The Beijing 2022 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games: Issues for Congress

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The capital of the People’s Republic of China (PRC or China), Beijing, is scheduled to host the XXIV Olympic Winter Games from February 4 to 20, 2022, and the XIII Paralympic Winter Games from March 4 to 13, 2022. The International Olympic Committee’s (IOC’s) selection of Beijing as host city for the Games has been controversial in the United States and elsewhere, primarily because of China’s poor human rights record.

The Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic has, moreover, posed major challenges for the Games’ organizers. China has sought to maintain a “zero-COVID” approach to the pandemic, seeking to contain and stamp out even the smallest outbreaks. To guard against Games participants spreading the virus that causes COVID-19, the organizers say they will operate “closed-loop systems,” created “to ensure there is no contact with the general public or anyone outside of the closed loop.” Games participants are to enter a loop on dedicated Games transportation carrying them either from the airport, or, if not fully vaccinated on arrival, from the dedicated facility where they will have spent their first 21 days in China in quarantine. The discovery of a domestic case of the highly transmissible Omicron variant of the virus in Beijing three weeks before the opening of the Games has further complicated the challenge of epidemic control and led organizers to halt spectator ticket sales.

Members of the 117th Congress have shown a strong interest in the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics and Paralympics. Some Members have held and testified at hearings on the Games, written Olympics-related letters, and made multiple public statements. Some have also introduced related bills and resolutions, including H.Res. 837, which passed the House on December 8, 2021, by a unanimous vote of 428-0. The resolution states, among other things, that it is the sense of the House that there is no contact with the general public or anyone outside of the closed loop.” Games participants are to enter a loop on dedicated Games transportation carrying them either from the airport, or, if not fully vaccinated on arrival, from the dedicated facility where they will have spent their first 21 days in China in quarantine. The discovery of a domestic case of the highly transmissible Omicron variant of the virus in Beijing three weeks before the opening of the Games has further complicated the challenge of epidemic control and led organizers to halt spectator ticket sales.

On December 6, 2021, White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki told reporters that the Biden Administration “will not send any diplomatic or official representation to the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics and Paralympic Games given the PRC’s ongoing genocide and crimes against humanity in Xinjiang and other human rights abuses.” Ten other countries have so far signaled their intent to withhold official representation from the Games, for diverse reasons, while still sending athletes. One country, North Korea, has stated that it will send neither officials nor athletes. It cited “the manoeuvres of hostile forces and the world pandemic.” The IOC’s approach to human rights has been evolving. The host city contract for the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics includes no reference to human rights. In 2017, however, the IOC announced that starting with the 2024 Games, host city contracts will include a provision relating to human rights.

The government of China appears to see Beijing’s hosting of the Games for a second time as serving multiple national purposes. They include spurring progress on one of Communist Party of China (CPC) General Secretary Xi Jinping’s signature initiatives, the development of a new megacity in north China. They also include boosting national pride, demonstrating to the world the alleged superiority of China’s political system, boosting the global profile of Chinese brands, and developing winter sports in China.

Appendices to this report list legislation related to the Beijing 2022 Games, provide information on the PRC bodies leading planning for the Games and corporate sponsors of the Games, and discuss two case studies of historic approaches to human rights and sport: the U.S.-led boycott of the Moscow 1980 Olympics and sporting bans against apartheid-era South Africa.
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Introduction

Beijing, the capital of the People’s Republic of China (PRC or China), is scheduled to host the XXIV Olympic Winter Games and the XIII Paralympic Winter Games (collectively, the Games) starting on February 4, 2022, five months after the closing of the Tokyo 2020 Summer Games, which were postponed by a year due to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic. China’s state media have presented China’s leader, Communist Party General Secretary and State President Xi Jinping, as personally guiding China’s planning for the Games and they frequently quote Xi’s instruction that the Games should be “Simple, Safe, and Splendid.”

With the world still in the grips of the pandemic, delivering on “simple” and “safe” has proved challenging both for the Beijing Organising Committee for the 2022 Olympic and Paralympic Games (BOCOG, also known as “Beijing 2022”) and for the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and the International Paralympic Committee (IPC), the independent, nonprofit, international organizations that lead the Olympic Movement and the Paralympic Movement, respectively. Together the three organizations have developed a complex set of protocols intended to guard against the spread of the virus among athletes, officials, staff, media and others at the Olympics. The emergence in late 2021 of the highly transmissible Omicron variant of the virus has raised questions about whether even those extensive protocols will be sufficient to prevent widespread infections. (See “Challenges Related to the COVID-19 Pandemic.”)

Complicating China’s efforts to portray the Games as “splendid” has been China’s human rights record. Members of the 117th Congress have held hearings and introduced more than a dozen pieces of legislation related to the Beijing Winter Games, many arguing against a “business as usual” approach to an Olympics and a Paralympics hosted by a country accused of ongoing genocide against predominantly Muslim groups in its northwest. Some Members have also expressed concern about the welfare of a Chinese tennis star and three-time Olympian who appeared to be silenced after posting on social media about a retired senior Chinese leader having allegedly coerced her into sex. (See “Concerns About the Welfare of Chinese Tennis Star Peng Shuai” and “The U.S. Congress and the 2022 Games.”)

