OPENING CEREMONY OF
THE GAMES OF THE XXX OLYMPIAD
London, 27 July 2012

Your Majesty,
Your Majesties,
Your Royal Highnesses,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen

In just a few moments, the Olympic Games will officially return to London for the third time, setting an unmatched record for hosting the Games that spans more than a century.

Thank you, London, for welcoming the world to this diverse, vibrant, cosmopolitan city yet again!

It has taken a lot of hard work by many people to get us to this point.

I want to thank the entire team at the London Organising Committee - superbly led by Lord Coe - for their excellent and hard work.

I also want to thank all the public authorities who have helped ensure that these Games will leave a lasting positive legacy long after the Closing Ceremony.

And, of course, we are all grateful to the thousands of dedicated volunteers who are being so generous with their time, their energy and their welcoming smiles.

For the first time in Olympic history all the participating teams will include female athletes. This is a major boost for gender equality.

In a sense, the Olympic Games are coming home tonight.

This great, sports-loving country is widely recognised as the birthplace of modern sport.

It was here that the concepts of sportsmanship and fair play were first codified into clear rules and regulations.

It was here that sport was included as an educational tool in the school curriculum.
The British approach to sport had a profound influence on Pierre de Coubertin, our founder, as he developed the framework for the modern Olympic Movement at the close of the 19th century.

The values that inspired de Coubertin will come to life over the next 17 days as the world’s best athletes compete in a spirit of friendship, respect and fair play.

I congratulate all of the athletes who have earned a place at these Games.

And to the athletes, I offer this thought: Your talent, your dedication and commitment brought you here.

Now you have a chance to become true Olympians.

That honour is determined not by whether you win, but by how you compete.

Character counts far more than medals.

Reject doping. Respect your opponents. Remember that you are all role models. If you do that, you will inspire a generation.

Ces Jeux sont porteurs de beaucoup d’espoirs.

Espoir d’entente et de paix entre les 204 Comités Nationaux Olympiques.

Espoir de voir les jeunes générations s’inspirer des valeurs du sport.

Espoir que ces Jeux puissent contribuer au développement durable.

Chers athlètes, faites-nous rêver ! Make us dream !

I now have the honour to ask Her Majesty the Queen to open the Games of the XXX Olympiad.