STORY HEADLINE: 29 refugee athletes to send a message of solidarity and hope to the world at the Olympic Games Tokyo 2020

LOCATION: Lausanne, Switzerland
DATE: 8 June 2021
LANGUAGE: English
Videos available profiling 25 IOC Refugee Olympic Team (EOR) athletes here>
https://iocnewsroom.com/category/olympic-games/refugee-olympic-team/

STORY SCRIPT:

Twenty-nine athletes competing across 12 sports and from 13 host National Olympics Committees (NOCs) will be part of the IOC Refugee Olympic Team (EOR) Tokyo 2020. The International Olympic Committee (IOC) today approved the composition of the team.

The Tokyo team was selected from refugee athletes currently supported by the IOC through the Olympic Scholarships for Refugee Athletes Programme. They will send a powerful message of solidarity and hope, bringing further awareness to the plight of over 80 million displaced people worldwide.

The 29 athletes met for the first time in a virtual ceremony during which IOC President Thomas Bach officially announced their participation in the Games in Tokyo this summer.

“Congratulations to all of you,” said the IOC President. “I speak on behalf of the entire Olympic Movement when I say that I cannot wait to meet you in person and to see you compete in Tokyo. You are an integral part of our Olympic community and we welcome you with open arms.”

UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) High Commissioner Filippo Grandi also shared a message with the athletes at the ceremony:

“I am thrilled to congratulate each of the athletes who have been named in the IOC Refugee Olympic Team Tokyo 2020. They are an exceptional group of people who inspire the world. It shows what is possible when refugees are given the opportunity to make the most of their potential.”

The team will compete under the Olympic flag again, and at the Opening Ceremony on 23 July in Tokyo the athletes will enter the stadium in second position, immediately after Greece.

Six of the 29 members of this team were part of the IOC Refugee Olympic Team Rio 2016, who captured the attention of the world with their performances and extraordinary stories.

The list of athletes is as follows: (name, gender, sport, discipline, host of NOC, country of origin)
The Olympic Games Tokyo 2020 will take place from July 23 to August 8 2021 and the Paralympic Games Tokyo 2020 from August 24 to September 5 2021.

The 29-member IOC Refugee Olympic team (EOR)* initiative at the Olympic Games Tokyo 2020 is a continuation of the IOC’s commitment to play its part in addressing the global refugee crisis, and another opportunity to continue to convey the message of solidarity and hope to millions of refugees and internally displaced people around the world.

*The IOC Refugee Olympic Team will compete in Tokyo under the French acronym EOR which stands for Equipe Olympique des Réfugiés.

**SHOTLIST:**
00:02 Drone shot of Olympic House, Lausanne, Switzerland
00:07 Aerial shot of Olympic House, Lausanne, Switzerland
00:10 Presenter Jochen Färber introduces the broadcast and IOC President Thomas Bach
00:20 President Bach introduction and announcement of athletes selected for the IOC Refugee Olympic Games Tokyo 2020 (EOR)
00:33 Alaa Maso, EOR athlete celebrating inclusion.
00:41 Jamal Abdoul-Magid, EOR athlete named
00:53 Luna Solomon, EOR athlete named
01:02 Dina Pouryounes Langeroudi, EOR athlete named
01:13 Aker Al Obaidi, EOR athlete named
01:20 President Bach congratulates EOR athletes selected for Tokyo 2020
01:24 EOR athletes presented on video-call
01:37 EOR athletes say thank you via video-call
01:45 President Bach welcomes Tegla Loroupe, IOC Refugee Olympic Team (EOR) Chef de Mission.

01:50 SOUNDBITE: Tegla Loroupe, IOC Olympic Team Chef de Mission, addresses Thomas Bach, IOC President (English Language)
“You gave me the trust to lead our athletes as a mother, as a sister, as a sportsperson. You yourself as a sportsperson, Mr President, I am really honoured to be the Chef De Mission for the second time.”

02:04 SOUNDBITE: Filippo Grandi, UNHCR High Commissioner (English Language)
“First of all congratulations, many people have asked me what do you expect of the Refugee Olympic Team, and my answer is simple: I expect you to win, to win medals. You have to compete like everybody else and be good as I know you are, but congratulations really for having made it to this important team. We’re so proud of you and remember dear friends, dear athletes that you have somehow an additional responsibility, not just to do well in the competitions, which is the primary task that you have in Tokyo, but also to represent and make proud millions and millions of refugees and displaced people around the world that will be watching you and feel proud about what you will achieve.

02:17 UNHCR High Commissioner Filippo Grandi speaks to Athletes on video-call
02:29 Filippo Grandi back in shot
02:56 Filippo Grandi continues on screen in studio with presenter

03:03 SOUNDBITE: Thomas Bach, IOC President (English Language)
Question: What message does the IOC Refugee Olympic Team send to the world right now?
“It’s a message to the entire world to make the world aware of the magnitude of this crisis which is growing every day. It’s also a message that these forcibly displaced people are an enrichment to all our societies and that we should embrace them like we do in the Olympic Games, to show all our unity in all our diversity.”

03:37 SOUNDBITE: Thomas Bach, IOC President (English Language)
Question: You met the 29 athletes (although virtually) for the first time today, what were your impressions?
“It’s again a great team. You can feel this energy, this determination but also this joy these athletes are radiating. So I think it will be another great experience for them, but also for all the other athletes around the world, meeting them in the Olympic Village and being able to have a conversation with them, and also for us it will be another enriching experience sharing this great positive energy.

04:16 SOUNDBITE: Tegla Loroupe, IOC Olympic Team Chef de Mission (English Language)
Question: How do you see the final preparations of the team before Tokyo 2020?
“I’m sure we will be working together, we will make sure that our athletes are being encouraged and supported, and will go to the competition at the right time.”

04:30 Presenter in Olympic studio closes ceremony by thanking IOC President Thomas Bach and athletes
04:40 Athletes together on final video-call shot.

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