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STORY HEADLINE: As Tokyo celebrates one year to go until the Olympic Games, International Olympic Committee President Thomas Bach believes the Games will be the “symbol of hope” for the world

LOCATION: Olympic House, Lausanne, Switzerland & Tokyo, Japan

DATE: July 23, 2020

LANGUAGE: English, Japanese

Broadcast quality footage available at the IOC Newsroom: <http://iocnewsroom.com>

STORY SCRIPT:

With exactly a year to go until the Olympic Games Tokyo 2020, International Olympic Committee (IOC) President Thomas Bach believes the Games will be the symbol of hope for the world, as the battle against the COVID-19 pandemic continues.

A series of special events were held in Tokyo’s Olympic Stadium to mark a year to go to the Opening Ceremony that will now take place on July 23, 2021. The Tokyo Metropolitan Gymnasium, Ariake Arena and Aquatics Centre were all illuminated as part of the celebrations.

The Olympic flame, which has been burning in Japan since arriving in the host nation earlier this year, was the centrepiece of the events in Tokyo and helped shine a light on the resilience and strength of the athletes as they continue to prepare for the Games, which had been due to open tomorrow (July 24, 2020).

President Bach said: “This milestone of the one year to go is a very significant one, for sport but also for the worldwide society. It can and will be the great comeback festival of sport to the international scene and we are preparing for this in the one year that remains for us to make these Olympic Games a real great festival of hope, of resilience and of solidarity.”

23 July also marks the start of the IOC’s #StrongerTogether campaign. This recognises the importance of solidarity and unity during these difficult times, acknowledging the power of sport, and in particular the Olympic Games, to bring people together. Japanese gymnasts Murakami Mai and Uchimura Kohei, the USA’s Simone Biles (gymnastics) and Nathan Adrian (swimming) were just some of the athletes taking part in live chats on the @olympics instagram page.



President Bach added: “This Olympic Games Tokyo 2020 in 21 can, should and will be the light at the end of the tunnel that all humankind is in at this moment, we are living in a period of great uncertainty. Then at the end of this very difficult period for humankind, the Olympic Games can be a great symbol of hope, of optimism, of solidarity and in unity in all our diversity.”

Since the historic announcement that the Olympic Games would be postponed, the IOC has been working in a spirit of solidarity with Tokyo 2020 and Olympic Movement stakeholders to reduce the impact caused by this postponement.

Last week, at the IOC Session, it was confirmed that all venues had been secured for next year’s postponed Games, including the Olympic Village, and that the schedule would remain the same.

President Bach said: “This is a mammoth task because we cannot prepare the Olympic Games as we are used to. In fact we have to prepare for multiple scenarios for the Olympic Games. We have to take all this into account, what could happen, what may happen?”

“So there was established one principle for all and this is a top priority. That the Olympic Games will respect and safeguard the health of all the participants. From this principle there derives the different scenarios. So, we want to prepare these Games and adapt it to the circumstances of the crisis at the time, while ensuring for everybody the Olympic spirit.

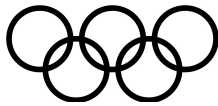
“Because this is what makes the Olympic Games so unique, uniting the entire world. This period has to be and will be reflected and all the adaptations we may have to make will not affect the venues and sports and will not affect the athletes so that we can give the athletes the stage to shine that they deserve.”

President Bach also paid tribute to the athletes, who are facing an extra 12 months of training before realising their Olympic dreams.

He said: “We’re standing at their side. We’re very happy that their preparations are facilitated by the great achievement of the Organising Committee ensuring that the Olympic Games next year can take place in the same venues and with the same schedules so that they don’t need to change their preparations and, maybe most important of all, that they can look forward to spending time together to experience, to live the Olympic spirit, in the Olympic Village.”

Yoshirō Mori, President of the Tokyo 2020 Organising Committee, confirmed securing all venues for competition 12 months later than planned was the number one priority for the Organising Committee. He said: “Our first priority was to make sure all the competition venues could be used for the Games next year. That was the biggest challenge – and the most time-sensitive one. Until the venues were secured, we couldn’t finalise the Games schedule, including the Opening and Closing Ceremonies.

The postponed Olympic Games Tokyo 2020 will now take place from July 23 to August 8, 2021.



SHOTLIST:

00:02 Footage of Junior World Champion and Olympic swimmer Rikako Ikee at the #1YTG Tokyo 2020 One Year to go event at Tokyo Olympic Stadium

00:49 SOUNDBITE: Thomas Bach, IOC President (English Language).

Question: It is now one year to go until the Olympic Games Tokyo 2020. How significant is this milestone?

"This milestone of the one year to go is a very significant one, for sport but also for the worldwide society. It can and will be the great comeback festival of sport to the international scene and we are preparing for this - in the one year that remains for us - to make these Olympic Games a real great festival of hope, of resilience and of solidarity."

01:26 SOUNDBITE: Thomas Bach, IOC President (English Language).

Question: What do you hope the Olympic Games Tokyo 2020 will signify for athletes and those watching from around the world?

"This Olympic Games Tokyo 2020 in 21 can, should and will be the light at the end of the tunnel that all humankind is in at this moment, we are living in a period of great uncertainty. Then at the end of this very difficult period for humankind, the Olympic Games can be a great symbol of hope, of optimism, of solidarity and of unity in all our diversity."

02:09 SOUNDBITE: Thomas Bach, IOC President (English Language).

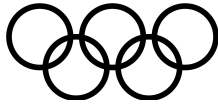
Question: What message would the IOC like to send to the athletes who are preparing for the Olympic Games Tokyo 2020?

