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STORY HEADLINE: Olympic flame officially handed over to Beijing 2022 to begin its journey to China

LOCATION: Panathenaic Stadium, Athens, Greece
DATE: 19 October 2021
LANGUAGE: English & Chinese

STORY SCRIPT: The Olympic flame for the Olympic Winter Games Beijing 2022 is on its way to China. During a ceremony in the historic Panathenaic Stadium in Athens, it was handed over today (Oct 19) from the Hellenic Olympic Committee (HOC) to the organisers of the next Games.

The priestesses entered the arena and watched on as Greece's Evi Moraitidou, silver medallist at the Athens Olympics in 2004 in water polo, brought the flame into the stadium.

Li Nina, Olympic silver medallist in freestyle skiing in both 2006 and 2010, from China then continued the lap of the historic track, before handing the torch to Paraskevi Ladopoulou, a cross-country and biathlon athlete from Greece, who will compete in Beijing 2022 in cross-country, to light the cauldron.

Due to the COVID-19 countermeasures, today's ceremony was held under strict conditions, with only a limited delegation and no spectators present. Also the traditional torch relay through Greece could not take place.

The ceremony was hosted by the Hellenic Olympic Committee President and IOC member Spyros Capralos.

He said: “This unique flame will convey a message of peace and friendship. But it will also carry with it, the respect and goodwill of the Greek towards the Chinese people. Two nations that count thousands of years of history and close relations.

“We deliver to you here, at the Panathenaic Stadium, where the first modern Olympic Games took place in 1896, the sacred Light of Olympism. To carry it to your distant yet beautiful country, to continue the remainder of its journey, sending out messages of peace, friendship, brotherhood and solidarity.”

Beijing will write history as the first city to hold both editions of the Olympic Games, winter and summer. The Olympic Winter Games Beijing 2022 aim to connect the Chinese people...
with the world, bringing to life China’s vision to engage 300 million people with sport on snow and ice.

The handover ceremony, which took place 24 hours after the lighting of the flame in Ancient Olympia near the Temple of Hera, was attended by the IOC Vice Presidents Ser Miang Ng and Nicole Hoevertsz; the IOC’s Beijing 2022 Coordination Commission Chair, Juan Antonio Samaranch; and IOC Honorary Member Sam Ramsamy. The Chinese delegation was led by IOC Vice-President, Special Representative and Vice-President of Beijing 2022 and Vice-President of the Chinese Olympic Committee Zaiqing Yu.

Zaiqing Yu said: “In a short while, the Olympic flame will be passed on to Beijing for the second time. As a symbol of the Olympic spirit, the Olympic flame will travel to the Great Wall and across other parts of China, bringing with it the light of peace and friendship.

“As I speak, the COVID-19 pandemic is still raging in the world. Under the principle of always placing the lives and health of people front and centre, we will have a different but innovative Olympic flame display and Olympic Torch Relay, one that combines tradition and reality.

“The Beijing 2022 Olympic Winter Games will open on 4 February 2022. Committed to a green, inclusive, open and clean approach to preparing and hosting the Games, we will deliver a streamlined, safe and splendid Games, which hopefully will help promote the Olympic Movement and the building of a global community of shared future.”

As a symbol of peace, unity and solidarity, the Olympic flame conveys the values of Olympism to all those that see it on its travels. The flame will help build anticipation amongst Olympic fans eager to witness the world’s best winter sports stars in action, whilst also inspiring thousands of athletes who are making their final preparations for these Games.

A welcome ceremony for the flame will be held in Beijing tomorrow (20 October), with the flame initially going on display to the public at the Beijing Olympic Tower before setting off on a flame exhibition tour. Closer to the Games, a traditional Olympic Torch Relay will be held. More information will be announced by the Beijing 2022 Organising Committee after the arrival ceremony.

Around 2,900 athletes, representing approximately 85 National Olympic Committees, will compete in what will be the most gender-balanced Olympic Winter Games in history, between 4 and 20 February 2022.

**SHOTLIST:**
00:02 Philharmonic Band of the Municipality of Athens open the ceremony, Panathenaic Stadium, Athens
00:07 Marching of the Presidential Guard
00:12 Greek athletes present the Olympic flag
00:17 Aerial drone shot, Panathenaic Stadium
00:21 Chinese delegation members at the ceremony
00:25 Raising of the Olympic flag
00:29 Close up, Chinese flag
00:35 Raising of Chinese flag and national anthem
00:38 Multiple shots of priestesses welcoming the Olympic flame to the stadium
00:53 Moving shot, Greece's Evi Moraitidou (silver medallist at the Athens Olympics in 2004 in water polo) brings flame into the stadium
01:00 Moraitidou hands over the flame to China's Li Nina (Olympic silver medallist in freestyle skiing in both 2006 and 2010)
01:08 Li Nina passes the flame to Greece’s Paraskevi Ladopoulou (who will compete in Beijing 2022 in cross-country)
01:18 Ladopoulou completes the handover and lights the cauldron
01:32 Priestesses perform artistic event in front of the cauldron

01:49 SOUNDbite: Spyros Capralos, President of the Hellenic Olympic Committee (HOC) (English Language)
“Ladies and gentlemen, Ni Hao. The Olympic flame is ready to begin its long journey from Athens to China, to reach the Beijing Olympic Stadium for the opening ceremony of the 24th Winter Olympic Games. This unique flame will convey a message of peace and friendship. But it will also carry with it, the respect and goodwill of the Greek towards the Chinese people. Two nations that count thousands of years of history and close relations.”

02:28 Applause from delegates

02:31 SOUNDbite: Zaiqing Yu, IOC Vice-President, Special Representative and Vice-President of Beijing 2022 and Vice-President of the Chinese Olympic Committee (Chinese Language with English subtitles)
“Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, it is indeed an exciting moment for us to take over the Olympic flame for the 24th Olympic Winter Games. On behalf of Beijing 2022 President, Mr Cai Qi and the Organising Committee, I would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to the HOC and the government and people of the Hellenic Republic. Thank you for your thoughtful arrangements which have made the lighting and handover ceremonies possible. Thank you for your support for the Beijing 2022 Olympic Winter Games.”

03:14 High Priestess lights the Beijing 2022 torch and passes it to President Capralos
03:31 President Capralos hands the torch to Zaiqing Yu to finalise the handover
03:32 Zaiqing Yu presents the torch to the crowd
03:50 Wide shot, delegates applauding
03:53 Close up, Beijing 2022 lantern is lit from the Olympic torch flame
03:59 Zaiqing Yu presents the lantern to the crowd
04:05 Wide shot, delegates applauding
04:07 Zaiqing Yu continues to present the lantern to the crowd
04:12 Zaiqing Yu walks with lantern
04:21 Wide aerial shot, The Acropolis, Athens

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