On December 6, 2021, White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki announced that the Biden Administration “will not send any diplomatic or official representation to the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics and Paralympic Games.” In explaining the decision, she cited, “the PRC’s ongoing genocide and crimes against humanity” in China’s Xinjiang region “and other human rights abuses.” Ten other countries have announced that they will withhold official representation from

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1 The Tokyo 2020 Olympic Summer Games (the Games of the XXXII Olympiad) were held from July 23 to August 8, 2021. The Tokyo Paralympic Summer Games were held from August 24 to September 5, 2021. The XXIV Olympic Winter Games are scheduled to open on February 4, 2022, although competition will begin on February 2, 2022.
5 See H.Res. 837, which passed the House on December 8, 2021, on a vote of 428-0.
6 See H.Res. 837, which passed the House on December 8, 2021, on a vote of 428-0.
The Games, though fewer than half have cited human rights as the primary reason for doing so. (See “Select International Stances” below.)

**Key Facts**

- The Beijing 2022 Winter Olympic Games are scheduled to take place from February 4 to 20, 2022 (though competition is scheduled to begin February 2, 2022). The Beijing 2022 Winter Paralympic Games are scheduled for March 4-13, 2022.  

- Beijing is the first city in Olympic history to be selected to host both Summer (2008) and Winter Games. Beijing will be reusing two 2008 Olympics and Paralympics venues: the National Indoor Stadium (also known as the “Bird’s Nest”) and the National Aquatic Center (formerly known as the “Water Cube” and now known as the “Ice Cube.”)

- The Games are to be held in three zones: central Beijing (ice sports); Beijing’s Yanqing District (alpine skiing, bobsled, luge, and skeleton); and the Chongli district of Zhangjiakou in Hebei Province (skiing and snowboarding).

- Approximately 2,900 Olympic athletes are to compete in 109 events (51 for men, 46 for women, 11 mixed events, and 1 open event), divided into 15 disciplines across 7 sports: biathlon, bobsleigh, curling, ice hockey, luge, skating, and skiing.

- Paralympic athletes are to compete in 78 events in two disciplines across six sports: alpine skiing, cross-country skiing, biathlon, snowboarding, para ice hockey, and wheelchair curling.

- The United States and ten other countries have announced that they will not send officials to represent them at the Olympics, but will send athletes. The other countries are Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Estonia, Japan, Lithuania, the Netherlands, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom. (See “Select International Stances.”)

- North Korea alone has stated that it will send neither officials nor athletes to Beijing, citing “the manoeuvres of hostile forces and the world pandemic.”

**Beijing as Host City: Selection and Controversies**

Beijing’s selection to serve as the host city for the 2022 Winter Games has been controversial in the United States and elsewhere, primarily due to China’s authoritarian political system and poor...
human rights record. Of particular concern to many critics of Beijing’s status as host city are ongoing human rights abuses in the northwest China region of Xinjiang that both the Trump and Biden Administrations have characterized as genocide. Some Members and others have also pointed to Beijing’s record of curtailing freedom of expression, an impulse that many critics saw at work in the apparent silencing of Chinese tennis star Peng Shuai after she accused a retired senior Chinese leader of sexual coercion three months before the scheduled opening of the Beijing Games. Pending legislation in the 117th Congress includes six resolutions that cite a worsening of the human rights situation in China following the Beijing 2008 Summer Olympics in calling for either moving the Beijing 2022 Games to another country, or boycotting them.

**Figure 1. Map of China**

The 2022 Winter Olympic Games are to be held in Beijing and Hebei.

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The IOC’s Selection of Beijing as Host City

The IOC in July 2015 selected Beijing as the host city of 2022’s XXIV Olympic Winter Games. Beijing started as one of six cities vying to host the 2022 Games. The others were Almaty, Kazakhstan; Krakow, Poland; Lviv, Ukraine; Oslo, Norway; and Stockholm, Sweden. Each city won endorsement from its respective national Olympic committee (NOC), giving it the status of an “applicant city.” Stockholm withdrew prior to submitting an application file to the IOC. After the remaining five cities submitted their application files and prior to the IOC Executive Board selecting candidate cities from among them, Krakow and Lviv dropped out. The board accepted all three remaining cities as candidate cities. When Oslo withdrew prior to the deadline for submitting a candidature file, Almaty and Beijing were left as the final two candidate cities. The IOC’s 2022 Evaluation Commission analyzed Almaty’s and Beijing’s candidature files, visited each city, and issued a report, which it “provided to the IOC Members to assist them in electing the Host City.” The Evaluation Commission’s report included language on assurances China’s government provided related to human rights:

Written assurances were provided regarding the following matters: human rights, the right to demonstrate, media freedom to report on the Games with no restrictions on the Internet, labour rights, displacement and environmental protection. Taking these into consideration, as well as the open nature of the discussions with Beijing 2022 and government authorities and China’s experience from organising the 2008 Olympic Games and the 2014 Youth Olympic Games, the Commission is confident that the Government of

