevent the U.S from boycotting the Games, traveled to Germany to validate any prejudice allegations. On his return from Germany, Brundage stated that "Jewish athletes in Germany are not being discriminated against."²⁸ Irrespective of this, streets in Germany had anti-Semitic signs which were eventually removed at the request of the IOC President Count Henri de Baillet-Latour.²⁹ The U.S House of Representatives debated on whether to finance the athletes' trip to Berlin and also contemplated on a total boycott of the Games. The Amateur

Athletics Union (AAU) was concerned about sending American athletes to Berlin for the Games. A few civil rights groups were divided over whether to allow African American athlete Jesse Owens compete at the Games. This was during the period where German leader, Adolf Hitler, proclaimed that the Aryan race was superior to that of the Jews and Blacks.

Further, Hitler had splurged substantial German resources to display white supremacy, and to achieve this, he organized the training of the German Olympians in a military technique.³⁰ In spite of this, Jesse Owens represented the U.S in Berlin, and eventually won four gold medals in the 100 and 200 metre dash, 4x 100 metre relay and long jump events to the astonishment and of the German spectators. He became the first American in Olympic history to win four gold medals at a single Olympic Games. After achieving this feat, Owens stated; “I had jumped into another rare kind of stratosphere – one that only a handful of people in every generation are lucky enough to know.”³¹ Nonetheless, Owens was subjected to racial abuse and epithets as well as other forms of maltreatment during the Games. Even, after the dominance of the Americans including Owens, in the track and field event during the Games, Hitler, who had been lauding German athletes left the venue right after three African Americans had won the high-jump category.³² Although the Berlin Games was a success for the Germans in terms of its impressive organization and sporting achievements, it also created the platform for nationalistic tenets to be displayed.

The Cold War era witnessed sports become an alternative avenue of competition between the Americans who stood for a liberal form of diplomacy and free market and that of the Soviet Union who represented communism. Competition between the two blocs went beyond the field, focused on and proved who had the best political economic systems. Kobierecki asserts that most of the medals won by the Americans in the 1964 and 1968 Olympic Games were in

response to the rise of the Soviet Union and other communist states during the 1960s. The Americans used the Olympic Games at the time, to gain prestige and superiority in the international system.³³ The Olympic Games at the time thus became a tool or platform for states to assert their power and project their values and culture in the international system. Aside its sentimental values, winning of medals and the competitive nature between the two blocs reflect how the Olympics were exploited for political reasons and also for furthering their national interests during the Cold War era. Most emerging host nations use the Olympic Games as a tool of diplomacy in an attempt to strengthen identities, national sentiments and ideologies which ultimately suggests that, sport is never dissociated from the concept of nation.³⁴

Hargreaves provides another insight when he examines the nationalist symbols and messages communicated during the 1992 Barcelona Summer Olympic Games. He argues that choosing Barcelona as the host city for the Games at the time was critical, as it was both an important centre within Spain and the capital of Catalonia. As a global showpiece, the Olympic movement contributed to the advancement of local, regional and national identities within the city. In essence, the Games in Barcelona was memorable for other reasons such as commemorating the first appearance of contingents from post-Apartheid South Africa and newly formed independent states of former Soviet Union.³⁵

Hargreaves posits that sport is linked to the dissemination of nationalism through the use of common cultural symbols,³⁶ and both local and international culture symbols largely contribute to the rites and customs of the Olympic Games. In his view, the Games provide ideal platform for expression of these symbols, in that:

“Olympism, as an aspect of a cosmopolitan global culture, co-exists and interacts with local national cultures. Rather than helping to reduce their significance, it is perfectly compatible with the existence of strong senses of national identity in participant countries and with the presence of nationalism as a major political force. Indeed, far from being eroded, nationalism can be stimulated by global developments such as Olympism”³⁷

The Spanish Olympic and international emblems were exhibited throughout the Games in Barcelona, but the Spanish state desired to use the Games as an avenue to enhance its image as a contemporary, well-organized nation. However, there were calls by interested parties within Catalonia to propagate Catalanian language and culture during the Games in order to meet the ethnic demands for recognition during the opening and closing ceremonies of the Games, and concurrently maintain its political relationship with the Spanish central government.