"First of all, I would like to congratulate the many Olympic athletes and hopefuls around the world very much for their determination and resilience that they are showing in this, for them, extremely difficult period. I can feel with them what it means to prepare for an Olympic Games at the peak of your career in such uncertain circumstances. What does it bring to you emotionally? What does it mean to you mentally and on top of this, many of these athletes can still not fully train because they do not have competition partners. They cannot go to the qualification competitions, it is indeed very hard for them. This is why we at the IOC are focusing on the athletes and we have extended all our support programmes for one year, for 21. We're standing at their side. We're very happy that their preparations are facilitated by the great achievement of the Organising Committee ensuring that the Olympic Games next year can take place in the same venues and with the same schedules, so that they don't need to change their preparations and, maybe most important of all, that they can look forward to spending time together to experience, to live the Olympic spirit, in the Olympic Village."

04:05 SOUNDBITE: Thomas Bach, IOC President (English Language).

Question: What steps are the IOC and the local organisers taking to manage COVID-19's impact on the Olympic Games?

"This is a mammoth task because we cannot prepare the Olympic Games as we are used to. In fact, we have to prepare for multiple scenarios for the Olympic Games. We have to take all this into account - what could happen, what may happen? So we have established one principle first of all and this is the top priority - that the Olympic Games will respect and safeguard the health of all the participants. From this principle, derives the different scenarios. So, we want to prepare these Games and adapt it to the circumstances of the crisis at the time, while ensuring for everybody the Olympic spirit. Because this is what



makes the Olympic Games so unique, uniting the entire world. This period has to be and will be reflected and all the adaptations we may have to make will not affect the venues and sports and will not affect the athletes, so that we can give the athletes the stage to shine that they deserve.”

05:41 SOUNDBITE: Yoshirō Mori, Tokyo 2020 President (Japanese Language).

Question: One year away from the Olympic Games Tokyo 2020, what progress has been made in the last three months since the postponement was announced?

“In that sense, our first priority was to make sure all the competition venues could be used for the Games next year. That was the biggest challenge – and the most time-sensitive one. Until the venues were secured, we couldn’t finalize the Games schedule, including the Opening and Closing Ceremonies.”

06:04 SOUNDBITE: Yoshirō Mori, Tokyo 2020 President (Japanese Language).

Question: What message of hope do you have for the athletes of the world and the billions of Olympic fans across the globe?

“First of all, I think this is like a shift in gear for each athlete. I believe strong athletes think positively, and there are many looking at the positive side of this, thinking that with a one year postponement possibly they can shave their personal best by another second, or have another year for preparing to beat a tough opponent.”

06:35 SOUNDBITE: Yoshirō Mori, Tokyo 2020 President (Japanese Language).

Question: How has this postponement posed a challenge for the athletes in preparation?

“I also believe the athletes who compete at the Olympic level are capable of maintaining their physical peak for years even if they are relatively older. I want to encourage them to do everything they can, and to think of how it will feel when they have overcome these obstacles to bask in praise as champions of the world.”

IOC ARCHIVE FOOTAGE

07:16 Athletes walking into the Olympic National Stadium at the Opening Ceremony of the Olympic Games Tokyo 1964.

07:21 Wide shot of the National Stadium at the Opening Ceremony of Tokyo 1964.

07:25 Japanese athlete Yoshinori Sakai running with the Tokyo 1964 Olympic flame.

07:33 Japanese athlete Yoshinori Sakai lighting the Olympic cauldron.

07:48 Close-up of giant Olympic rings

07:52 Wide shot of giant Olympic rings

07:55 Tokyo Aquatics Centre time-lapse external construction

08:00 Tokyo Aquatics Centre time-lapse internal construction

08:05 Tokyo Aquatics Centre wide shot of the finished pool

08:10 Jumps at Equestrian Park

08:13 Pan of Hockey field at Oi Hockey Stadium

08:22 Wide shot of Sea Forest Waterway

08:29 Target at Yumenoshima Park Archery Field

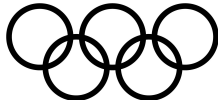
08:34 Miraitowa and Someity, Tokyo 2020 official mascots.

08:40 Pan of Ariake Arena illuminated at night

08:50 Wide shot of Ariake Arena illuminated at night

08:56 Close-up of illuminated Olympic Rings

09:01 Close-up of the words (laser projection mapping) referencing the 1yr to go moment



09:08 Wide of Senso-ji at night
09:14 Close-up shots of an official countdown clock in Ginza
09:25 Tokyo 2020 medals unveiled at ceremony last year
09:29 Close-up of Tokyo 2020 medals.
09:35 IOC President Thomas Bach hands the Olympic flag to Yuriko Koike, Governor of the City of Tokyo, at the closing Ceremony of the Olympic Games Rio 2016.
09:49 Various shots of athletes celebrating at Rio 2016.

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TOKYO 2020 TO MARK ONE YEAR TO GAMES WITH VIDEO MESSAGE

The Tokyo Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games (Tokyo 2020) will release a video incorporating messages of respect and gratitude for all those supporting the Games, and support for the athletes aiming to participate in next year's Games. The message will be delivered from the Olympic Stadium at a session for media on Thursday 23 July 2020 at 8 p.m. local time (GMT+9) – the same date and time as the Opening Ceremony of the Olympic Games Tokyo 2020 next year. This session will be open for the media only; there will be no participation by members of the public.

Please refer to the [Tokyo 2020 media advisory here](#) for further information on how to cover the event on site. The event will be livestreamed on [Olympicchannel.com](#).

Please [find here the Live Broadcast Feed Technical Details](#) including the contact information. Requests must be submitted by 22 July 2020.

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