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14 Written by CRS Specialist in American National Government L. Elaine Halchin.
15 The IOC is an independent, nonprofit, international organization that leads the Olympic Movement. The Olympic Movement is “the concerted, organised, universal and permanent action, carried out under the supreme authority of the IOC, of all individuals and entities who are inspired by the values of Olympism . . . In addition to its three main constituents, the Olympic Movement also encompasses the Organising Committees of the Olympic Games (“OCOGs”), the national associations, clubs and persons belonging to the IFs and NOCs, particularly the athletes, whose interests constitute a fundamental element of the Olympic Movement’s action, as well as the judges, referees, coaches and the other sports officials and technicians. It also includes other organisations and institutions as recognised by the IOC.” International Olympic Movement, “Olympic Movement,” at https://olympics.com/IOC/olympic-movement.
16 See International Olympic Committee, “Olympic Games Candidature Process,” at https://www.olympic.org/all-about-the-candidature-process, for an overview of the current host city selection process. Note that the IOC has revised the selection process over the years, so the process for selecting a host city for one Olympics may differ somewhat from the process used for another.
17 The host city selection process has two phases: application and candidature. In the first phase, NOCs endorse cities, giving them the status of “applicant cities.” In the second phase, applicant cities accepted by the IOC executive become “candidate cities.” The U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Committee (USOPC) is the NOC for the United States. International Olympic Committee, “Host City Election for the Olympic Winter Games 2022,” at https://www.olympic.org/2022-host-city-election.
18 The Executive Board, which consists of a president, 4 vice presidents, and 10 other members of the IOC, manages the affairs of the IOC. International Olympic Committee, “IOC Executive Board,” at https://olympics.com/IOC/executive-board.
20 The IOC website that contains the Beijing 2022 documents, at https://olympics.com/IOC/documents/olympic-games/beijing-2022-olympic-winter-games, does not include the host city’s written assurances regarding human rights and the other matters listed here.
China would take all necessary measures to ensure the Olympic Charter and Host City Contract would be respected.\(^{21}\)

On July 31, 2015, IOC members voted by secret ballot, selecting Beijing over Almaty by a vote of 44 to 40.\(^{22}\) Any IOC member who was a national of either China or Kazakhstan was not permitted to vote.\(^{23}\)

**Allegations of Genocide in China’s Xinjiang Region\(^{24}\)**

Between 2017 and 2020, authorities in China’s Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR) arbitrarily detained an estimated one million-plus Turkic Muslims, mostly ethnic Uyghurs, in “reeducation centers.”\(^{25}\) The government justified the detentions on the basis of detainees’ past religious, cultural, scholarly, social, and online activities, which the government subsequently deemed to be manifestations of religious extremism or potentially terrorist in nature, also referred to as “pre-criminal offenses.” Detainees were compelled to renounce many of their Islamic beliefs and customs as a condition for their possible release.\(^{26}\) These detentions were an apparent part of a PRC government effort to systematically transform the thought and behavior of Uyghurs and forcefully assimilate them into Chinese society, an effort which some observers claim is destroying Uyghur culture and identity.\(^{27}\) Treatment and conditions in the centers reportedly included compulsory factory labor, crowded and unsanitary conditions, food deprivation, psychological pressure, sexual abuse, and medical neglect and torture, sometimes resulting in deaths of detainees while in the camps or soon after their release.\(^{28}\) Since 2020, the XUAR government appears to have closed or repurposed most reeducation centers; it has released some

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\(^{21}\) Ibid., p. 73.


detainees, sent others to factory labor, and kept many in pre-trial detention facilities or prosecuted them as criminals and imprisoned them in higher security facilities.29

Many Uyghurs, including former detainees, reportedly have been assigned to factory employment in Xinjiang and other parts of China under conditions that indicate forced labor.30 Uyghur detentions, forced labor, and other state policies have led to family separations and contributed to nearly half a million Uyghur children attending state-run boarding schools.31 In 2017, the government launched a campaign to reduce “illegal births” among Uyghurs and other Turkic Muslims in Xinjiang, partly through forced contraception, sterilization, and abortion, affecting many minority women with three or more children.32

On January 19, 2021, the day before the end of President Donald J. Trump’s term in office, the State Department determined that China’s actions against Uyghurs and other Muslim groups in Xinjiang constitute crimes against humanity and genocide.33 With regard to crimes against humanity, the State Department referred to arbitrary imprisonment, forced sterilization, torture, forced labor, and “draconian restrictions” on freedom of religion or belief, freedom of expression, and freedom of movement. Regarding its genocide determination, the department stated that Chinese authorities “are engaged in the forced assimilation and eventual erasure of a vulnerable ethnic and religious minority group.”34 The Biden Administration has indicated concurrence with this determination, and has described genocide in Xinjiang as “ongoing.”35 (For further information about U.S. government actions in response to human rights violations in Xinjiang, see CRS In Focus IF10281, China Primer: Uyghurs, by Thomas Lum and Michael A. Weber.)

Under international law, the crime of genocide,36 unlike crimes against humanity, requires evidence of intent to destroy a particular group. Some legal experts view the intent standard as

32 Department of State, “Determination of the Secretary of State on Atrocities in Xinjiang,” January 19, 2021.
34 The U.N. Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide defines genocide as “any of the
challenging to prove. According to media reports, late in the Trump Administration, State Department lawyers and other department employees disagreed over whether sufficient evidence existed to justify a finding of genocidal intent. A March 2021 report produced by a group of independent experts for a non-partisan think tank in Washington, DC, concluded that the government of China committed genocide; conversely, an April 2021 Human Rights Watch report alleged crimes against humanity, while stating, “Human Rights Watch has not documented the existence of the necessary genocidal intent at this time.” In December 2021, a United Kingdom-based nongovernmental tribunal found that the PRC government had, “beyond reasonable doubt,” committed torture, crimes against humanity, and genocide in Xinjiang, although the language of the tribunal’s summary judgement was measured with regard to the genocide finding.

