

4<sup>th</sup> August 2021

## Better

**"It is a far, far better thing that I do, than I have ever done."**

*Charles Dickens, A Tale of Two Cities*

Since the Olympic Games began, their motto has been, *Citius, Altius, Fortius* – "Faster, Higher, Stronger". On 20 June 2021, in preparation for the current Games, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) approved a change in the Olympic motto that recognises "the unifying power of sport and the importance of solidarity". The change added the word "together". So the new Olympic motto now reads:

*Faster, Higher, Stronger – Together*

In his remarks before the unanimous vote, IOC President, Thomas Bach, explained the link between the change and the original motto: "Solidarity fuels our mission to make the world a better place through sport. We can only go faster, we can only aim higher, we can only become stronger by standing together – in solidarity."

The importance of unity and solidarity is also reflected in the IOC's global campaign, entitled "Stronger Together". This approach celebrates athletes by showcasing their journey to these Olympic Games, and how they have kept moving even when the world around them stopped. Whatever we think of the decision to hold the games in the midst of a global pandemic, the IOC's message of solidarity is surely important. If the power of the Olympic movement is to unite peoples, communities and societies across the globe, then it is surely a symbol that our world moves forward only when it moves forward together.

But if I was a member of the IOC, I would be pushing for a further change, and suggest the motto become *Citius, Altius, Fortius, Melius – Communiter*, which translates as "Higher, Faster, Stronger, Better – Together." This is not a political statement, I hasten to add, familiar though some words in this sentiment might be in our current thinking. It is simply a statement of fact. Thomas Bach is right. Whatever we strive for, whatever improvements we reach out to achieve, we need to cooperate, to do it together, for that will always result in a better world.

### A prayer for today

*Lord, what can I help others to do better today? More than I did yesterday? Amen.*