The debate over recognition was not only spearheaded by the ultra-nationals and the Barcelona City government, but also orchestrated through institutions such as the Comité Olímpic Español (COE), the Barcelona Olympic Organizing Committee (COOB) for the Games and the Catalan Olympic Committee (COC). This debate raised security concerns, issues of disruptions, as well as violence and terrorism, but these political and diplomatic disagreements were resolved through the IOC's 'paz olímpica' i.e. Olympic peace, approximately six weeks before the opening ceremony of the Games.

In addition, the Beijing Olympic Games in 2008 was also employed to reinforce China's nationalism, which resulted in the government extending its recognition, gaining support and by persuading the domestic public of its legitimacy. The hosting of the Games communicated China's status not only internationally, but locally as well. In its efforts, it used the Beijing Games to unify the people and strengthen national identity. Polson and Whiteside make reference to this assertion when they note that, "a key success of the Beijing Games was in fostering Chinese nationalism."³⁸ Furthermore, the Games were used by China to emphasize exceptionalism, reinstitute national pride and promote its values that would present China as an attractive state to other emerging states in the international system. The processes involved in

organizing the Beijing Games were important in harmonizing both international exposure and nationalist biases.

After the IOC accepted China back into the Olympic movement in the 1970s, it competed at nine editions of the Summer Games, with the 2008 Games being the most successful one. The 2008 Games presented China the opportunity to claim first position on the overall medal rankings, and this was primarily as a result of having the highest number of athletes represent China in its Olympic history. This reflected in the medal table as China's won 100 medals in Beijing, and improving on their previous performance at the 2004 Athens Olympic Games where they won 63 medals in all.³⁹ Even though there were calls for the boycott of the Beijing Olympic Games as a result of the efforts made by organizations such as International Campaign for Tibet, a campaign for Students in Tibet and some political figures, the Games proved to be a success for the nation. The buoyant mood of the Chinese people coupled with this triumph, strengthened China's status as an emerging power in world sports as well as showcasing a sense of nationalism and national identity across the globe.

There have been alternative means through which nationalism has been expressed by nations at the Olympic Games. For instance, Ghana's identity at the Olympic Games has largely been attributed to the wearing of the 'kente' cloth by the Ghanaian Olympic contingent during the opening and closing ceremonies of Olympic Games.⁴⁰ This has served as a means of expressing a sense of identity and nationalism by the Ghanaian athletes and signifies the rich heritage and culture of the country. Athletes pride themselves in positively forming and enhancing a country's identity on the international stage through their sporting achievements. It is worth noting that Ghana's first President Kwame Nkrumah, promoted his ideologies and intentions to create an identity for Ghana through sports. This is evident in the naming of Ghana's national

football teams which have the prefix of “Black”, such as the under-23 Olympic football male and female teams, the “Black Meteors” and “Black Princesses” respectively. The symbolic nature of the name was further propelled onto the international scene when “Black Meteors” became the first ever African representative to win a medal in the Olympic football competition at the Barcelona 1992 Games. This feat instilled a sense of national pride among Ghanaians and the rest of Africa, and paved way for other African nations such as Nigeria and Cameroon to win gold in Olympic football at the 1996 Atlanta and 2000 Sydney Olympic Games respectively, carving a form of identity, pride and nationalism for themselves and the continent as a whole on one of the biggest international sporting platforms.⁴¹

3.3 The Olympic Games as a Foreign Policy Tool

The Olympic Games do not only present a platform for nationalistic beliefs as well as ideological and political dissensions, but can also expedite cooperation, overcome profound disputes, enhance understanding between states, dissolve stereotypes and restrict conflicts to the playing field rather than the battleground. The above factors have prompted states in the international system to use sporting events as means of achieving foreign policy objectives, which plays an important function in a state’s opinion on certain issues or a particular state.

In some situations, sports have been employed as a tool by states to show disapproval of a particular issue and event in the international system. In this context, sport is used as a tool mainly because of its large patronage and commercialization across the globe, and provides a preferable and vast opportunity for states to convey diplomatic gestures on an important public platform. As a result of its magnitude, various editions of the Olympic Games have been used by actors to express their intentions and position within the international community.

