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STORY HEADLINE: IOC honours gender equality advocates as Olympic Winter Games Beijing 2022 begins. Hashimoto Seiko (JPN) awarded World Trophy.

LOCATION: Beijing, China
DATE: 3 Feb 2022
LANGUAGE: English, Japanese

STORY SCRIPT:
The International Olympic Committee (IOC) has announced the winners of the IOC Women and Sport Awards 2021, recognising people and organisations who have advanced gender equality on and off the field of play.

Six gender equality advocates were honoured for their work in gender equality during the 139th IOC session in Beijing. Tokyo 2020 President Hashimoto Seiko was awarded the World Trophy by Chair of the IOC Women in Sport Commission Lydia Nsekera.

An experienced and prominent sports leader and seven-time Olympian, Hashimoto Seiko has been instrumental in advancing gender equality and inclusion in sport, challenging established gender norms through her key role in Tokyo 2020.

World winner: Hashimoto Seiko (Japan)

Five continental award-winners:
- Winner for Africa: Natsiraishe Maritsa (Zimbabwe)
- Winner for the Americas: Figure Skating Harlem (USA)
- Winner for Asia: Zhang Xia (China)
- Winner for Europe: Karl Fasting (Norway)
- Winner for Oceania: Tracey Holmes (Australia)

Reflecting on the role of sport in advancing gender equality, IOC President Bach said: “The Olympic Games Tokyo 2020 were the most gender-balanced Olympic Games in history. This sent a powerful signal that the Olympic Games are always about bringing all people together without any discrimination regardless of gender, race, background or political belief. For over 20 years, the IOC Women and Sport Awards have been recognising and celebrating the many people and organisations that help us realise this mission.”

Receiving her award Hashimoto Seiko said: “I think for men and women and everyone who has a dream, I want them to shine. I would like to share my radiance and I would like to see future female leaders share theirs with the world. We should come together with the motivation to make a better future for everybody.”
IOC president Bach paid tribute Hashimoto, and her work on the postponed Tokyo Games: “It needed someone like you to lead these Olympic Games to success. Someone with a proven track record of challenging the status quo. Fighting for gender equality. This is why I hope this award will put a spotlight on your important work to empower women and girls in and through sport.”

Introduced in 2000, there have been 128 recipients of IOC Women and Sport Awards, from 67 countries. The six winners today were selected from 26 shortlisted candidates.

**World winner: Hashimoto Seiko (Japan)**

President of the Tokyo 2020 Organising Committee and seven-time Olympian turned politician, Hashimoto Seiko has been advancing gender equality and inclusion in Japan for decades. A former cyclist and speed skater who competed at both Summer and Winter editions of the Games, Hashimoto's experiences as an athlete have shaped her unyielding desire to better the futures of women and girls in Japan.

As a sports leader, Hashimoto advocated for greater support for female athletes and coaches and led the establishment of specific development and support programmes. As a politician, she was instrumental in creating a maternity leave policy and an in-house childcare facility for lawmakers in Japan.

After being appointed President of the Tokyo 2020 Organising Committee, she took immediate steps to strengthen gender, diversity and inclusion, pledging that female empowerment would be promoted at the Games and beyond. She increased collaboration with Pride House Tokyo, the first permanent LGBTQ+ centre in the Japanese city, and doubled female representation on the Executive Board from 21 to 42 per cent.

Embodying the core values of Olympism, Hashimoto has shattered many glassceilings throughout her career, and remains as committed as ever to improving the opportunities for young girls and women in Japan both on and off the field of play.

For additional information about the IOC’s work to foster gender equality in and through sport, please click here.

The Olympic Games Beijing 2022 will take place from 4 to 20 February 2022 and will be followed by the Paralympic Games from 4 to 13 March 2022.

**SHOT LIST:**

Graphics & images

*Winner for Africa: Natsiraishhe Maritsa (Zimbabwe)*
*Winner for the Americas: Figure Skating Harlem (USA)*
*Winner for Asia: Zhang Xia (China)*
*Winner for Europe: Karl Fasting (Norway)*
*Winner for Oceania: Tracey Holmes (Australia)*

00:38 Close up of revolving IOC Women and Sport World winner trophy

**00:58 SOUNDBITE: Thomas Bach, IOC President (English Language)**

“This is my great honour and pleasure to announce that the world trophy of the 2021 Women and Sport award goes to Hashimoto Seiko.”

01:12 Applause, close up of Hashimoto Seiko standing and bowing.
01:21 SOUNDBITE: Thomas Bach, IOC President (English Language)

“When you were appointed as President of the Tokyo 2020 Organising Committee I knew that with your unparalleled Olympic experience - thank you Mr Beckers for the great advice - you would be a great choice for this position and indeed you were a valuable partner in your term of office.

Someone with a proven track record of challenging the status quo. Fighting for gender equality. Pushing the boundaries for more inclusion. Shattering glass ceilings for more diversity.

This is why I hope that this award will put a spotlight on your important work in Japan to empower women and girls in and through sport. More importantly, I hope that this will only motivate you to continue to be a driver for change in your country. Thank you very much and congratulations again”.

02:43 Pull out Hashimoto Seiko on stage lifting World Trophy of 2021 Women and Sport award
02:51 Side shot Hashimoto Seiko on stage bowing with applause
02:55 Wide shot Hashimoto Seiko on stage lifting the trophy
02:59 Close up Hashimoto Seiko lifting the trophy with applause
03:03 Close up Hashimoto Seiko on stage with trophy

03:06 SOUNDBITE: Hashimoto Seiko, 2021 IOC Women and Sport Awards, World Winner (English language)

“I sincerely thank you all again. I have been committed to serve on this movement at my best and it has been my biggest pleasure if my effort has operated some laws in promoting women and sports. I would like to give my best to contribute to the positive change in our society through the power of sport. I would appreciate your continuous guidance. Thank you very much”.

03.47 Wide shot audience applauding

Question: What does receiving the 2021 IOC Women and Sport World Trophy mean to you?

03:51 SOUNDBITE: Hashimoto Seiko, 2021 IOC Women and Sport Awards, World Winner (Japanese language)

“Frankly speaking I am really happy, but this is not only just for me and could only happen because of the people who guided me and supported me every day. Others like me, who know that there are many children training hard every day to become future athletes. For me this knowledge was very helpful, it gave me power to keep motivated. I think this award is for a lot of people who have supported me.”

04:22 Hashimoto Seiko competing in speed skating at Olympic Winter Games Albertville 1992

Question: What advice would you give to aspiring future female leaders?

04:52 SOUNDBITE: Hashimoto Seiko, 2021 IOC Women and Sport Awards, World Winner (Japanese language)
"I think for men and women and everyone who has a dream, I want them to shine. I would like to share my radiance and I would like to see future female leaders share theirs with the world."

05:13 Hashimoto Seiko competing in cycling at Olympic Summer Games Atlanta 1996

**Question: What would be your message to leaders about investing in gender equality in sport?**

05:28 **SOUNDBITE:** Hashimoto Seiko, 2021 IOC Women and Sport Awards, World Winner (Japanese language)

"Building the world to be a better place to live for every athlete should not be the only target of sport - sporting values should be a huge contribution to the whole world. We should come together with the motivation to make a better future for everybody. I would like to encourage that."

05:53 Hashimoto Seiko at baseball event in her role as President of Tokyo 2020 Organising Committee

06:08 Hashimoto Seiko welcomed to the lectern by IOC President Thomas Bach at Olympic Games Tokyo 2020.

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