

December 15, 2014: during the Collar for Sports Merit award ceremony the Prime Minister Matteo Renzi and the President of CONI Giovanni Malagò announced Italy's bid to host the 2024 Olympic Games in Rome.

December 19, 2014: CONI athletes and managers had an audience with the Pope who said "Best wishes for Rome's bid to host the 2024 Olympic Games," and then added "I won't be around then, will I?"

March 13, 2015: the Pope announced the extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy. It will begin when the Holy Door of the Basilica of St. Peter's is opened on December 8, 2015 and ends on November 20, 2016.

The Romans react to these inevitable events with their proverbial cynicism filtered by their good-natured wisdom bordering on indifference, the indifference of those who've seen it all and suffered through it. The first thing they think of are the traffic jams, the gridlock, an unsolved, age-old problem between the layout of old Rome and modern town plans. In the words of the Italo-Spanish poet Rafael Alberti, Rome as a

*huge alma garage*. Rome, a city with an intimate contradiction (or lucky palimpsest?) between the historical/monumental layout of the centuries-old city and the crazy, everyday traffic chaos.

It would be very unfair as well as totally inaccurate to say that as the President of CONI Malagò has only focused on Italy's Olympic bid. He's been President of the Committee since 2013 and has done everything in his power to revive a dormant or barely functional organisation. During the CONI election campaign his *revolutionary* programme convinced its electorate and paved the way for his victory over the candidate of its long-standing President, Petrucci. After his successful bid for President he said: "My election is based on the concept of collective participation. I obviously want to represent everyone and *involvement* is the name of the game in my work programme." This is undoubtedly true, but we think that to achieve the important results he talks about in his interview it's wishful thinking to believe that collegiality can be used as a method. Yes, someone has to listen to what everyone has to say, but then someone has to make the right

decision at the right time. Otherwise discussions go on forever and compromise between the various viewpoints invalidates the impact of a *well-meaning* ecumenical decision. Malagò doesn't fit the bill. Otherwise how could he have accomplished what he himself considers an important *landmark* achievement, in other words the anti-doping framework agreement with the Carabinieri.

Let's digress for a moment and talk about (institutional) longevity. Unlike Pope Francis, Renzi is planning to be around in 2024, no doubt about it! Perhaps serving a third term of office as Prime Minister (the second term as an elected PM)?

A very Happy *sporting* Easter from all of us at Telos!

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MALAGÒ

## OLYMPICS 2024 MON AMOUR

“The country must rise to the occasion and tackle this important challenge: the Government, CONI and the Rome Municipality are the ideal flag bearers of a dream that has to involve the whole country.”

**Telos:** With the New Year Rome officially kicked off its bid for the 2024 Olympic Games. The candidacy is a challenge for Italy, but Renzi immediately clarified: "We're determined to win, not just to participate." How does the selection process work, but more interestingly, how is it played out *behind the scenes*?

**Giovanni Malagò:** It's divided into three phases. On January 15 the IOC initiated the first phase during which candidate countries are individually invited to participate in a technical meeting. Italy proposed Rome as the host city and since it was the first to announce its bid it was also the first to be invited to Lausanne on February 11 this year. Between March and August the IOC will assist candidate countries in several ways, for example by helping them draft projects compatible with the future infrastructure and urban development of the proposed cities. The second phase, called the applicant phase, will officially start on September 15, 2015, the deadline for countries wishing to submit their candidacy.

In early 2016 countries will have to answer an IOC questionnaire (called an Application File) and provide a guarantee letter. The IOC Executive Board will then short list the candidate cities. The third phase involves drafting a detailed plan of the Games. In January 2017 the shortlisted cities have to submit the final documents. The IOC Evaluation Commission then visits each of the shortlisted cities. The city chosen to host the 2024 Summer Olympic Games will be announced at the IOC Session scheduled to be held in September 2017 in Lima, Peru.

Although the candidate cities are the most important, the new rules approved by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) let countries use other domestic venues. What do you think about this new rule?

