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Sylvie Bertrand, head of mission:

“Anticipate and react quickly and unfailingly”

These are the third Olympic Games for Sylvie Bertrand who has been entrusted with the role of head of mission within the “red and white” delegation.

□ What is the role of the head of mission?

The main task of the head of mission is to ensure cohesion within the team and above all be there for the athletes. For that, you need firstly to anticipate any problems that may arise and secondly react quickly and unfailingly to get round any drawbacks. So you need to be constantly on the look out, always on your guard, to adapt and try to cope with all possible scenarios. At the same time, the head of mission has to take care of all the logistics beforehand. That is why he/she arrives at the venue well before the delegation in order to check and validate the registration of the athletes and officials and to settle any accommodation, transportation issues etc....



□ What is your typical day?

It is difficult to define a typical day for a head of mission. The only thing that doesn't change is the daily meeting at 7.30 a.m. during which the IOC and the organising committee give information or instructions concerning such and such a theme (ceremonies, meetings, various procedures) and each delegation can discuss any problems it has come up against the day before. Then, it all depends on the needs: visiting the sites, reserving training sessions and logistics relating to the sport concerned, staying in contact with the organising committee, carrying out the usual formalities in various fields... So there isn't a typical day.

□ What are the special features of being the head of mission for a delegation such as Monaco?

The main advantage of being in charge of a small delegation is that you can talk to the athletes and officials directly without going through intermediaries – the sports heads for large teams. We have 5 athletes this year. And many countries take part in the Games with many fewer athletes.

□ What is Monaco's image at the O.G. ?

Among the 204 countries taking part in the Games, it is extremely good. That is without doubt due to the extremely positive image conveyed by Prince Albert over many years within the IOC and in the world of sport in general.

□ What are your first impressions?

Since I arrived in Beijing, I have constantly been impressed by the quality of the facilities and the organisation. The Olympic village is magnificent, huge, extremely well thought out and

finalised. The apartments are spacious. Everything is clean. You feel that the organising committee and the Chinese authorities have made it a point of honour to welcome their guests in the best conditions possible. The Games haven't yet begun but I would say they're poised to pull it off successfully.

What is your dream?

It is obviously utopian to dream of winning a medal. So I would like our five athletes to find fulfilment through taking part. That they do their very best so they have no regrets after the competition.