One of the most relevant illustrations that evidently provide the use of sports as a foreign policy tool, was the 1988 Olympic Games in Seoul, South Korea. One of the chief reasons why the rights to host the Games were awarded to South Korea by the IOC was to help in the process of reuniting both North and South Korea over the divided Korean peninsula. North Korea, for their part, saw the Games as a critical means towards their ultimate objective of uniting the two countries. However, there was widespread scepticism among the public whether Seoul would be an ideal city to host the world for one of the biggest sporting events. This was as a result of the growing fears of ill-fated incidents and division among the people in some parts of the country. Also, the Games were awarded just 15 months after a devastating and bloody uprising in Kwangju led by General Chun,⁴² as well as the country's rather delicate relations with North Korea which had resulted in sporadic surges of violence. According to then vice-president of the IOC, Richard W. Pound, the decision taken by the IOC to award the Games to South Korea was "at best as risky and at worst as recklessly foolhardy, depending on one's degree of optimism and place on the political spectrum."⁴³

Following the decision by the Asian Games Federation (AGF) to also choose Seoul as the venue for the Asian Games in 1986, the Chun government sought to use the two impending major international sporting events as an avenue to legitimize the regime both domestically and internationally. Also, the Olympic Games in particular could play an essential role in resolving the internal political wrangling in the country, as well as the belief by Chun that, organizing successful sporting events could confer power and reinforce his authority to rule. With regards to the Games, these objectives by the Chun government were threatened by certain issues and these included; North Korea's resentment towards the positive attention received by South Korea from the international community for hosting the Games, the possibility of countries such as China and the Soviet Union boycotting the Olympics because of their alliance with

North Korea. Another issue was the fact that, 37 other National Olympic Committees did not have diplomatic ties with South Korea.⁴⁴

The IOC maintained its firm support for Seoul to host the Games despite earlier indications by the Soviet Union not to send athletes to South Korea. This follows the involvement of the Soviet Union and North Korea in the shooting down of a South Korean passenger airline in September 1983, primarily to deter many people from attending the Games. The incident further set back the relations between both countries. Although the Games were a great success for both the IOC and South Korea, it encountered fears of terrorism and boycotts mostly throughout the Games, along with the decision by North Korea not to compete in the Games despite the fact that its allies did.⁴⁵

It is vital to note that, following an IOC's resolution in 1962, there had been several meetings between both countries in 1963 and subsequent years to discuss the possibility of presenting joint teams at the Olympic Games, but the attempts proved futile. However, recent times have indicated a substantial improvement in the relationship between the two countries vis-à-vis sports, which has been evidently exhibited in international sporting events. Both Korean states have on a number of occasions presented a unified team usually at the opening and closing ceremonies of the Olympic Games, with the opening ceremony of the 2000 Sydney Games in Australia being the first of few instances. A decision was made by both states to allow their athletes march together under one flag, which was white in colour with deep blue embroidery of the Korean peninsula stitched into it. Initially, then IOC president, Juan Antonio Samaranch proposed that both Korean teams jointly march under the Olympic flag, which would be accompanied by the flags of both countries. South Korea welcomed the proposal, but this was rejected by North Korea who reiterated that displaying two flags would be redundant, as the

ultimate goal of both countries was reunification. The flag-bearers, one from each Korean state marched ahead of the athletes and presidents of the two National Olympic Committees, and the name 'Korea' was employed to represent the two states during the opening ceremony of the Games. After the successful initiative in Sydney, both countries again displayed and marched together under one flag at the Athens Summer Olympic Games in 2004 and the 2006 Winter Olympic Games in Turin, Italy.⁴⁶

In addition, South Korea's initial bid to host the 2014 Winter Olympic Games in Pyeongchang was unsuccessful even though they employed the reunification theme to enhance its chances of being granted the rights to host the Games. In their quest, the local organizing committee spearheading Pyeongchang's campaign adopted a blend of economic, sports and political arguments in an attempt to convince the IOC in awarding the hosting rights.⁴⁷ In July, 2011, the IOC awarded the city of Pyeongchang the rights to host the 2018 Winter Olympics after its third attempt. This meant that within two decades, South Korea has organized three mega sports events, i.e. the Seoul Summer Olympic Games in 1988, the FIFA World Cup in 2002 co-hosted with Japan and the Winter Olympics in 2018. This clearly showed the intention of South Korea to use sports especially the Olympic Games as a diplomatic tool in fostering peace with its neighbours, particularly North Korea, and to maintain and consolidate its relations with other states.

