

## PRESS RELEASE

### Corporate Responsibility – Enriching Lives

## SAFILO SUPPORTS SPECIAL OLYMPICS

### SAFILO HELPS IMPROVE VISION FOR 7,000 SPECIAL OLYMPICS ATHLETES AT SPECIAL OLYMPICS WORLD SUMMER GAMES ATHENS 2011

Padua, June 2011 - Safilo Group, leader in premium eyewear sector, continues its commitment to support Special Olympics, the international sports training and competition programme for people with intellectual disabilities around the globe. Founded in 1968 by Eunice Kennedy Shriver, Special Olympics now involves **nearly 4 million athletes with intellectual disabilities** in sports training, competition, and related services worldwide.

Safilo's support of Opening Eyes continues to expand, specifically as a visible sponsor at the **"2011 Special Olympics World Summer Games in Athens, Greece from 25<sup>th</sup> June to 04<sup>th</sup> July, when 7,000 Special Olympics athletes from more than 170 countries** will compete in 22 Olympic-type sports. This international event will bring people together to celebrate and ignite the very best of the human spirit.

Safilo's involvement with Special Olympics **started in 2003** as global supplier of the Special Olympics-Lions Clubs International Opening Eyes® vision care program. Opening Eyes, part of Special Olympics' award-winning Healthy Athletes® public health initiative, is the largest program in the world dedicated to providing vision care for people with intellectual disabilities. A large number of athletes have the chance to benefit from the vision screenings, and above all, to receive prescription eye glasses to correct their vision impairments and sunglasses to protect their eyes. The Opening Eyes program also provides sports protective eyewear for athletes that train and compete in contact sports.

The care and prevention program called, **"Opening Eyes"**, was founded by the American Optometric Association's Sports Vision Section and formally incorporated into the Special Olympics Healthy Athletes program in 1997. A generous grant from the Lions Clubs International Foundation, the largest service club in the world, formalized a global partnership and enabled the Opening Eyes program to expand internationally.

Safilo renewed its support for Special Olympics by **donating more than 80,000 spectacles and sunglasses between 2010 and 2011 for the athletes of Special Olympics**. In addition, Safilo personnel often take an active part in the implementation of the events as volunteers, donating their time and expertise for the benefit of Special Olympics athletes and those with intellectual disabilities.

From the United States to France, from Spain to China, from South Africa to Australia, Special Olympics continually involves a number of athletes in sports events aimed at uniting a passion for sport with individual dignity and success. Through the support to Special Olympics, Safilo demonstrates its sensitivity towards important charity initiatives and corporate responsibility, supporting this project aimed at improving the integration and welfare of those involved.

*The Safilo Group is worldwide leader in the premium eyewear sector and maintains a leadership position in the prescription, sunglasses, fashion and sports eyewear sectors. Present in the international market through exclusive distributors and 30 subsidiaries in primary markets (U.S.A., Europe and Far East). The main proprietary branded collections distributed are: Safilo, Carrera, Smith Optics, Oxydo, Blue Bay, and the licensed branded collections are: Alexander McQueen, A/X Armani Exchange, Balenciaga, Banana Republic, Bottega Veneta, BOSS by Hugo Boss, Boss Orange, Dior, Emporio Armani, Fossil, Giorgio Armani, Gucci, HUGO by Hugo Boss, J.Lo by Jennifer Lopez, Jimmy Choo, Juicy Couture, Kate Spade, Liz Claiborne, Marc Jacobs, Marc by Marc Jacobs, Max Mara, Max&Co., Nine West, Pierre Cardin, Saks Fifth Avenue, Tommy Hilfiger, Valentino, Yves Saint Laurent.*

*Special Olympics is an international organization that changes lives by promoting understanding, acceptance and inclusion between people with and without intellectual disabilities. Through year-round sports training and athletic competition and other related programming for more than 2.25 million children and adults with intellectual disabilities in more than 150 countries, Special Olympics has created a model community that celebrates people's diverse gifts. Founded in 1968 by Eunice Kennedy Shriver, Special Olympics provides people with intellectual disabilities continuing opportunities to realize their potential, develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage and experience joy and friendship. There is no cost to participate in Special Olympics. Visit Special Olympics at [www.specialolympics.org](http://www.specialolympics.org).*