Concerns About the Welfare of Chinese Tennis Star Peng Shuai

Since November 2021, concerns about the welfare of Chinese tennis star Peng Shuai have compounded many critics’ reservations about Beijing’s role as host city for the Olympics. In a November 2, 2021, social media post, Peng, a former Wimbledon doubles champion and three-time Olympian, alleged that she had been subject to sexual coercion from a former senior Chinese leader, Zhang Gaoli. Zhang served as a member of China’s top decisionmaking body, the Political Bureau Standing Committee from 2012 to 2017. Until 2018, Zhang also served as a vice premier in China’s government and as head of the Central Leading Group for the Work of the XXIV Olympic Winter Games.
Peng’s statement disappeared minutes after she posted it, with most commentators attributing its disappearance to China’s internet censors. Those searching for Peng’s name on the Chinese internet found their searches blocked.44 Peng herself went silent. Twelve days after Peng’s post, on November 14, 2021, the Chairman and CEO of the Women’s Tennis Association (WTA), Steve Simon issued a statement declaring, “Peng Shuai, and all women, deserve to be heard, not censored.”45 Three days later, a Chinese state media outlet claimed to have obtained the English translation of an email from Peng to Simon, which it posted on Twitter.46 Simon demanded “independent and verifiable proof that [Peng] is safe,” saying he had “repeatedly tried to reach her via numerous forms of communication, to no avail.”47 Some of the biggest names in women’s tennis followed up with expressions of concern for Peng’s wellbeing.48

State media journalists next posted photos and a video of Peng purporting to show her safe.49 The propaganda campaign appeared to heighten concerns about Peng’s safety among her peers and others outside China. On December 1, 2021, Simon announced that the WTA was suspending all tournaments in China, including Hong Kong, citing “serious doubts that [Peng] is free, safe and not subject to censorship, coercion and intimidation.” Simon added that he was “greatly concerned about the risks that all of our players and staff could face if we were to hold events in China in 2022.”50

The IOC took a different tack. It held video calls with Peng on November 21 and December 1, 2021, reporting after the first call that Peng “explained that she is safe and well, living at her home in Beijing, but would like to have her privacy respected.”51 The IOC said it was relying on “quiet diplomacy” and addressing concerns “directly with Chinese sports organisations.”52 H.Res. 837, passed unanimously on December 8, 2021, by a vote of 428-0, was

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strongly critical of the IOC’s role in the affair. Among other concerns, the resolution expressed the sense of the House that, “by acquiescing to the Chinese Communist Party’s narrative, the IOC failed to adhere to its own human rights commitments and protect the safety and free speech of Olympic athletes.” The resolution also asserted that, “the IOC’s conduct has undermined the efforts by the United States Government, human rights organizations, the Women’s Tennis Association, and other international bodies and individuals to secure Peng’s safety.”

On December 19, 2021, in an apparently impromptu video interview with Singapore’s Lianhe Zaobao on the sidelines of a skiing competition in Shanghai, Peng stated that she had always been “very free.” Addressing her social media post, she said, “I have never said or written about anyone sexually assaulting me. That’s a very important point.” She said the social media post, initially shared with her nearly 600,000 followers on China’s Weibo Internet platform, was “my private matter.”

The Human Rights Legacy of the Beijing 2008 Summer Olympics

Ahead of the Beijing 2008 Summer Olympic Games, statements by PRC and IOC officials raised the prospect that the Games might lead to improvements in human rights in China. By the time the 2008 Games opened, however, nongovernmental human rights organizations outside China generally contended that China’s hosting the Olympics had not led to overall improvements in human rights conditions in China, and may have contributed to PRC government human rights abuses in some areas. PRC authorities reportedly cracked down on China’s civil society sector ahead of the Games and subjected human rights activists to detention, home confinement, and/or surveillance in order to stifle criticism of the country’s human rights record and prevent protests during the Games. Rights advocates also criticized human rights problems associated with the preparation for the Games in Beijing, including wide-scale evictions of and land seizures from Beijing residents and the forced removal from the city of migrant workers and others. Amnesty International reported:

Notwithstanding some important legislative and institutional reforms ... on balance the Chinese authorities have so far failed to fulfill their own commitments to improve human rights. In fact, the authorities have used the Olympic Games as pretext to continue, and in some respects, intensify existing policies and practices which have led to serious and widespread violations of human rights.

According to one academic study, the 2008 Games strengthened and accelerated technological development in China’s security apparatus and surveillance systems, including internet surveillance and censorship systems. Some of these efforts reportedly benefitted from


54 Written by CRS Specialist in Asian Affairs Thomas Lum and CRS Analyst in Foreign Affairs Michael A. Weber.


56 For example, see Human Rights Watch, “China: Olympics Harm Key Human Rights,” August 6, 2008.


collaboration with U.S. companies. In addition, Olympic venues were marked by “overt militarization”—including the deployment of soldiers—and the involvement of hundreds of thousands of “voluntary informants.” The study concluded that “post-9/11 Olympic security and surveillance have authoritarian effects.”