The 2018 Winter Olympic Games in Pyeongchang provided South Korea another platform to use sport as an instrument in its foreign policy objectives and relations. The Games also provided an opportunity for both Korean states to hold talks in the wake of growing concerns over North Korea's missile and nuclear programs. Kim Jong-Un, the North Korean President, in his New Year's speech on the 1st of January, 2018, put forward discussions in Seoul, South Korea, over the North Korea's involvement in the Games and this happened to be the first time

in over two years that both the North and South had high level talks.⁴⁸ Following the talks on 9th January, North Korea concurred to send its athletes to Pyeongchang for the Games,⁴⁹ and it was announced on 17th January, 2018, that both states had settled on presenting a combined women's ice hockey team.⁵⁰ This was the first time that athletes from both states had competed as the same team at the Olympic Games, and also marched under the Korean Unification Flag at the opening ceremony of the Games.⁵¹ The main message of the ceremony centered on peace, passion, harmony and convergence.

It is critical to note that prior to the commencement of the Games, the IOC facilitated an historic agreement in order to enable qualified North Korean athletes travel across the Korean Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) into South Korea to participate in the Pyeongchang Olympics.⁵² This act carried an emblematic meaning for all Koreans on both sides of the border for the aspirations of a potential reunification of the two states in the near future. The Games, which took place between the 9th and 25th of February 2018, featured the unified Korean team which consisted of twelve players from North Korea and twenty-three players from South Korea. The team participated in the ice hockey competition organized for women. However, the unification theme was met with protests and online petitions in South Korea where they contended that the government was seeking to utilize the Games to propagate and support North Korean beliefs.⁵³

The beginning of the Olympics witnessed the diplomatic dialogue between South Korean leader Moon Jae-in and Kim Yo-Jong, sister of the North Korean leader, and an eminent figure of the regime. The two representatives of both states agreed on sending a unified contingent to the Games.⁵⁴ This was to signify to the world the clear objectives of both states vis-à-vis the Winter Olympic Games in Pyeongchang. Though the unified hockey team presented for the Games was unsuccessful in their quest for Olympic glory, they captured the spirit and the imperfect

nature of the Pyeongchang Games. The Pyeongchang Olympics will go down in history as a symbolic breakthrough for the Korean people, as it eased growing tensions in the Korean peninsula. Both Korea states have indicated the possible unification as a top-priority political objective as it particularly reflects in South Korea's 'Sunshine Policy'. The policy fundamentally strives for peace, reunion and opulence on the Korean peninsula.⁵⁵ It must be noted that, sports diplomacy and sports exchanges between the two Korean states carries a huge potential to be used for foreign policy purposes and constitutes a significant breakthrough in inter-Korea relations and cooperation.

In advancing the foreign policy objectives of a state, hosting of the Olympic Games can provide the opportune avenue for host states to engage other states in diplomatic dialogues and furthering its interests effectively. This is achieved through scheduled meetings with diplomats and ministers of the participating states who usually travel with their respective Olympic contingent to the Games, for the sole purpose of discussing inter-state issues. In an effort not to take attention away from the Games, dialogues between state ministers and diplomats are often at times held behind closed doors. In the instance stated above, the IOC's decision to award South Korea the Olympic Games in the summer of 1988 demonstrated how hosting the Olympics can be critical in influencing the actions of states in the international system and their quest to attain foreign policy objectives. Thus, not only does the hosting of the Olympic Games exude goodwill, it can also lead to gaining economic benefits and revenues from the Games.⁵⁶

3.5 Olympic Games and Building Positive Images of States

The image of a state is extremely significant for its survival as well as its diplomatic relations with other states in the international system. In essence, diplomacy provides states the platform use certain tools and components to improve their image both domestically and internationally.

This type of diplomacy, termed public diplomacy, as examined in chapter one of this dissertation epitomizes the objective of a state's quest to build a positive image through soft power initiatives. Interactions between states in the international system can be very successful when they possess positive images and opinions in the eyes of publics of other states.⁵⁷

Some states have used tools such as television and media programs, radio broadcasts, cultural and educational exchange programs as well as educational scholarships in enhancing their image. These tools have created the avenue for countries to get closer to citizens of other countries which results in making the citizens form opinions about them. For instance, states like United States and China, usually adopt a blend of these public diplomacy tools to create positive perceptions and image for their foreign public across the world.⁵⁸

Sports have been utilized by most states as an important diplomatic tool in boosting their image in the international community. From being granted the rights to host a major sports competition and achieving victories, to sheer participation in a sporting competition can be valuable for a state's image in international relations. In current times, many emerging states have espoused sports as an essential tool in improving their images and notions with regards to other states in the world.

