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PRESS RELEASE

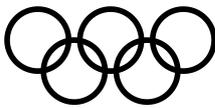
“Thank you IOC for paving the way through sport to the peace process on the Korean peninsula, the region and the world”

Athletes from North and South Korea, Japan and China celebrate Olympic Day with the International Olympic Committee in Lausanne

The latest move in the IOC's long term commitment to support the ongoing peace talks and dialogue on the Korean Peninsula and the region beyond took place in Lausanne, today. The International Olympic Committee (IOC) marked the 70th anniversary of Olympic Day by hosting top-level athletes and officials from the National Olympic Committees (NOCs) of the Republic of Korea (KOR), the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) and the hosts of the upcoming Olympic and Olympic Winter Games, Japan (JPN) and the People's Republic of China (CHN). The celebrations took place in the Olympic Capital of Lausanne, Switzerland, at the annual Olympic Day reception.

Olympic and elite table tennis players from each of the four nations showed off their skills during a friendly mixed table tennis exhibition match. The athletes then presented the IOC President with a table tennis racket signed by all the players with the dedication: “Thank you IOC for paving the way through sport to the peace process on the Korean peninsula, the region and the world.”

The racquet will be donated to The Olympic Museum.



“By playing in mixed teams, the athletes show us the unique ability of sport to build bridges,” said IOC President Thomas Bach. With these table tennis exhibition matches to celebrate Olympic Day, we can all experience the unifying power of sport and our contribution to make the world a better place through sport,” he added.

[Olympic Day](#) is an annual, global celebration that takes place on 23 June, and as IOC President Thomas Bach said during the evening’s events: *“Olympic Day is an occasion to remind ourselves of the spirit of Olympism.”*

“There is a special significance for this year’s celebration because it is an Olympic Year. Only four months ago, the Olympic Winter Games PyeongChang 2018 reminded us that sport has the power to change the world. With only four months to go until the the Youth Olympic Games Buenos Aires 2018, the countdown to the first Youth Olympic Games in South America has already begun.”

The athletes who took part in the exhibition match included:



- Chinese Olympic gold medallists from Rio 2016 Ms Ning Ding and Mr Long Ma;
- South Korean Olympic bronze medallist in Athens (2004) and Beijing (2008) Ms Kyungah Kim, and Olympic gold medallist in Athens and IOC Member Mr Seung Min Ryu;
- Japanese Olympic silver medallist in London (2012) Ms Ai Fukuhara, and the youngest-ever winner of an ITTF World Tour men's singles title at only 14, Mr Tomokazu Harimoto;
- North Korean Olympic bronze medallist in Rio (2016) Ms Song I Kim, and elite athlete in the ITTF tour Mr Sin Hyok Pak.

In 2014, the IOC first began to engage with both Koreas in anticipation of 2018 PyeongChang Winter Olympics and initiated a programme to support athletes from the DPRK in the qualification process for the 2018 Winter Olympic Games. That conversation continued, and evolved, through geopolitical ups and downs that hit a nadir in the second half of 2017, as some raised questions about whether the Games should be held at all amid the tension.

In the new year came a new pledge to participate in the Games from the leader of the DPRK, and efforts to build unified participation by the two

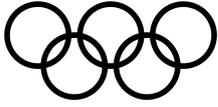


Koreas began in earnest, culminating in the two teams marching into the Opening Ceremony of the 2018 PyeongChang Winter Olympic Games under the same flag. That spirit was exemplified in the joint Korean women's ice hockey team that came together to compete as one.

After the Olympic Winter Games PyeongChang 2018, President Moon Jae-in of South Korea and Chairman Kim Jong-un of North Korea both asked the IOC to continue to support the peace talks through actions in sport. The next two editions of the Olympic Games are taking place in the neighbouring countries of Japan and China and in this way the efforts of the IOC are being extended to the entire region.

Additional activities at the Lausanne celebration included: an Olympic Day Run organised by the City of Lausanne, a tango demonstration, live music with Swiss Olympic snowboarder and artist, Pat Burgener and a live broadcast of the Switzerland versus Serbia FIFA World Cup match.

Every year, Olympic Day sees millions of people – of all ages and from all walks of life – get active and participate in sporting, educational and cultural activities, encouraging them to enjoy and benefit from sport. To learn more, visit www.olympic.org/olympic-day



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