International concern over China’s hosting of the 2008 Games focused in particular on two issues. The first was conditions in Tibet following March 2008 unrest in the Tibetan capital, Lhasa, and other Tibetan areas. The second was China’s relations with Sudan amidst allegations of genocide in Darfur. Some analysts have argued that international pressure on the latter issue led to a PRC shift in posture toward Sudan’s government. Some human rights groups criticized the IOC and world leaders for, in their view, not using the Games as an opportunity to meaningfully press China’s government to improve human rights within China. Some congressional hearings and proposed legislation raised concerns over China’s human rights practices in the context of the Games and/or sought to restrict U.S. government attendance at the Games. President George W. Bush opted to attend the opening ceremonies in Beijing and utilized a policy speech prior to his arrival at the Games to express “deep concerns” over human rights in China.

With regard to foreign media access, in 2006, the PRC government announced that it would temporarily relax restrictions beginning in January 2007, and allow international journalists to report freely from China during the 2008 Games. The Foreign Correspondents Club of China reported that although the temporary regulations improved overall reporting conditions for foreign journalists, intimidation, harassment, and detention of foreign journalists by state security agents occurred during the lead up to the Games. Furthermore, despite having lifted some media restrictions, PRC authorities reportedly implemented “creative mechanisms” to control the flow of information, including blocking interviews of Chinese dissidents. During March 2008 unrest in Lhasa, Tibet, the government blocked most news about Tibet for most Chinese and restricted foreign access to the region.

Challenges Related to the COVID-19 Pandemic

SARS-CoV2, the virus that causes COVID-19, was first identified in the central Chinese city of Wuhan in late 2019. Chinese authorities brought the subsequent COVID-19 outbreak in Wuhan...
and other parts of China under control in the spring of 2020. Since then, China has maintained a “zero-COVID” approach to the virus, seeking to contain and stamp out even the smallest outbreaks. China appears committed to retaining that approach, even as it prepares to welcome athletes, team officials, and media from across the globe for the Olympics.

To implement its “zero-COVID” policy, China has so far relied on some of the world’s strictest pandemic measures, including keeping China’s borders largely closed since March 2020; imposing domestic travel restrictions, mandatory quarantines, contact tracing, mass testing, and lock-downs of neighborhoods and even whole cities as soon as cases appear; and promoting widespread vaccination and mask-wearing. On November 26, 2021, a little over two months before the 2022 Games were to open, the World Health Organization identified the highly transmissible Omicron variant of the virus as a “variant of concern.” Its spread appears to be responsible for several outbreaks in China that have led Chinese authorities to impose some of the largest-scale lockdowns of the pandemic, including in Xi’an, a city of 13 million, which has been under lockdown since December 22, 2021. Beijing reported its first Omicron variant case of the pandemic on January 15, 2022.

For the Olympics, the IOC, the IPC, and BOCOG have together published two “Beijing 2022 Playbooks,” presented as guides “to a safe and successful games.” As of mid-January 2022, each Playbook had gone through two editions. One Playbook addresses athletes and team officials. The other addresses “Broadcasters, International Federations, Marketing Partners, Olympic and Paralympic Family, Press, Workforce.” Measures related to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic dominate both Playbooks. From the Playbook for athletes and team officials, COVID-19-related measures include:

- A mandatory vaccination policy, with a requirement that individuals be fully vaccinated at least 14 days prior to departure for China in order to avoid quarantine on arrival. (The Playbook states that exceptions will be considered “on a case-by-case basis, based on medical reasons.”)
- For all participants who are not fully vaccinated, a mandatory 21-day quarantine upon arrival in Beijing in “a dedicated facility.”
- “Closed-loop systems,” created “to ensure there is no contact with the general public or anyone outside of the closed loop.” Games participants enter a loop on dedicated Games transportation carrying them either from the airport, or, if not fully vaccinated on arrival, from the dedicated facility where they will have spent their first 21 days in China in quarantine. Within the loop are the Olympic villages, contracted hotels, training venues, competition venues, and “other

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V. Lawrence.


permited destinations,” with participants moving among those places using dedicated Games transportation. Participants are warned that, “The closed loop system will apply during your entire stay in China.”

- Warnings to participants to, “Only carry out the activities relevant for your role at the Games, at places on the list of permited destinations” and “Avoid shouting, cheering and singing—show support or celebrate by clapping instead.”

