



Dr. Thomas Bach
President
International Olympic Committee
Av Général-Guisan 70
1009 Pully
Switzerland

October 16, 2019

Dear President Bach,

Human rights are universal and inalienable; indivisible; interdependent and interrelated. Ensuring respect for these rights in sport is essential for athletes as competitors, but more importantly it guarantees and recognizes us as people first and athletes second. As we've seen time and time again over this last year through cases of unimaginable abuse, gender and racial discrimination, silencing of athlete voices, threats to athlete safety and wellbeing, and restrictions on athletes' ability to make a living - the ever changing and often arbitrary rules of sport continue to supersede the rights of athletes. Until the IOC places a priority on human rights within its policy framework and above all else, its Olympic Charter, this will continue to be the case.

In a recent press release you were quoted saying, ***“Our mission, to put sport at the service of humanity, goes hand-in-hand with human rights, which is part of our DNA.”***

President Bach, it is time to bring your words to life.

The Olympic Charter is the fundamental guide for the development, functioning, and growth of the IOC and the Olympic movement. It is for that reason that we recommend the IOC to urgently adopt an 'Eighth Fundamental Principle of Olympism'. This Principle would read:

“The Olympic Movement is committed to respecting all internationally recognized human rights and shall strive to promote the protection of these rights.”

This would signal a real and meaningful commitment in respecting and protecting the human rights of athletes and all involved in sport.

With ongoing issues of maltreatment, discrimination, denial of freedom expression and barriers to effective representation rampant in today's sport landscape, the IOC continues to enable the oppression of its most valuable ambassadors. This was made clear through the IOC's adoption of the Athletes' Rights & Responsibilities Declaration, despite strong objections, which imposes obligations on athletes under the pretext of 'Responsibilities' that openly limit basic human rights. Simply put, the power of sport is in jeopardy when its athletes are being compromised. Without a commitment to respecting all internationally recognized human rights from the IOC, athletes will continue to be vulnerable.

We are demanding meaningful change now.



It is time to adapt to today's athlete-centered sport culture. We, the athletes are driving it and we are holding those who play in it accountable to sport's most important stakeholder. We have mobilized quickly, and are in a position to continue to grow the athlete voice movement to all corners of the globe to ensure athletes are part of the decision processes that impact their lives.

It is time to demonstrate your commitment to us as people first. The IOC is dangerously falling behind in quite possibly the most important aspect of the Olympic movement – humanity.

Sincerely,

AthletesCAN

Athletes Germany

United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee Athletes' Advisory Council

New Zealand Athletes Federation

Global Athlete