IOC invites Olympic winter athletes to PyeongChang 2018 with just one year to go

“One year from now, it will be your moment to make history. When the Olympic Winter Games PyeongChang 2018 finally begin, it will be a moment for Korea to amaze the world. Hosting the Olympic Games is a once-in-a-lifetime experience and it opens a unique window of opportunity to write a new chapter in your sporting history,” says IOC President Thomas Bach.

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) today officially invited the National Olympic Committees and their winter sports athletes to take part in the Olympic Winter Games PyeongChang 2018, which will open in exactly one year’s time.

The invitations were sent from the IOC headquarters in Lausanne, while a ceremony took place in the Republic of Korea at the Gangneung Hockey Centre. Gangneung is due to host all ice sport competitions during the Games next year. Attended by IOC Coordination Commission Chair Gunilla Lindberg, and by representatives of the government of the Republic of Korea, the celebrations showcased Korean culture with a concert with K-pop stars and the 2018 Choir. It also included the unveiling of the Olympic torch and torchbearer uniform which were presented by Olympic figure skating gold medallist Yuna Kim, Youth Olympic Games cross country gold medallist Magnus Kim, and five young future leaders from Korea.

Speaking at the ceremony in a video message, President Bach said: “The Olympic Winter Games PyeongChang 2018 will open up new horizons. It will connect the people and the passion of the Republic of Korea with the world. PyeongChang will transform into a hub for Asian winter sports. For the first time, the magic of Olympic sport on snow and ice will come to Korea’. The President carried on: ‘As an Olympian, I know of the excitement that every athlete feels just before the competition. So I wish the athletes all the very best as they prepare to make their Olympic dreams come true in PyeongChang next year’.

Read the full text of IOC President Thomas Bach’s message here.

With a number of test events already completed, ticket sales now underway, and a promising volunteer programme (91,000 applications received for the 22,400 places to be filled), there is a real sense that the Olympic Winter Games PyeongChang 2018 are taking shape.

“With only one year to go until the Olympic Winter Games PyeongChang 2018, we can feel the excitement growing and the support of the whole of the Republic of Korea for these
Games,” commented IOC Coordination Commission Chair Gunilla Lindberg. “World-class venues are being delivered on time and they will serve the development of winter sport in this region,” she continued. “Over 20 test events will be held this winter season, laying the groundwork for successful Olympic Winter Games in one year’s time. The athletes taking part in these events are already giving top marks to their experience in PyeongChang, and I am confident that, come next February, the athletes, the people of Korea, and the watching world will have an outstanding Olympic Winter Games experience with PyeongChang 2018,” Lindberg concluded.

The official ambassadors for the Olympic Winter Games PyeongChang 2018, Korean figure skating legend Yuna Kim and US Alpine skier Lindsey Vonn, are already building anticipation for these Games and putting PyeongChang on the map.

Ticket sales also began today in the Republic of Korea and in some other territories around the world. More information about how to obtain tickets for the Games can be found at the official website of the Games: www.pyeongchang2018.com.

With state-of-the-art sports venues, brand new hotels and tourist facilities, PyeongChang and Gangneung have all the key elements in place to be the next Asian winter sports centre. The new high-speed train connection will bring the Eastern and Western parts of the country closer together than ever before. The Olympic Games are also acting as a catalyst for transformation and development. PyeongChang now has the unique chance to make its own mark on history, and everyone has high hopes that it will create its own Olympic legacy, benefiting the people of the entire region and country.

The new events that will feature in PyeongChang will certainly add a new dimension to these Games, with the emphasis very much on increasing the appeal of the Olympic Winter programme to young audiences around the world. Certain to give the Games a youthful vibe is the snowboard Big Air, as well as mixed doubles and team events in curling and Alpine skiing, just to name a few.

The Olympic Winter Games PyeongChang 2018 will take place from 9 to 25 February 2018.

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The International Olympic Committee is a not-for-profit independent international organisation made up of volunteers, which is committed to building a better world through sport. It redistributes more than 90 per cent of its income to the wider sporting movement, which means that every day the equivalent of USD 3.25 million goes to help athletes and sports organisations at all levels around the world.

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