- A requirement that participants download a BOCOG-developed smartphone application, “MY2022” and report body temperature and “any other COVID-19 symptoms” on the app’s “Health Monitoring System” daily. (In a report released on January 18, 2022, the Citizen Lab at the Munk School of Global Affairs & Public Policy at the University of Toronto alleged security flaws in the app. The report identifies “a simple but devastating flaw” in the encryption intended to protect audio and file transfers. It also flags risks from “data transmissions that MY2022 fails to protect with any encryption.” The report suggests that the alleged flaws might enable an attacker “to read a victim’s sensitive demographic, passport, travel, and medical information sent in a customs health declaration or to send malicious instructions to a victim after completing a form.” Citizen Lab says it reported the alleged flaws to BOCOG but as of January 18, 2022, BOCOG had not addressed them.75)

The Playbook for journalists and others who are not athletes and team officials includes the measures listed above. It also notes:

- “Spectator tickets will only be available to residents of Chinese mainland who meet the conditions of COVID-19 control. (On January 17, 2022, after the appearance of the Omnicron variant of the SARS-CoV-2 virus in Beijing, BOCOG announced an update to the spectator policy. It halted ticket sales and said the organizers would “invite groups of spectators to be present on site during the Games,” with the expectation that, “these spectators will strictly abide by the COVID-19 countermeasures before, during and after each event.”)76

- “Photographers are not permitted to access areas outside the closed loop of a venue, including public areas and spectator stands.”

- “When leaving a venue, accredited press can only take dedicated Games transport and travel only to places on the list of permited destinations.”

- “Reporters must keep two metres from the athletes at all times.”

The U.S. Congress and the 2022 Games77

Members of the 117th Congress have expressed a strong interest in the Beijing 2022 Winter Games. Some Members have introduced bills and resolutions related to the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics, held and testified at hearings on the Games, written Olympics-related letters, and made multiple public statements. Citing China’s poor human rights record, some Members have

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77 Written by CRS Specialist in Asian Affairs Susan V. Lawrence.
proposed diplomatic or full boycotts of the Beijing Games, and/or for the Games to be moved out of China, and have scrutinized the roles of U.S. firms serving as corporate sponsors for the Games. Some Members have also raised concerns about freedom of speech and the safety of U.S. athletes at the Games, given China’s authoritarian political environment. Those stances are discussed below. For a table of legislation in the 117th Congress related to the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics, see Appendix A.

**Congressional Calls for Diplomatic and Full Boycotts**

On May 10, 2021, nearly seven months before the Biden Administration’s December 6, 2021, announcement that it would not send diplomatic or official representation to the Beijing Winter Olympics, the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations reported comprehensive China-related legislation that would include support for a “diplomatic boycott” of the Games. The Senate subsequently incorporated the language of those Olympics-related provisions of the Strategic Competition Act of 2021 (S. 1169) into a second comprehensive China-related bill, the United States Innovation and Competition Act of 2021 (USICA) (S. 1260), which passed the Senate on June 8, 2021, by a vote of 68-32. Section 3312 of USICA would:

- state that it shall be the policy of the United States “to implement a diplomatic boycott” of the 2022 Winter Games and “to call for an end to the Chinese Communist Party’s ongoing human rights abuses, including the Uyghur genocide”; and
- bar the Secretary of State from obligating or expending federal funds “to support or facilitate” any U.S. government employee’s attendance at the Games, with exceptions. The exceptions include expenditures “to provide consular services or security to, or otherwise protect the health, safety, and welfare of, United States persons, employees, contractors, and their families.”

As reported by the House Foreign Affairs Committee on July 15, 2021, a third comprehensive China-related bill, Ensuring American Global Leadership and Engagement (EAGLE) Act (H.R. 3524), would state that it shall be the policy of the United States:

- “to implement a presidential and cabinet level diplomatic boycott” of the 2022 Winter Games;
- “to encourage other nations, especially democratic partners and allies, to do the same”; and
- “to call for an end to the Chinese Communist party’s ongoing human rights abuses, including the Uyghur genocide.”

Other legislation related to representation includes:

- H.Con.Res. 16 (introduced on February 11, 2021) which would call on the United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee “to support human rights and boycott the 2022 Winter Olympics if held in the People’s Republic of China”; and
- H.Res. 129 (introduced on February 15, 2021) which would urge that “the United States Olympic Committee and the Olympic Committees of other countries should withdraw from the 2022 Winter Olympic Games” if held in China; and
- H.Res. 812 (introduced on November 18, 2021), which would support “a diplomatic boycott of the 25th Olympic Winter Games and 25th Paralympic Winter Games in Beijing,” and encourage “the International Olympic Committee
to develop a framework for reprimanding or disqualifying host countries that are committing mass atrocities.”

In testimony before a May 18, 2021, hearing of the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission and the Congressional-Executive Commission on China (CECC) titled “China, Genocide and the Olympics,” House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, too, backed “a diplomatic boycott.” The Speaker described U.S. athletes as “sources of such pride” before stating, “Let’s honor them at home. Let’s not honor the Chinese government by having heads of state go to China to show their support for their athletes.” Having heads of state attend, Pelosi asserted, would “beg[] the question: What moral authority do you have to speak again about human rights any place in the world if you’re willing to pay your respects to the Chinese government as they commit genocide?”