The country must rise to the occasion and tackle this important challenge: the Government, CONI and the Rome Municipality are the ideal flag bearers of a dream that has to involve the whole country, but without interpreting the new IOC rules too broadly. If we were to adopt a rather lax approach and delocalise too much then we would effectively weaken our candidacy. When the IOC



**Giovanni Malagò:** sports manager, entrepreneur and athlete. The President of CONI is first and foremost a huge sports enthusiast. He was elected President of the Olympic Committee on February 19, 2013 when he prevailed over CONI's long-standing secretary general Pagnozzi. Over the years he has held several important positions as a sports manager. He has been President of the Circolo Canottieri Aniene since 1997 where he was responsible for football, swimming and tennis as the President of the Organising Committee of the International Championships in Italy. He has been part of the top CONI managers since 2000 when he was nominated as an Executive Board member. He has organised many international sporting events including the 2005 European Volleyball Championships and the World Aquatics Championships in Rome in 2009. Over the years he has combined his responsibilities as a sports manager with his entrepreneurial commitments, primarily involving his family business: Sa.Mo.Car. His family business brought him into contact with the Agnelli family, a relationship which later blossomed into a very warm, personal friendship. As an entrepreneur he has occupied important positions in the world of sailing, real estate and finance (he was also advisor to the banking giant HSBC). Born in Rome on March 13, 1959 he holds a degree in Economics and Commerce. He says his Cuban roots (his mother) have given him one of his best traits: he's an incorrigible optimist. He loves to spend time with his two *beloved* daughters and take long walks along the beach. And is even happier when he takes his Labradors with him.

speaks of *more flexibility* for new candidacies we have to try and understand what exactly this means. As part of the dossier, we'll see what we can do to extend the area chosen for the games. The Olympic village and opening and closing ceremonies will obviously have to be held in the host city. Anything that can be done within a certain radius of the host city, perhaps using high-speed trains, may be taken into consideration, but it's all very premature right now.

1. "Rationalise and optimise the organisational machinery; an innovative management approach compared to the past. 2. Safeguard resources; look for external support for sporting activities. 3. Sports Facilities. All great sports need good facilities. These were the three priority items you listed when you became President of CONI. How do things stand today?"

I was elected President of CONI two years ago and I think I can safely say that we've achieved 70% of the goals I indicated in my work programme. We've completed the reform of the justice system for sports activities and redefined the criteria for allotment of funds to federations by bringing the FIGC [Italian Football Federation] into line with the other federations. Thanks to support by the Prime Minister, the *Class Sports* Projects was jointly launched with the Italian Ministry of Education, University and Research (MIUR): two hours of physical education in primary schools. Finally, thanks to CONI's moral suasion new regulations have been implemented regarding sports facilities.

Sports have been introduced in prisons by exploiting physical activities to enhance integration; we've changed our logo, radically revamped our website and made sports the key issue; we've invented a *Walk of Fame* for champions who've written the history of sports. Then we've not only invested heavily in the management of a complex legacy without provincial committees, but also reformed our organisational structure and divided up the tasks between CONI and CONI Servizi; finally, we've implemented an ongoing spending review for general costs, marketing activities and revenue. And then there's our important anti-doping revolution.

On this last issue CONI has signed a very important agreement with the Carabinieri Healthcare Command (NAS) to counter the doping phenomenon. Another step forward in your efforts to ensure ethics in sports. Could you tell us more about it?"

It's a groundbreaking move. Transparency, commitment and credibility are the key concepts behind all CONI's anti-doping initiatives. We don't need shortcuts or gimmicks. The NAS are the best in Italy and the world and we thought of them because the current system has several weak points and we needed to improve the anti-doping system. We didn't want people to think that CONI had *any influence* over the system, not even in theory. The agreement will remain in place for the entire length of the Olympic mandate; one of its main objectives is to make the Italian NADO completely independent and free from any external influence. Nominations will be made after assessment by the Undersecretary of State for Sports, Delrio, and the Minister of Health, Lorenzin.

The collaboration between CONI and the NAS will initially involve intelligence activities regarding the in and out of competition checks to discover and suppress activities in contrast with anti-doping regulations, and the presence of NAS investigation teams during checks.