



INTERNATIONAL
OLYMPIC
COMMITTEE

Thomas Bach
President

**Opening Ceremony
of the
128th IOC Session
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
30 July 2015**

Monsieur le Premier Ministre de Malaisie

Monsieur le Président du Comité National Olympique de Malaisie, mon Collègue et
ami, Prince Tunku Imran

Mes Collègues et amis, Membres du CIO

Excellences et Autorités

Présidents des Fédérations Internationales et des Comités Nationaux Olympiques

Chers Invités

Mesdames et Messieurs



Selamat Datang ! C'est un honneur et un privilège de vous accueillir tous ici à Kuala Lumpur. La Malaisie est un lieu riche d'inspiration pour y tenir notre 128e Session – un pays qui sait si élégamment allier tradition et modernité. Notre aimable hôte est un pays dynamique, tourné vers l'avenir. L'énergie, l'enthousiasme et l'hospitalité du peuple malaisien nous offrent les conditions idéales pour les discussions qui nous attendent et les décisions importantes que nous allons prendre au cours des prochains jours.

Merci à vous, Prince Imran, de nous avoir invités dans ce merveilleux pays et cette ville impressionnante. Merci tout spécialement au Comité National Olympique de Malaisie pour son chaleureux accueil, son hospitalité et ses capacités d'organisation. C'est un pays qui aime le sport. Je l'ai découvert lors de ma visite au complexe sportif national Bukit Kiara au début de cette semaine. J'y ai rencontré de jeunes joueurs de badminton âgés de treize et quatorze ans qui ne pensent déjà qu'aux Jeux Olympiques de la Jeunesse de Buenos Aires 2018. Leur joie de pratiquer, leur passion pour leur sport étaient flagrantes. Au moment de parler avec moi, ils étaient un peu plus timides. Mais quand il a s'agi de jouer au badminton, alors là je peux vous dire qu'ils ne m'ont vraiment pas ménagé! Néanmoins ... ou peut-être justement pour cette raison, c'est un vrai plaisir d'être ici à Kuala Lumpur.

Terimah Kasi !

Not only is it our first time to Malaysia, but this is the first IOC Session since we unanimously approved the Olympic Agenda 2020 in December last year. The implementation of the recommendations began right away. In the coming days, we will see many elements of the Olympic Agenda 2020 already in action. There are positive signs that we are moving in the right direction: Olympic Agenda 2020 gives us a clear vision of where we are headed, how we can protect the uniqueness of the Olympic Games and strengthen Olympic values in society. So I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you, my dear colleagues and friends, IOC Members, but also Presidents of International Federations and National Olympic Committees for



your support and enthusiasm with which you have embraced the Olympic Agenda 2020 over the last seven months.

But this is not the time to look back – our focus has to be on the road ahead. Our process of change needs to continue with the same energy as on that great day, the 8th of December 2014, when we passed our strategic roadmap, the Olympic Agenda 2020. We all can do so with great confidence, because we see already today how positively these reforms are shaping the present and the future of the entire Olympic Movement.

Tomorrow you will elect the Host City for the Olympic Winter Games 2022. This will be the last vote on a candidature procedure which started before the approval of Olympic Agenda 2020. Even more I would like to applaud both Candidate Cities, Almaty and Beijing, for having taken major recommendations into account already. As we saw in your presentations in Lausanne just a couple of weeks ago, your bids now reflect a strong emphasis on sustainability, legacy and feasibility. Here we have more evidence about the extremely positive effects of Olympic Agenda 2020. Even if the 2022 candidatures are the last pre-Olympic Agenda 2020 ones, they have already succeeded in reducing the infrastructure budgets to 1.5 and 1.85 billion US dollars respectively. But it is not only about reducing budgets. They did so by choosing more sustainable and environmentally friendly solutions. Therefore from these investments generations to come will benefit.

The Evaluation Commission has analysed both bids through this lens of Olympic Agenda 2020, clearly highlighting both opportunities and risks for all assessment criteria. I would like to thank our Evaluation Commission with Chairman Alexander Zhukov and all its members very warmly for having delivered a really excellent evaluation report. Both Candidate Cities we wish all the very best for tomorrow and we thank you already now for your great contribution to the Olympic Movement and the implementation of Olympic Agenda 2020.



In this agenda, we have addressed sustainability in a holistic way. We have offered all our future host cities to benefit from these reforms already now. The Organising Committee of Tokyo 2020 has embraced this opportunity in a remarkable way. Together with our Coordination Commission chaired by Vice-President John Coates, the Games project was reviewed in cooperation with the representatives of the International Federations who play an always more important role in the delivery of Olympic Games. With this joint effort we have achieved within seven months savings of 1.7 billion US dollars and some hundreds of millions more in the pipeline without jeopardising the atmosphere of the Olympic Games.