Congressional Calls to Move the Olympics Out of China

More than a year before the Beijing 2022 Games were scheduled to open, some Members of the 117th Congress began introducing legislation to urge that the Games be moved out of China. Those items of legislation include:

- S.Res. 13 (introduced on January 22, 2021) and H.Con.Res. 16, H.Res. 160, and H.Res. 162 (all introduced in February 2021), which would urge the IOC to rebid the 2022 Games to “a country that recognizes and respects human rights;”
- H.Res. 129 (introduced on February 15, 2021), which would urge the U.S. Olympic Committee to “propose the transfer of the 2022 Winter Olympic Games to a site other than within the People’s Republic of China”;
- S.Res. 126 (introduced on March 18, 2021), which would urge the IOC “to consider relocating the 2022 Winter Olympics from Beijing to another suitable host city located outside of China, on account of the flagrant violations of human rights committed by the Government of the People’s Republic of China and the Chinese Communist Party in mainland China, Hong Kong, the Tibet Autonomous Region and other Tibetan areas, the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, and elsewhere”; and
- The EAGLE Act (as reported by the House Foreign Affairs Committee on July 15, 2021) and H.Res. 466 (introduced on June 8, 2021) which would call on the IOC to “initiate an emergency search process for suitable replacement facilities for the 2022 Winter Olympics if the Government of the PRC fails to release all arbitrarily held Uyghurs from mass detention centers and prisons.”

Congressional Scrutiny of Beijing 2022 Corporate Sponsors

The Beijing Winter Olympics Sponsor Accountability Act (H.R. 3645), introduced on May 28, 2021, would bar executive agencies from contracting for the procurement of goods or services with any person that has business operations with the Beijing Organising Committee for the 2022 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games or the International Olympic Committee.

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In July 2021, the Congressional-Executive Commission on China (CECC) convened a hearing on “Corporate Sponsorship of the 2022 Beijing Olympics,” calling as witnesses representatives of U.S.-based companies that sponsor the Olympics through The Olympic Partner (TOP) Programme of the IOC. (For a full list of TOP Programme sponsors, see Appendix C.) Statements at the hearing included the following.

- Senator Jeff Merkley, CECC’s chair, suggested that the hearing was “not meant to attack or embarrass individual U.S. companies but rather to explore how key Olympic movement stakeholders, corporate stakeholders, can use their influence to ensure the Olympics live up to its values.”

- Addressing the corporate witnesses, Rep. James P. McGovern, CECC’s co-chair, stated, “We hope you agree that your company’s reputational risk ... is not worth the association with an Olympics held in the midst of a genocide.”

- Representative Chris Smith, a CECC commissioner, referred to corporate sponsors of the Games as “in effect those who underwrite, and help legitimize the ‘Genocide Olympics.’”

Senator Merkley and Representatives McGovern and Smith followed up in January 2022 with a letter to the IOC raising concerns about possible forced labor in the supply chains of two BOCOG corporate sponsors that reportedly continue to source cotton from Xinjiang. (See “Boosting Chinese Brands” below.)

On January 13, 2022, 25 members of the House Committee on Energy and Commerce wrote to corporations participating in the IOC’s TOP Programme, asking each “how you will use your creative and financial investments in the games to shed light on what media coverage and commercials will likely not showcase—China’s history of human rights abuses and calculated deception.” Among the questions committee Members posed in each letter were, “Are you concerned that your investment and business in China has not resulted in China becoming a force for good in the international community, but instead has given the [Chinese Communist Party] legitimacy even as it engages in horrific human rights abuses and threatens democracies like Taiwan and Hong Kong?”

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Congressional Concerns Related to the Personal Security and Freedom of Expression of U.S. Athletes at the Games

Legislation related to freedom of expression in the context of the Games include:

- The EAGLE Act and H.Res. 466, which would call on the IOC to “propose a set of clear, executable actions to be taken by the International Olympic Committee upon infringement of freedom of expression by a host country’s government during any Olympics”;

- The EAGLE Act, which would call on the IOC to “rescind Rule 50 of the Olympic Charter, which restricts the freedom of expression by athletes when competing during Olympics events, and affirm the rights of athletes to political and other speech during athletic competitions, including speech that is critical of their host countries” (see “Rule 50.2 of the Olympic Charter” below);

- The American Values and Security in International Athletics Act (H.R. 1211), reported by the House Committee on Foreign Affairs on February 25, 2021, which would express the sense of Congress “that individuals representing the United States at international athletic competitions in foreign countries should have the opportunity to be informed about human rights and security concerns in such countries and how best to safeguard their personal security and privacy,” and would require the Secretary of State to devise and implement a strategy for disseminating such information to U.S. athletes; and

- H.Res. 837, which passed the House on December 8, 2021, by a unanimous vote of 428-0, and states, among other things, that it is the sense of the House that IOC’s role in “legitimizing” PRC claims about the safety of PRC tennis star Peng Shuai, “raise[s] questions about the organization’s ability and willingness to protect the rights of athletes participating in the 2022 Olympic and Paralympic games in Beijing.”

Some Members have raised concerns about China’s efforts to promote use of a new digital currency, the Digital Currency Electronic Payment, or “digital yuan,” urging the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Committee to bar U.S. athletes from acquiring or using digital yuan during the Beijing 2022 Games because of fears that it could be used for surveillance purposes.84 In response to an inquiry from the Wall Street Journal, a BOCOG representative stated in January 2022 that, “Athletes and other stakeholders of the Games will not be required to download or use China’s digital currency (digital yuan) during Games time.”85

In a January 13, 2022, letter to the CEO of the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Committee, Senator Rick Scott raised concern about BOCOG’s COVID-19 testing protocols and China’s “draconian...
technological surveillance,” asserting that the Communist Party of China “has a track record of stealing American citizens’ biological and personal information.”86 (For discussion of security concerns related to BOCOG’s MY2022 smartphone app, see “Challenges Related to the COVID-19 Pandemic” below.)