China's hosting of the Beijing Olympics in 2008 provides a relevant illustration of how sports diplomacy can be used by states to boost their image. The city of Beijing won the bid to host the Summer Olympics in 2001 at the expense of cities such as Toronto, Osaka, Istanbul and Paris. However, the decision did not go down well with certain organizations such as Amnesty International, an international human rights based organization. The organization argued against the unsatisfactory level of human rights in China. A report by the organization in April,

2008, titled “*China: The Olympics countdown- broken promises*” highlighted the various circumstances of human rights abuses experienced in the country. The report emphasized the lack of effort by the Chinese government in dealing with issues of human rights and the inability of the relevant authorities in investigating the issues before the bid was awarded to Beijing. Part of the report states that:

“Chinese courts continue to sentence to death and execute thousands of individuals every year. Those facing capital charges do not receive fair trials in line with international human rights standards...Several incidents of miscarriages of justice, in some cases leading to the execution of the innocent, have been published in the Chinese press and have generated disquiet among the public at large.”⁵⁹

With regards to issues pertaining press freedom, the report made claims about the treatment of foreign reporters in China. It read that:

“Despite the introduction of new media regulations increasing the freedom of foreign reporters to cover news stories in China, overseas journalists continue to report being obstructed or hampered from conducting interviews. The Foreign Correspondents Club of China (FCCC) documented approximately 180 incidents in 2007. By July 2008, this had increased to 230, including over 40 cases after the unrest in Tibet in March and more than 12 after the Sichuan earthquake in May.”⁶⁰

Regardless of the human rights issues and revelations by Amnesty International, the Chinese government received full support from the IOC in organizing the Beijing Games. Hein Verbruggen, chairman of the IOC panel for coordinating the Games, stated that the IOC believed China deserved the chance to host the Games and by doing so, China would have the opportunity to improve its record vis-à-vis human rights, freedom of press and the practice of democracy.⁶¹ According to Cha, in an attempt to prove the right decision was taken by the IOC, the Chinese government freed some prisoners including Zhao Yan, who was jailed in 2006 on charges of leaking state secrets.⁶² This also prompted changes in China with respect to mass protests and press freedom throughout the period of the Games and probably after it ended.

The opening ceremony of the 2008 Beijing Games showcased China's image to the world. It aimed at displaying China's rich culture, its success as well as epitomizing China as a modern and innovative nation. The Games were also used to highlight the country's economic improvement by popularizing its high technology Olympics in strengthening China's status as an emerging state.

The general response after the Games was exceptional and fans as well as spectators were impressed with the excellent facilities constructed for the Games. This pushed China into the limelight when it exhibited to the world that it was ready to deliver a memorable experience for the many visiting spectators and sports personalities. The magnificent Beijing National Stadium, commonly known as the "Birds Nest Stadium" was the center stage for the events which happened to be an unforgettable image imprinted in the minds of viewers across the world throughout the period of the Games. The stadium was the venue for the opening ceremony, closing ceremony and the athletic competitions. It also witnessed Jamaica's Usain Bolt's impressive exploits in the men's 100 metres final and thus, has become an image and a moment that many fans and spectators across the globe would fondly relive.⁶³ Additionally, the China Aquatic Centre, Indoor Stadium as well as the Beijing Wukesong Culture and Sports Centre which were all constructed for the Olympics enhanced the country's image as an infrastructural powerhouse in the world and particularly Asia. Generally, China's image across the globe was immensely boosted by hosting the Olympic Games in 2008. It can also be noted that the presence and participation of seasoned athletes in the Olympic Games to some extent, affect the patronage of the Games and could serve as a tool for projecting the image of the host nation. Stephen A. Greyser, a marketing scholar, argues that the massive financial expenses by China in hosting the Games underlined the fact that China was now making a relevant statement

in international affairs.⁶⁴ A communiqué issued by the government of China stated the estimated cost of the Games as \$40 billion with a windfall of \$16 billion.⁶⁵

China was highly applauded by the UN in its efforts to ensure a cleaner environment for fans and spectators during and after the Games. The UN resident aide in China, Khalid Malik stated that, “the next focus of China is to further promote the concept of Green Olympics and finally realize the goal of making a green China.”⁶⁶ Hosting of the Olympic Games has been used by emerging states such as China to brand themselves as important actors, at least during the period of the Games, because to these states, the Olympics symbolizes the power of a nation. According to Grix and Lee, “China’s Olympics could be read as an attempt to present the nation that has shifted from being a regional superpower to a global power”.⁶⁷ Thus, China underwent an image improvement phase throughout the Beijing Games and that has resulted in its recently found relevance in the international system. The Chinese exhibited power and astonished the world with the hosting of the Games, its economic prowess as well as its athletic performances.

