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# 89- HK

Dear colleagues and friends,

First and foremost, please let me once again express our heartfelt gratitude for the support of Ukraine, the Olympic movement and sports of Ukraine, for the Olympic solidarity shown in these extremely difficult times of Russia's full-scale invasion of our country.

Today I would like to address you and express the opinion of the entire Olympic family of Ukraine.

On February 24, 2022, Russian troops invaded the territory of independent Ukraine, killing Ukrainians and destroying our peaceful towns and villages.

The Olympic Truce, adopted by the UN General Assembly and declared for the period of the Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games in Beijing 2022, was violated.

The entire international community strongly condemned such actions and expressed solidarity with Ukrainians. We are grateful to the International Olympic Committee for its decisions aimed at protecting Ukrainian sport, showing solidarity and support. The suspension of Russian and Belarusian athletes from competitions and the withdrawal of sports events from the aggressor countries would be impossible without the IOC's clear and principled position.

Unfortunately, nothing has changed for the better this year - Russia's war against Ukraine continues. The Russian army tortures civilians, kills and rapes women and children, destroys peaceful towns and villages, destroys infrastructure, and Russian politicians threaten the whole of Europe and the world with nuclear weapons. Missile attacks on peaceful cities and energy infrastructure leave not only Ukraine without electricity, heat and water, but also neighboring countries, destroy hospitals, schools, sports facilities and, worst of all, kill people.

The participation of Russian and Belarusian athletes in international competitions will make it impossible for Ukrainian athletes to take part in them, because each of the Ukrainians suffered from Russian aggression in one way or another: they lost their relatives and friends, lost their homes, received psychological trauma, lost the opportunity to do what they love.

During this war, about 350 sports facilities were severely damaged or destroyed. More than 220 athletes and coaches were killed, about 40 000 athletes were forced to move abroad, and about 140 000 young athletes have no opportunity to train.

You can find evidence of the destruction of the sports infrastructure of Ukraine at the following link:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1NsiwB6vcw27BS33-LJvM1xdTPz5i91H>

Such data indicate that because of Russia's large-scale armed aggression against Ukraine, children and youth have lost the opportunity to engage in their sports, which, in its turn, has a huge negative impact on the sports reserve, the prospects for the further development of Ukrainian sport, in particular, participation in the upcoming Youth Olympic Games.

It should be noted that in September 2022, Stanislav Pozdnyakov, President of the Russian Olympic Committee, commenting on the possible conscription of Russian athletes to the armed forces of Russia in connection with the announced mobilization, stated the ROC position, emphasizing that Russian athletes are citizens of their country and serving their homeland and therefore participation in the war is an honorable duty for them.

This information is available at the link:

<https://www.insidethegames.biz/articles/1128348/roc-president-pozdnyakov-mobilisation>

Unfortunately, so far we have not heard the International Olympic Committee's assessment of this statement, its compliance with the Olympic Charter, and the above-mentioned person continues to chair the ANOC Culture and Education Commission.

In Russia, sport is an element of politics, powerful propaganda, in this case the promotion of war. This political component is confirmed by the presence of leading political figures in sports management. For example, Secretary of the Security Council of Russia, Nikolai Patrushev, is a Member of the Supervisory Board of the All-Russian Volleyball Federation, the Minister of Foreign Affairs Sergei Lavrov is the Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Russian Canoe Slalom Federation, and the daughter of the Minister of Defense of Russia, Ksenia Shoigu, is the President of the All-Russian Triathlon Federation.

At the same time, the vast majority of Russian athletes belong to the military and other law enforcement agencies (45 Olympic medals out of 71 in Tokyo were won by representatives of the Central Army Sports Club), supporting the war and promoting it at various rallies, meetings, television broadcasts and their own social networks.

Numerous evidence of such a position of Russian athletes can be found at the link:

[https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/15IsDIGv\\_82CqfFW8q4NzmEkZ3-kWqXZ0](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/15IsDIGv_82CqfFW8q4NzmEkZ3-kWqXZ0)

Simultaneously with these events, the international Olympic community began discussing the conditions and possibilities for the return of Russian and Belarusian athletes to international arenas.

Do the above facts correspond to the spirit and principles of the Olympic Charter? So what has changed now? Is the promotion of a peaceful society that cares about preserving human dignity no longer a



fundamental principle of Olympism, and the prohibition of violence no longer the mission and role of the IOC?

Why in conversations about the protection of the rights of athletes in aggressor countries, no words are heard about the protection of the rights of those people who were attacked and who have been killed for almost a year?

How and in what way will the rights of Ukrainian athletes be protected? Will they be able to step onto the same sports field and compete with the Russian athletes at a time when their families, friends, and colleagues are in mortal danger? How can Ukrainian Olympians be sure of their safety, living in the same Olympic village with representatives of the Russian Federation, using the same changing rooms and dining halls, how can they climb the podium together and shake hands?

What do people who plan to resolve the issue of reintegration of Russian and Belarusian athletes count on? To see blood in the pool, as it was in Melbourne in 1956, or to repeat the events in Munich that happened in 1972?

In such circumstances, we believe that the admission of Russian and Belarusian athletes to international competitions is support for the war in Ukraine and Russian crimes under the guise of neutrality.

We appeal to the IOC to believe in facts, not words! We call on the IOC not to make assumptions about those who are afraid to speak out and not to believe the myths created in the Kremlin, but to protect those who really need help!

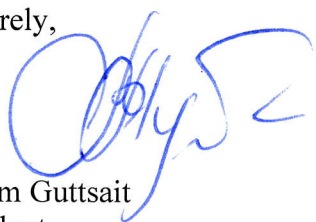
We are grateful to every Olympian in the world who supported us and expressed absolutely clear position: as long as the war continues, Russian and Belarusian athletes should not participate in international competitions in any status!

There have already been precedents in history when countries were not admitted to the Olympic Games. In particular, due to the country's apartheid policy South Africa was barred from the Olympics in 1964 and rejoined the Olympic movement in 1992. In addition, Austria, Bulgaria, Germany, Hungary and the Ottoman Empire were banned from the Olympics in Antwerp 1920 because of their role in World War I, and Germany and Japan were not invited to London in 1948.

Ukrainian athletes are ready to compete in a fair play with athletes who adhere to the Olympic principles and ideals and confirm their position with serious deeds and actions, not words or assumptions!

We appeal to all of you and call to support Ukraine and jointly defend the fundamental Olympic values! Everyone's voice must be heard!

Sincerely,



Vadym Guttsait  
President  
NOC of Ukraine  
Olympic Champion