IOC President holds fruitful talks in Pyongyang with Supreme Leader Kim Jong-un – DPRK commits to participation in future Olympic Games

IOC President Thomas Bach was in the North Korean capital Pyongyang on Friday for meetings with political and sports leaders. Following an extensive “four eyes” meeting with Kim Jong-un, it was confirmed that the country is committed to its athletes competing at the Olympic Games Tokyo 2020 and the Olympic Winter Games Beijing 2022, as well as the Summer Youth Olympic Games Buenos Aires 2018 and the Winter Youth Olympic Games Lausanne 2020. The Supreme Leader also praised President Bach and the IOC for the role they had played in mediating and bringing about an agreement for the participation of the National Olympic Committee (NOC) of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) in the Olympic Winter Games PyeongChang 2018.

During the visit, which came at the invitation of the DPRK NOC, President Bach expressed his appreciation for the participation of the DPRK NOC athletes at the Olympic Winter Games PyeongChang 2018. “In particular, the joint march sent a strong message of peace,” President Bach said. “Now, on the political level, the discussions can continue in the Olympic spirit of understanding and peace. We will continue to accompany this political dialogue through sport, by helping athletes to prepare for and compete in future editions of the Olympic Games,” he said. This support has already begun, with immediate assistance to athletes from the DPRK NOC to compete in the table tennis World Championships, which are taking place in Sweden this April.

Earlier in the day, President Bach met representatives of the DPRK NOC, led by its President, Kim Il-guk, who is also the country’s Sports Minister. In a packed agenda, President Bach also discussed the IOC’s support for the athletes and sport in the country with the two Vice-Chairmen of the Workers’ Party, Choe Hwi, who is also Chairman of the National Sports Guidance Committee, and Choe Ryong-hae, who is also Vice-Chairman of the State Affairs Commission of the DPRK.

The visit finished with a dinner hosted by the President of the Praesidium of the Supreme People’s Assembly, Kim Yong-nam, who had led the DPRK delegation to the Olympic Winter Games PyeongChang 2018.

As well as discussing help for and future participation of athletes, President Bach visited several sporting facilities in an impressive city-centre complex, where he
met athletes, Olympians and future potential competitors in the Olympic Games, in swimming, weightlifting and table tennis. He also met the figure skating pair, Ryom Tae-ok and Kim Ju-sik, who had competed in the Olympic Winter Games PyeongChang 2018.

President Bach was accompanied throughout the visit by the IOC Member from North Korea, Professor Ung Chang.

###

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 3.4 million US dollars goes to help athletes and sports organisations at all levels around the world.

For more information, please contact the IOC Media Relations Team:
Tel: +41 21 621 6000, email: pressoffice@olympic.org, or visit our web site at www.olympic.org.

Broadcast quality footage
The IOC Newsroom: http://iocnewsroom.com/

Videos

YouTube: www.youtube.com/iocmedia

Photos

For an extensive selection of photos available shortly after each event, please follow us on Flickr.

To request archive photos and footage, please contact our Images team at: images@olympic.org.

Social media

For up-to-the-minute information on the IOC and regular updates, please follow us on Twitter, Facebook and YouTube.