This is what Olympic Agenda 2020 means for all of us.

The Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro next year will give another great example of the legacy of the Olympic Games. As the Organising Committee and the Mayor have recently stated: seven billion euros is being invested into sustainable long-term infrastructure projects, like 150 kilometres of new express bus lanes, a new metro line and the transformation of the old port area to name but a few. From this investment generations of Brazilians will benefit.

Our Brazilian friends know that they cannot slow down their great efforts, that there is no time to lose. But knowing about the challenges is an important step to overcoming them.

Therefore we all together can look forward with great anticipation to the Olympic Games Rio de Janeiro 2016. Our Brazilian hosts will deliver excellent Games with the Brazilian combination of passion, a joy of living and efficiency at the same time.

For all these reasons we can look with great confidence into a bright future for the Olympic Movement. Our recent success in marketing and TV-rights negotiations with many long-term contracts demonstrate that also our partners have such great confidence in the IOC and the direction we are taking.



Another proof is the bidding procedure for the Olympic Games 2024. These candidates will be the first ones to fully benefit from the philosophy change in our bidding process – turning it from an application for a franchise to an invitation to present to us and the world their view on the sustainable organisation of Olympic Games. After having benefitted from the consultation with the IOC in this newly created invitation phase five NOCs have already committed themselves to a candidature: France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, USA. All of them have made it very clear that the wide-ranging reforms of Olympic Agenda 2020 played a decisive role in their decision about presenting a candidature. We welcome them all here among us. We invite you to continue this close cooperation with us in order to have creative, diverse, authentic and sustainable candidatures.

This is what Olympic Agenda 2020 means for all of us.

Credibility is another pillar of the Olympic Agenda 2020. These are difficult times in sport, as recent events in other sports organisations have all too clearly shown. We live in a world that takes less for granted. People today demand more transparency and want to see concrete steps and results on how we are living up to our values and our responsibility. We need to demonstrate that we are indeed walking the walk and not just talking the talk.

We know from our own history how long it takes to rebuild credibility and that implementing best practices with regard to good governance and transparency cannot happen overnight. The IOC has already undertaken major efforts 15 years ago to strengthen good governance and transparency. Putting these changes like term limits, age limit and others in place has not been an easy process. But today we see very clearly just how vital these reforms have been for our organisation.

With Olympic Agenda 2020 we bring the IOC up to even higher standards. Following the advice from independent experts, we introduce a state-of-the-art system of good



governance, compliance and transparency, including our strict rules for the candidate city procedures. In this IOC Session we will publish for the first time an annual report according to the recommendation of Olympic Agenda 2020. With this report everybody interested can see where our revenues are coming from and how we distribute 90 per cent of them for the worldwide development of sport and athletes. These accounts of global solidarity distribution are audited in application of the benchmark International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) – even if legally we would be compliant when using a much, much lower standard. We are showing in the same transparent way the indemnity policy for all IOC Members including the President. We will elect here for the first time the members of the Ethics Commission by the IOC Session. We will publish the new IOC Code of Ethics. We have separated the Audit Committee from the Finance Commission. We have appointed a Chief Ethics and Compliance officer. We have a Chief Internal Auditor. The annual report explains in a very transparent way our governance structure, our risk-management, our corporate operational excellence program as well as our manifold activities to lead the Olympic Movement, to promote Olympism and to strengthen the role of sport in society.

This is what Olympic Agenda 2020 means for all of us.

Sport does not operate in isolation from the rest of society. We are living in the middle of a modern and diverse society that holds us accountable for what we do. This is why from the very beginning of developing the Olympic Agenda 2020, it was important to have close consultation with stakeholders from inside and outside the Olympic Movement. This is what made the Olympic Agenda 2020 truly inclusive, transparent and reflective of the many priorities of all stakeholders.

Our founder, Pierre de Coubertin, put it well, when he said: “Olympism is a destroyer of dividing walls. It calls for air and light for all.”



We have opened our doors and windows. We let air and light in through dialogue. We speak with a wide range of stakeholders from all walks of life. These include, among others, the United Nations, Transparency International, Human Rights Watch, the Committee to Protect Journalists and the International Trade Union Confederation and other NGOs.

In this context we also discussed the responsibility of the IOC with regard to political issues and human rights. In all these talks we made it very clear what our responsibility is and what the limits are. This responsibility is to ensure that the Principles of the Olympic Charter and the Host City Contract are fully respected in the context of the Olympic Games. That means for all participants and for all directly Olympic-related issues. This includes among many other matters the principles of non-discrimination and the right to freely report from the Olympic Games. Outside the context of the Olympic Games the IOC has to respect the laws of sovereign states. The IOC is not a world Government. Governments have their own responsibilities.