Though the use of conventional forms of diplomacy by states is still relevant in image building, there has been a prevalent use of sports in recent times as a soft power tool in the quest for nation-branding. Through soft power, states can achieve its objectives and consolidate diplomatic relations with other actors in the international system in a more congenial manner. Sports is prioritized by some governments in their foreign policy initiatives as a means of enhancing their national image within the international community. Seasoned and celebrated athletes and Olympians can serve as symbols of participating nations and can be used by governments in its diplomatic engagements with other states in the international system. Achieving sporting or athletic victories can advance a state’s favourability in world opinion. For instance, Jamaica’s success in the athletics events of the various editions of the Olympic Games has promoted certain aspects of its culture and values, not just to the Jamaican diasporic

community in the United Kingdom and the United States, but to Asia and Europe. The stellar performances by the Jamaican athletes at the Beijing Games propelled the nation's global sports brand and have become a core pillar of Jamaica's image within the international community, in areas of diplomatic relations, foreign investments and tourism.⁶⁸

3.6 Conclusion

In conclusion, it is critical in understanding how sports diplomacy has and continues to manifest itself in international relations within the context of the Olympic Games. The chapter established the link between sports and international relations through various dimensions. Olympic Games have been employed by actors in the international system to achieve their objectives by hosting and participating in the Games. Hosting of the Olympics Games has been an influential factor for states in particular in advancing their interests as they seek to use the platform in conducting diplomacy, building their image and expressing their identity and nationalism.

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CHAPTER FOUR

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter introduces the summary of findings of the study where conclusions were drawn based on the findings. It also presents some recommendations mainly for researchers who in the future may be interested in examining sports diplomacy and its function in international relations vis-à-vis the Olympic Games.

4.1 Summary of Findings

The study sought to among other things, examine the role of sports diplomacy in international relations by using the Olympic Games as a case study, and explore the relationship between sports and international relations and by extension diplomacy. It also sought to assess how sports have been used as a tool of diplomacy by states in the international system using examples from some editions of the Olympic Games.

The findings indicate that sports have experienced a vast change throughout modern history. It has shifted away from being form of an exercise or leisure activity to a lucrative industry. The growth of sport in recent times has been as a result of the developments of major sports events such as the Olympic Games. The outstanding performances by sportsmen and women have created memorable experiences for spectators, and the feeling of passion it generates has contributed to its popularity across the globe.

Due to its commercialization, sport has provided the opportunity for athletes, corporations, organizing bodies and to some extent, nations to create wealth. Huge amount of monies are now injected into sports and athletes in modern times earn a lot through wages, sponsorship and endorsement deals. Major sporting organizations such as the IOC, record huge profit margins from the Olympic Games due to its high attendances and media broadcasts.

It is observed that there exists a relationship between sport and international relations, and this is as a result of the growing popularity gained by sport over the years. Sport as a soft power tool is used by states to influence the actions of other states and to shows their superiority in the international system. Sport is however linked to international relations through the hosting of major sporting events, victories and participation in and boycotting of sporting events. It is also noted that sporting organizations such as the IOC use the hosting rights to influence the world of politics by awarding it to countries or regions that desires the platform to change its political situation.

As a soft power tool, sport is used by states in some editions of the Olympic Games to promote their national interests in the international system. The various ways states achieve is by using sport as a foreign policy tool in its diplomatic relations with other states. Sport is used to build the positive images of states, particularly for emerging states in the international system to enhance its status and recognition in order to further their national interests. Another finding is that sport diplomacy facilitates a nation's quest to express their nationalism, national identity and national pride. The study finds that among the actors that used the Olympic Games for diplomatic purposes were North and South Korea at the Pyeongchang Winter Olympic Games. Thus, the manifestations that emerged from the activities of the above mentioned countries was

the unification of the women's ice hockey team for the first time in the history of both countries, as well as marching together under a unified Korean flag at the opening ceremony of the Games.

