

Game ON!

Team FAO steps up on the podium at this year's Inter-Agency Games!

1/07/22



The UN family recently got together in Copenhagen for the 47th [United Nations Inter-Agency Games \(UNIAG\)](#). It was the first event since 2019, following postponement due to the pandemic.

More than 1 200 enthusiastic participants from various UN agencies, including 30 from FAO, competed in 22 different disciplines (!).

Under the UNIAG flag, people from all over the world came together for four days of camaraderie, exchange, and friendly competition. The IAG is a great opportunity for colleagues from all agencies and organizations of the UN to get to know each other through the uniting power of sport, while strengthening the understanding of each other's mandates (and to have lot of fun!). Attending his fourth IAG, Lorenzo Gentile Colotta (DDC – and FAO football star!) enthusiastically said, “it’s a great experience that everyone should live at least once in their lifetime! You get to meet many great people from different UN organizations in an environment of inclusivity, laughter and fun!”



The energy was infectious as Danielle Perpoli (ESP – FAO golf player extraordinaire!) reflected on the Games as, “truly a special occasion that allows us to meet our global colleagues.” And Thomas Willems (PSR – FAO athletics dynamo!) reminisced on the joy that the Games bring, “sporting together, city tripping together and partying together. What's not to like? Meeting colleagues from all over the world and sharing this experience with them is truly unique and creates an amazing bond.”

Fun and games aside, playing is serious and it got competitive. Team FAO meant business, proudly bringing home an impressive total of four gold and four silver medals! Padel tennis was played for the first time this year and FAO came in first place! Padel champion Edoardo Corriere (OIN) expressed his delight at attending the Games and collecting the gold medal, “we had a great time competing with colleagues from all over the world with whom we bonded immediately! Being a relatively small group, we enjoyed each other's company very much and look forward to next year!” His fellow gold medallist and padel partner Juan Henao Henao (OCB) shared his enthusiasm, “the IAG were indeed a wonderful experience to enjoy what I like to do in my free time (padel!), while joining colleagues from all the UN agencies.”

FAO paired up with WFP forming an invincible duo on the Bellevue Beach, which hosted the beach volleyball. Stefano Anibaldi (FAO retiree) played with a colleague from WFP, overcoming all teams to clinch the gold medal.



Another gold, this time indoors, went to the FAO and UNEP table tennis women. Ayurzana Puntsagdavaa (RAP) said that after the win she, "was re-energised after participating in the Games."

Two's company, three's a team! The Organization joined forces with UNEP and OIOS to top the table at table tennis, as the men also won gold!

There were two more terrific trios who also made it onto the podium. FAO, IFAD and WFP who relayed together on the athletics track sprinted to a silver medal. The FAO tennis team rallied alongside ILO and IAEA and also earned the silver. The team hadn't been on the podium for many years, making them the surprise second-place winners for this tournament and Sara Holst (OED) a very proud captain!

The darts event brought together some of the Organization's best individual talent to form a competitive team, travelling to Copenhagen full of excitement and a desire to get on the podium! FAO focal point for the Games and darts captain Cora-Lee Canzian (OCC) said the recipe for success was, "our coordination skills, steady hand, and good aim for the bullseye!" The teamwork resulted in the dream work: they bagged the silver medal (and a wonderful trophy)! "All of us enjoyed the team spirit, fair play and we celebrated each member's performance while having so much fun." High-fives accompanied colleagues' accuracy on the board and, "showed not only the FAO darts team's competitive edge, but also our generosity in cheering all players to do their personal best!"

Making a splash in the pool, the swimming squad front crawled to victory, securing Team FAO's fourth silver medal! Aida Guardiola Sanchez (RAP – stellar swimmer) described the experience as, "truly awesome", explaining, "the vibe in swimming has been amazing and one UN united. I'm already impatient and motivated for the next UN Games!"



If all this sporting talk is making feel you like picking up your racket, dusting off your darts, or lacing up your football boots then why not get in touch with the sporting captains (see below)! It's never too early to start training for next year's event, which will be organized by the [UN in Vienna](#). If you don't play sports yourself, no worries! There is a place for everyone at the IAG, and you can attend also as a supporter. Let's make FAO representation in 2023 bigger than ever!

If you're interest in getting involved in FAO sports activities, [reach out](#) to the Games focal point and join the fellow sporting superstars in your office!

Here are some other quotes from those involved:

"Darts is truly the sport of "making friends" and we can't wait for next year!" (Darts team).

"It is my second IAG. What I enjoy the most about it is that we are all equals. There is no hierarchy! In a hierarchical structure such as the UN, it is beautiful seeing everyone together under the camaraderie of sports!" Vanda Ferreira (OCC – top tennis supporter).

"UN Games are a powerful mix of sports, culture and social activities, bringing together the UN diversity, reinforcing competencies and values such as teamwork, fair play, respect and goal setting, sport can deepen mutual understanding and a sense of belonging, thus promoting a climate of trust, harmony and cooperation." Carlo Angelico (ESP – FAO football legend).

See more photographs from the Games [here](#).

Find out more about the history of the Games [here](#).

Would you be interested in physical, recreational, cultural or creative services at headquarters, off-site or online? Keep your eyes peeled for the launch of a headquarters-wide survey (coming soon!) to gauge interest in services and activities available, which will ask these questions and many more!



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FAODOMAIN/Corriere July 1 2022 - 15:21

A wonderful and eye-opening experience! The IAGs are the perfect opportunity to meet fellow colleagues from other Agencies and from all over the world! Looking forward to next year's IAGs - I am sure more FAO colleagues will join!

FIELD/vongayl July 1 2022 - 13:15

It was such a wonderful and rewarding time, and I hope more colleagues will join next year. The IAGs are one of the best opportunities to (re-) connect with colleagues from other Agencies in an informal setting.

Rotondo Elena July 1 2022 - 11:34

Congratulations to all the colleagues that participated! It's so nice to see the IAG up and running again!

Canzian Ms Cora-lee July 1 2022 - 11:18

I am so proud of FAO this year, in my 20 years of playing I have never seen FAO win so many trophies. An amazing year, I look forward to 2023 with many more colleagues participating and joining in the fun. Bronte, we had a special Fallen Arrows dart tournament for John Hourihan, Adnan and a few other darters close to our hearts. Caroline Von Gayl won the women's singles. They were definitely cheering us on.

Jackson Ms Bronte Dee July 1 2022 - 09:32

Well done all! And way to go Darts team! I am sure Adnan was there cheering you on.

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