With our Olympic Values of tolerance, respect, excellence, non-discrimination we send a strong message to the world – the strong message spread by the athletes living together in the Olympic Village in a community where all people are equal.

In my many discussions about this topic I get the feeling that this principle is more and more accepted.

How we are living up to this responsibility can be demonstrated by the approach of our Evaluation Commission. They have the task to openly raise these issues by taking into consideration the views of other NGOs and independent experts. They discuss these questions openly with the Governments and seek the relevant assurances.

Our Evaluation Commission for 2022 – even if it started working before Olympic Agenda 2020 – has already applied this principle.



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The third priority of the Olympic Agenda 2020 focuses on engaging youth all around the world. Tomorrow we will elect the Host City for the Winter Youth Olympic Games 2020. We welcome the representatives of the two candidate cities; Brasov (Romania) and Lausanne (Switzerland). We thank them very much for their excellent candidatures and wish them all the best for tomorrow's election.

We also have to keep our focus on the road ahead and be aware of the bigger developments in the world to anticipate the defining trends of the future. There we have to look no further than our host country Malaysia to get a sense of what the future will look like. The median age here in Malaysia is around 25. In fact, with over half the world's population under 30, there are more young people in the world than ever before. What does this mean for us? It means that, as a matter of priority, we need to engage the young generations around the globe. We must ensure that the Olympic values resonate with the next generations.

This is where the Olympic Channel will help us spread these values 365 days a year. The digital revolution has led to an explosion of information that is available for everyone – instantly, anywhere, and quite literally directly into their hands with a smartphone. It is connecting people. It makes everyone a consumer and a content creator at the same time.

We are looking forward to get more good advice on this by one of the world leading experts in communication Sir Martin Sorrell, the CEO of WPP, the world's biggest advertising company. You will enjoy his inspirational keynote speech in a new room setting for the IOC Session. The room will have a parliament-like setting to represent the spirit of dialogue and discussion of Olympic Agenda 2020. I hope you will like it – if not we have a problem.



I am sure Sir Martin will tell us that the IOC must remain part of the global digital conversation. We must know that this conversation will happen anyway. The question is not whether it will happen. The only question is: Will it happen with us – or without us?

The changing media landscape is a true game changer. The Olympic Channel is our game changer to stay ahead of the curve. It goes well beyond a TV channel – it is a digital platform that will leverage all technology trends. It will give Olympic fans more opportunities to view, engage with and share the magic of Olympic sport.

Therefore we are happy that the International Federations and the National Olympic Committees realise this unique opportunity for each and every one of them. It will strengthen their existing media presence in a significant way. Our broadcast partners also see the great potential of raising awareness for sport in the global audience.

This is what Olympic Agenda 2020 means for all of us.

We are also looking to the future in order to put sport at the service of humanity. We know that we can only make progress if we work together with society at large. Since you elected me 22 months ago I have met 129 Heads of State or Government. After tonight, Mr Prime Minister, I guess it will be 130. So thank you for making it a round number. In these meetings I highlighted the priorities of the Olympic Agenda 2020 and discussed ways to support the peaceful development of society.

Through our partnership with the United Nations, the IOC is now actively involved in the discussions about the UN Sustainable Development Goals – the new set of global targets of the global community for social and economic development. These Sustainable Development Goals will be finalized in just a few weeks' time during a worldwide summit meeting at the UN General Assembly in New York.



I am happy to be able to inform you that the present draft of this important document recognizes the growing contribution of sport to the realization of peace, development and other Sustainable Development Goals. I hope very much – and we will make all efforts to this end – that this recognition of the role of sport in society, according to Olympic Agenda 2020, will be contained in the final document also.

This is what Olympic Agenda 2020 means for all of us.

We have a big year ahead of us and a big agenda to tackle. These are exciting times. There are a lot of “firsts” on our plan.

The first Olympic Games in South America.

The launch of the first Olympic Channel.

The first full participation of the IOC with the United Nations to shape the future of the global community.

Let us use these many “firsts” as an inspiration to celebrate our unity in diversity. The Olympic Agenda 2020 has set us on the right path forward. If we are united in our vision and our values, then our future will be one of progress.

In Monaco before the approval of Olympic Agenda 2020 I quoted our founder Pierre de Coubertin, who said: “Courage... and hope! ... Charge boldly through the clouds and do not be afraid. The future belongs to you.”

Today we can proudly report to our founder Pierre de Coubertin:

This is what Olympic Agenda 2020 means for all of us.

This is the spirit of Olympic Agenda 2020.

Thank you very much.