U.S. and International Stances on Official Representation at the Games87

The Biden Administration’s Decision

At a December 6, 2021, press briefing, White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki told reporters that the Biden Administration “will not send any diplomatic or official representation to the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics and Paralympic Games given the PRC’s ongoing genocide and crimes against humanity in Xinjiang and other human rights abuses.”88 (See textbox for the full text of Psaki’s announcement.) Psaki pushed back at a reporter’s characterization of the U.S. move as a “diplomatic boycott,” however, saying that that term “brings people back to 1980,” when the United States barred its athletes from competing at the Summer Olympic Games in Moscow. (For discussion of the U.S. boycott of the 1980 Moscow Olympics, see Appendix D.) For the 2022 Winter Games, Psaki said, the administration decided that “U.S. athletes—people who have been training, giving up a lot of blood, sweat, and tears preparing for these Olympics—should be able to go and compete.” She added that the Administration would “look forward to cheering for them from home.” Psaki said that the Biden Administration had informed allies of the U.S. decision and would “leave it to them to make their own decisions” about whether to follow suit.89

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Text of White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki’s Announcement Related to U.S. Participation in the Beijing 2022 Winter Games (December 6, 2021)90

“The Biden administration will not send any diplomatic or official representation to the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics and Paralympic Games given the PRC’s ongoing genocide and crimes against humanity in Xinjiang and other human rights abuses.

“The athletes on Team USA have our full support. We will be behind them 100 percent as we cheer them on from home. We will not be contributing to the fanfare of the Games.

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87 Written by CRS Specialist in Asian Affairs Susan V. Lawrence and CRS Analyst in Asian Affairs Ricardo Barrios.


90 Ibid.
“U.S. diplomatic or official representation would treat these Games as business as usual in the face of the PRC’s egregious human rights abuses and atrocities in Xinjiang. And we simply can’t do that.

“As the President has told President Xi, standing up for human rights is in the DNA of Americans. We have a fundamental commitment to promoting human rights. And we feel strongly in our position, and we will continue to take actions to advance human rights in China and beyond.”

The same day, State Department Spokesperson Ned Price clarified that the United States still intended “to provide consular and Diplomatic Security services to ensure that our athletes, coaches, trainers, staff associated with the U.S. Olympic team, that they are secure, that they have access to American citizen services.” He insisted that “this is a separate matter from official diplomatic representation at the Games.” On January 19, 2022, the South China Morning Post reported that China had approved visas for a U.S. delegation of 46, predominantly from the U.S. Department of State. The paper quoted the U.S. Embassy in Beijing as stating that the visa applications were for “consular and diplomatic security personnel” and that, “those personnel do not constitute official or diplomatic representation at the Games.”

Days after the White House announcement that it would be withholding official representation from the Games, Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo said the Biden Administration would not be pressuring corporations over their Games sponsorships. “What individual companies do is entirely up to them. We’re not going to pressure them one way or another,” Raimondo told Bloomberg News. She added, “So if a company decides—as many companies have—that they want to make a statement against human rights abuses, then that would be great. But we’re not going to be pushing anyone to make that decision.”

China’s Reaction to the Biden Administration Decision

Immediately following the U.S. announcement that it would forego diplomatic and official representation at the Games, a spokesperson for China’s Foreign Ministry, Zhao Lijian, characterized the decision as an attempt “to interfere with the Beijing Winter Olympics” and predicted that it would cause the United States “greater loss of moral authority and credibility.” He also accused the United States of “fabricating the biggest lie of the century about so-called ‘genocide’ in Xinjiang.” Zhao said that China had “lodged stern representations” with the U.S. government. He also said China would respond with unspecified “firm countermeasures” and warned that the U.S. position could “affect bilateral dialogue and cooperation in important areas and international and regional issues.”

As some U.S. allies indicated that they, too, would withhold official representation from the Games, a PRC Foreign Ministry spokesperson responded by stating, “political manipulation with

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the Olympic Games by the U.S., Australia, the U.K. and Canada wins no support and isolates the countries themselves. They will pay a price for their erroneous moves.”95

In a December 30, 2021, interview with Chinese state media, PRC State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi criticized, “The politicization of the Olympics by certain countries,” saying it “completely violates and discredits the Olympic spirit.” Wang also asserted, however, that the stances of the United States and other countries “will do no harm to a splendid Olympic Games.”96

The IOC’s Stance

In a December 6, 2021, statement responding to the Biden Administration’s announcement, the IOC stated, “The presence of government officials and diplomats is a purely political decision for each government, which the IOC in its political neutrality fully respects.” The IOC indicated that it interpreted the Administration’s announcement, which included support for the participation of U.S. athletes in the Games, as “mak[ing] clear that the Olympic Games and the participation of the athletes are beyond politics,” a stance the IOC said it welcomed.97

The U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Committee’s Stance

Following the Biden Administration’s announcement, Sarah Hirshland, CEO of the United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee (USOPC) issued a statement saying, “We greatly appreciate the unwavering support of the President and his administration and we know they will be cheering us on from home this winter. