

*Presentation of Dr. Jenő Kamuti*

**„FAIR PLAY TODAY AND TOMORROW”**

We live in the age of **uncertainty**.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Mr. President, dear Professors,

Honourable Guests,

We live in an age where anyone can travel, but few have a compass. Where almost anyone can talk, but few have anything to say. Where almost anyone can give an answer, but only few know what the most important questions are. Uncertainty means that we have lost our points of reference in the sea of possibilities. Uncertainty means that we lose the others in the battle we fight against ourselves.

We also live in the age of **distrust**. Where suspicion comes as a natural feeling. Where solidarity is against our interests. Where we calculate each of our steps and ponder upon what would be useful for us. Where we justify everything by rules instead of the truth. In other words, distrust is loneliness. Distrust is when we see the others as unreliable enemies instead of seeing them as mates and allies.

The **age of uncertainty and distrust** is threatening and dangerous. But only if we regard it as such. If we believe that nothing can be done against it. If we think that our compass, our message, our responses and our sympathy will not be enough. If we believe that, we will be unable to change anything.

Here we are together today to speak the language of sport, life and culture, a language that radiates trust and security. To speak the language that talks to the

others, that eases our terrified loneliness, the language in which truth goes without saying and play is joyful.

That is the language of fair play. A pure language without secondary meanings. A language that helps confront and love the world we live in.

János Pilinszky, a Hungarian poet says that a language breaks down when people stop loving each other. And this breakdown and deterioration can be cured neither by grammar, nor linguistics. To put it simply, the language of fair play is that of loving and caring for each other.

These are simple, yet big words. Words that we hesitate to say: when something is so evident, it is often hard to pronounce.

But we must be aware of the fact that fair play is not just a fashionable innovation, but the most important of truths. Play only exists as long as it is fair. And fair play exists only as long as we accept, understand, and love each other.

Please allow me to present to you the dictionary of the language of fair play today. May I talk not only about **fair** play, but **care** play as well. **Fair play** and **care play**: they are two notions that are at their best if they co-exist. **Fair** which is just and right, and **care** which is caring and affectionate. Fair incarnates the masculine ethos while care embodies the feminine aspect of play. Together they can become a functioning language and principle.

We need this dictionary today because tomorrow many and many more will be learning the new lingua franca: in gyms, in schools, in politics, in the media.

A young colleague of mine said when he started working with me in fair play matters that "the biggest problem is that it is hard to convince people of the good. Today when only bad news is news, when destruction is more exciting than construction, when cheaters are considered to be smarter than those staying honest till the end, it is hard to proclaim fair play and care play."

I have to agree with him. Indeed, fair play is no sensational news.

Although our experience is that the importance of the messages of fair play is recognized by all, few are those who live and act accordingly. Fair play can be posted on every flag, but under the flags many people forget about its real meaning. It is easy for fair play to turn into a friendly, somewhat boring commonplace if we don't speak its language very well. And it may turn into a mere style if it is not translated into real acts.

As Quintilian, the ancient orator said, "True words shine through with the light of good deeds." And all of us present know well that the language of fair play is the language of action: it is not enough to talk, we must live accordingly.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Dear Colleagues,

The manifest of the International Fair Play Committee put forth our creed in 2011. Now let me complete this creed with the values that concern **fair play** and **care play** as a way of life, as a social culture, and as a community principle.

The roots of fair play are three-fold, similarly to those of care play. Fair play is about **respect, responsibility, and commitment** to shared values. On the other hand, care play is about **humility, attention, and understanding**. United, these two can assure humane sport, human happiness and the future of the community. These two kinds of play, fair and care, make it possible for us to enjoy each other's company, to share in the destiny of others, to preserve our traditions and values.

Dear Friends,

Everybody plays; in fact, playing is the most human activity in the world. Children play while preparing for life, and adults play while living their destiny. Athletes play who set out to win, and their opponents who can rejoice in the

victory of the other also play. The person creating and re-creating the most important guiding principles of life in harmony with rules plays as well. According to Shakespeare, "All the world is a stage", and we can say with him that "all the world is play."

There are few things more important and more serious than this play. Few are more humane and more symbolic. It is not natural forces that are responsible for play, but us, humans. Play is only our concern. Play is our future.

In an age of uncertainty and distrust, few messages sound more joyful!

Does a game of chess mean anything if we can make any kind of move on the board? Does a game mean anything if we find no company in it? Honesty and humanity become the most essential in play. Fair and care.

So let us start!

*When I say "fair", I also mean "respect."* I accept others, and I can rejoice in their results. Respect is the natural esteem that we feel for others. Respect can be learnt, it is an important part of moral education, and an inherent value of ethical life. And playing, living, studying and thinking are worth doing only in an ethical way. Whoever can respect others will generate respect in others. That is how respect can become a resource that will never be exhausted: in sport, economy and politics.

*When I say "fair", I also mean "responsible."* A person responsible for his acts. And for his thoughts. We tend to believe that it is enough to take responsibility of our actions afterwards, but that is not the case. We are responsible for our intentions in the first place, the way we think about ourselves, our actions and others. A responsible person assumes that he is related to the world he lives in. A responsible person is always a participant and never an outsider. A responsible person is a community person and never an individualist.

*When I say "fair", I also mean "committed to common values."* A person who follows the rules because he sees the common wisdom behind them. Committed because he knows that that is the only way to cooperate. Value-centred because he knows that he is setting an example to others.

*When I say "fair play", I mean respect, responsibility, and commitment.*

*When I say "care", I'm talking about humility and service.* These are unusual words in today's world! We tend to think that the humble lose themselves. We tend to think that humility is not competitive. János Szentágothai, the renowned Hungarian medical professor said that the person who serves will never be disappointed. He is right. The person serving a cause does not give himself up, but enriches the community. Athletes fight not only for a single result, but rather, they make a sacrifice for the cause of sport: they sacrifice their strength, time, and endurance. And only true causes can be served genuinely.

*When I say "care", I'm talking about attention as well.* About paying attention to others. About curiosity. About the way we consider others, things, and ourselves. About the feeling of laying ourselves at the feet of others and letting them direct us. According to some researches, the biggest problem in schools today is that students are unable to pay attention to each other. We have to learn to pay attention. In true attention, the world opens up, and the glory of one person can become a shared joy. While the world is becoming ever noisier, while thousands of pieces of information reach us every minute, our attention has closed down instead of opening up. Care play is about paying attention to each other again!

*When I say "care", I also mean understanding.* I'm saying tolerance and acceptance. Understanding is not mere resignation, but an enormous inner task, a spiritual and intellectual job. It doesn't imply full acceptance, but it does mean

the understanding of the other person's viewpoint. There is no dialogue without understanding. There is no play without understanding.

**Fair play** and **care play** buttress our lives with these **six words**. These six words constitute the foundations of the language in which we can talk to each other clearly and without fear. Respect, responsibility, commitment, humility, attention, understanding – six words on the ground of which such sentences can be formed that surpass simple speech: they are actions.

The age of uncertainty warns us of the crisis of values. The age of distrust calls our attention to the illnesses of human relations.

When values are easily shaken and when relations are too volatile, when our compass is out of order and it is hard to decipher what others are trying to say, fair play and care play are especially important. Just and caring play.

Play that promises us a future.

Thank you for your attention.