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**Story script**

**The International Olympic Committee (IOC) OFFERS THE FOLLOWING VIDEO NEWS RELEASE TO ALL NEWS AGENCIES, BROADCASTERS AND ALL ONLINE PLATFORMS FREE OF CHARGE.**

**Story Headline:** Syrian refugee Ibrahim Al Hussein carries the Olympic Games Rio 2016 Torch through Greek refugee camp.

**Event:** Olympic Games Rio 2016 Torch Relay.

**Location:** Eleonas Open Reception Centre, Athens, Greece.

**Release Date:** 26 April 2016

#### **STORY SCRIPT**

Ibrahim Al Hussein, a Syrian refugee-athlete, has carried the Olympic torch through the Eleonas Open Reception Centre in Athens as part of the Rio 2016 Torch Relay.

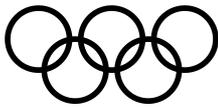
The 27-year-old who arrived in Greece in 2014 having lost family members in war-torn Syria received the flame from Hellenic Olympic Committee President Spyros Capralos before running through the Eleonas camp for refugees and migrants in the Greek capital.

It is the same centre visited in January of this year by IOC President Thomas Bach and Jacques Rogge, IOC Honorary President and UN Special Envoy for Youth Refugees and Sport.

This chapter in the flame's journey held special significance for Ibrahim who had his own hopes of competing in the Olympics ended after a bomb shattered most of his right leg during the outbreak of war in Syria in 2011.

But after being fitted with a prosthetic leg, the Syrian now trains at a sports complex built for the Olympic Games Athens 2004. An accomplished swimmer in his homecountry, Al Hussein is now also a member of a wheelchair basketball team. He is actively participating in the sportive community of his asylum country highlighting the role sport can play in demonstrating peace.

After his own battles against adversity, Al-Hussein said: "I am sending this



message to all migrating Syrians, but not only them or Iraqis or Afghans. Anyone who has to migrate away from their country to go to Europe, and was an athlete before in their country. I hope they continue their athletic pathway.”

Al Hussein’s run through the Athens camp is part of a six day torch journey around Greece covering 2,235km which began on 21 April with the Rio 2016 flame lighting ceremony in Olympia. On 27 April the flame will be officially presented to the organisers of the Olympic Games Rio 2016 at the Panathenaic Stadium, the site of the first modern Olympic Games in Athens back in 1896.

Al Hussein’s return to the Eleonas Camp is made even more symbolic after the Executive Board of the IOC announced in March of this year the creation of the Refugee Olympic Athletes (ROA) team to compete at Rio 2016.

An expected ROA Rio team of between 5 and 10 athletes will enjoy the same Olympic experience as the other NOCs including its own welcoming ceremony at the Rio 2016 Olympic Village which promotes living in harmony without discrimination. The full composition of the ROA team will be announced early June.

An IOC emergency fund of 2 million US dollars was also made available to National Olympic Committees (NOCs) for the purpose of organising programmes to help refugees worldwide in 2015.

The Games of the XXXI Olympiad will be held from 5 to 21 August 2016. Approximately 10,500 athletes from more than 200 countries will compete in 28 sports, comprising of 98 medal events.