

Paris 2024 Olympics: human rights are not being respected

Paris, March 25th 2024 – **With the opening of the Paris 2024 Olympic and Paralympic Games fast approaching, the ongoing social cleansing that is making the most precarious populations invisible is intensifying. A cycle of dialogue and consultation has been carried out by *Le revers de la médaille* collective, but to date no tangible solution has been proposed by the public authorities. As in previous editions, and despite the promise of inclusive Games, France is trampling all over human rights.**

Mass removals of homeless people, evictions from squats and shanty towns, dispersal of drug users, pressure on sex workers... On a daily basis and for several months now, the teams from the member associations of *Le Revers de la médaille* collective have been observing on the ground a real social cleansing at work to make situations of great precariousness invisible.

These operations are being carried out without any consultation or alternative solutions, and for thousands of vulnerable people, they are creating wandering and a breakdown in their links with social services. With the end of the winter truce on 31st of March, the collective is anticipating evictions of informal settlements without alternative accommodation throughout France, which will further exacerbate this situation.

The Games are exacerbating a major social crisis that has been present in France for many months, including a spectacular increase in extreme poverty, the use of food aid and the number of people living on the streets. As with all previous editions, the Games have so far had a negative impact on human rights, whereas the huge momentum generated by the event could, on the contrary, make a positive contribution to the fight against exclusion.

"We call on the parties involved in the organisation of the Paris 2024 Games to look beyond the organisation of the sporting events, to ensure that the public authorities respect human rights. The promise of a positive social legacy and inclusive Games must not be a mere advertising slogan!", said Paul Alauzy, health watch coordinator at Médecins du Monde and spokesman for the collective.

It's not too late to act. *Le Revers de la médaille* reiterates its willingness to engage in dialogue and consultation with the public authorities, if this leads to real commitments and the implementation of tangible solutions.

For the time being, this is not the case: the request to put an end to the current social cleansing and to establish direct and effective mediation with the Préfecture de Police has not been heeded. The establishment of a reception centre for exiles, similar to the one for displaced persons from Ukraine, has come up against a policy of reception on the streets. In response to the call for 7,000 permanent accommodation places to be made available to prevent rough sleeping in the run-up to and during the Games, only 200 additional places have been made available in the Ile-de-France region.

In addition, the member organisations of the collective must make a major effort to adapt, in particular by relocating facilities or recruiting additional teams, in order to ensure the continuity of all social

services. To cover this exceptional effort, the Collective proposed setting up an Olympic Solidarity Fund with a budget of €10 million. This proposal also failed to gain support.

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Collectif le revers de la médaille
Paris 2024 Olympics : for a positive social legacy
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