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## VICE-PRESIDENT OF UIPM JOËL BOUZOU SUPPORTS REFUGEES



Joël Bouzou, Vice-President of UIPM, has made another important intervention in his capacity as President of the World Olympians Association.

Mr Bouzou joined IOC President Thomas Bach in calling for attention to be drawn to the plight of migrants by urging Olympians everywhere to use their influence as sportspeople and role models to make a difference to the lives of refugees.

In September 2015, President Bach announced the IOC's decision to create a US \$2 million emergency fund made available to National Olympic Committees to help refugees. During a recent trip to Athens he announced that the Rio 2016 Olympic torch relay would pass through the Eleonas refugee camp where many thousands of migrants are living.

Joël Bouzou said in a story on the official WOA website: "Thomas Bach put action behind his words by visiting a refugee camp. He did so in the name of the International Olympic Committee. But he also did it as an Olympian.

"Over these last months, the IOC and National Olympic Committees have greatly contributed to

improve the situation of migrants. It's now for athletes to take up the challenge. Their influence on young people and their weight with the media gives them the power to make a difference.

"It's for athletes to rise to their status as role-models and set an example in a crisis whose victims are counted in the hundreds of thousands. Olympians in particular have a status and title that has always been, and will be for a long time to come, associated with the values of mutual aid, commitment and going beyond excellence.

"The WOA will continue to support Thomas Bach and the IOC in their ambition to help those refugees aiming to compete at the Rio 2016 Olympic Games and I look forward to welcoming these new future Olympians in our community."