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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: South Sudanese refugee James Nyang Chiengjiek selected for Refugee Olympic Team at Olympic Games Rio 2016

Date: 3 June 2016

Place: Nairobi, Kenya

STORY SCRIPT

South Sudanese refugee James Nyang Chiengjiek has been selected together with nine fellow refugees to be part of the Refugee Olympic Team (ROT) at the Olympic Games Rio 2016, 15 years after fleeing his home country. The composition of the team was officially announced by the IOC today.

The 28 year-old left South Sudan in 2001 but will now represent the ROT which will join the other teams of the 206 National Olympic Committees (NOCs) competing in Rio. The team was created by the IOC Executive Board last March as a symbol of hope for refugees worldwide. .

Chiengjiek, who left South Sudan for Kenya in 2002, joined the Kakuma refugee camp where the UNHCR supported him. He went to school and started running there. In 2013 he took part in athletics trials organized by the Tegla Loroupe Foundation, showed promising results and was selected to join the Foundation. He will compete in the 400m.

Refugee athletes had to reach specific sporting standards and have official refugee status verified by the United Nations (UN) to be in contention to be part of the ROT – the first of its kind. They will march with the Olympic flag immediately before host nation Brazil at the Opening Ceremony and will have their own welcoming ceremony in the Olympic Village.



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Having fled Bentiu in South Sudan in order to avoid having to join the army and participate in the war, Chiengjiek is now settled in Kenya thanks to the help of the UNHCR.

After his ROT selection Chiengjiek has a message for people who are also facing adversity in life: “Training is just a matter of working hard. I know that everything in this world is about working – if you’re given the chance you have to utilise it in the right way and pray to God to give you this chance.”

Chiengjiek will proudly compete in Rio and is also hoping to help refugees across the world.

He said: “My dream of course is to get good results in the Olympics and also my dream is to help people if I get that chance. Without support I cannot be so because I’ve been supported by someone, I want to be able to support someone.”

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 98 medal events.