The influence of the IOC as a non-state actor in the dynamics of inter-state relations is observed. The IOC in some instances played key roles in defining very delicate political situations in international relations. It presented the Olympic Games as an avenue for states to seek peaceful relations and maintain the status quo in the international system.

4.2 Conclusions

The main objective of states in the international system is to ensure peaceful relations with other states. Over the years, states have adopted traditional forms of diplomacy such as peace dialogues, negotiations, mediations among others, in finding ways of ensuring the existence of peace, and accentuating their status in the international system.

However, sports have evolved into a soft power tool for states in their pursuit of peaceful co-existence in the international system. At face value, sport and international relations seems apart, but both fields have managed to fuse together in generating fruitful outcomes in the quest for world peace. As a socioeconomic phenomenon, sport has a huge following which cannot be ignored by governments as they begin to consider sport as a tool for their actions in the international system. It is worth noting that a single football match or an edition of the Olympic Games will not ensure total peace, but sports can facilitate meaningful political dialogue or for the advancement of diplomacy between countries where politics failed.

Successful sporting events such as the Olympic Games, provide states the opportunity to gain recognition, build peaceful relations among participating states and use Olympic sport as tool

of diplomacy in furthering their national interest. The IOC have used its autonomous power to influence the actions of states in the international system through hosting of the Olympics, and such is the case of the 1988 Seoul Summer Olympic Games in South Korea, where the Games were awarded to the Asian country in an effort to reunite the two Koreas. Even though North Korea boycotted the Games, its allies did participate that year. Another instance where the IOC was instrumental using sport to influence politics was when it facilitated a historic agreement, which allowed North Korean athletes cross the border at the DMZ to participate in the 2018 Pyeongchang Winter Olympics.

Additionally, sport diplomacy is pivotal in the improvement of a nation's image in the international system. China's hosting of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games was very important in boosting the country's image in the international community. The issues discussed in this work are a reflection of the contemporary nature of the international system. All the sporting incidents, boycotts among others which happened during and beyond the Cold War have provided a stable foundation for modern day inter-state diplomatic relations. The expression of nationalism and national identity in the Olympic Games and other sporting events has provided the states the identity they need to engage in diplomatic dialogues to further their national interests.

In conclusion, the Olympic Games continue to enhance sport diplomacy and its role in fostering peace, cooperation, promoting national interests as well as cultural exchanges in the international system. Sports diplomacy can be used to improve the image, share a sense of camaraderie among states, promote international development and improve international relations. Though some editions of the Games have used to exhibit negative agendas and propagandas by some actors in the international system, it is still a very effective platform in

pursuing foreign policy objectives. Though the connection between sports and politics has long been established, they look set to grow closer together in times to come as the practice of sport diplomacy becomes normalized and accepted as a legitimate and significant tool for peace.

4.3 Recommendations

Considering the major role that sports diplomacy plays in international relations, it is obvious that state and non-state actors can use this opportunity to promote its objectives in the international system. The following recommendations were made:

- Sport diplomacy and its function in the field of international relations should be severely considered by countries or regions with long-standing issues of conflict. Sport diplomacy should be regarded as an alternative form of diplomatic dialogue and as a means of resolving conflicts in situations where traditional forms of diplomacy have been ineffective.
- Secondly, the IOC should undertake programmes and initiatives that would promote peaceful relations between warring countries or in conflict regions. In this regard, celebrated Olympians can serve as peace ambassadors in these initiatives and use their status in the sporting world to influence the actions of states or regions in conflict. It is also recommended that the IOC provide an equal platform for its member states with regards to the Winter Games as it favours the European and Asian member states, thus training facilities should be established in African countries to adequately prepare athletes for the Winter Olympics.
- Finally, in examining the efficacy of sport diplomacy in boosting the positive images of nations, I recommend that governments enact sports policies to promote their soft power agenda in order to achieve their objectives in the international system. The Ministry of sports and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of respective states should collaborate and put in place measures that would create diplomatic roles for celebrated sports

personalities as brand or sports ambassadors for the state. Although, sport may not be of high priority for most governments, the availability of sports diplomats in any government can be useful in advancing its interests within the international community.

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