



– a hope for diversity and a cruel disappointment

The Games were awarded to Rio faced to Madrid, Tokyo and Chicago. They are the 1st in South America and the 3rd in the southern hemisphere, after two Olympiads in Australia, (Melbourne 1956 and Sydney 2000). It is also the first Portuguese-speaking Games in history.

The overall budget includes the expenses of the organizing committee (1.26 billion Euros) and the total investments - 4.8 billion Euros revised to 6.22 billion, The construction of the Olympic Park and transport infrastructure. A tram was built by Alstom to improve traffic and reduce pollution.

The emblem of Rio 2016 is inspired by the vision of a modern Brazil, united to offer the world's largest festival, under the sign of passion and transformation. It evokes four pillars: harmonious diversity, contagious energy, exuberant nature and the Olympic spirit. A symbol of hope for Rio and more generally for Brazil.

The opening and closing ceremonies take place in the Maracanã stadium, where the national team of Brazil has so often shone with legendary footballers (Pelé, Didi, Alberto, Romario...). Directors with international careers (Fernando Meirelles, Daniela Thomas or Andrucha Waddington), Brazilian champions, or the singer Mariene de Castro, a local star, are associated to the ceremonies.

The brilliant face of the Rio Games, which brings together 204 nations (plus two delegations under the Olympic banner), is tainted by the biggest corruption scandal in Olympic history, denounced by the Japanese delegation since 2009. The IOC decided in 2017 to suspend the Brazilian National Olympic Committee. Its president, Carlos Nuzman, head of the Games Organizing Committee, is arrested for “money laundering”, “corruption” and “participation in a criminal organization”. He allegedly helped to buy votes from IOC members. The IOC's Ethics Commission, chaired by former UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, banned Nuzman from being an honorary member of the IOC.

The migration crisis in Europe of the summer 2015 (with the war in Syria), leads to an unprecedented initiative of the IOC in Rio in 2016- it allows refugee athletes to compete under the Olympic banner, not their country's. The European Union, for its part, is creating temporary protection in all Member States after a massive influx of displaced persons exposed to major risks in their country (for instance the Syrian refugees).

The 2016 Games are a cruel news in 2024 where geopolitics is even more tormented. The fight against corruption and money laundering is crucial. Dirty money is gangrene in current conflicts. The war in Ukraine since 2022 has resulted in the massive displacement of more than 10 million Ukrainians with special status of “temporary protection”. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict following the Hamas terrorist attack of 7 October 2023 displaced nearly 2 million Palestinians; harassment by pro-Iranian militias (Hezbollah in Lebanon, Houthis in Yemen) has never stopped. In Afghanistan, the return of the Taliban has created a humanitarian nightmare: 5.1 million refugees and 3.25 million internally displaced people. Several athletes in 2024 in Paris are among these unfortunate exiles.

1. Documentaire de Mickaël Gamrasni « Olympiques ! La France des Jeux », France, diffusé le 16 juillet 2024 sur France 2
2. Site officiel du CIO- <https://olympics.com/fr/olympic-games/rio-2016/logo-design>
3. Vie publique, protection temporaire - <https://www.service-public.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/F299>
4. « Guerre à Gaza : 1,9 million de Palestiniens déplacés, Netanyahu refuse le « défaitisme »... Le bilan du 270e jour », La Croix avec AFP, 2 juillet 2024, <https://www.la-croix.com/international/guerre-israel-hamas-jour-269-attaque-bande-gaza-otages-israel-resume-20240702>

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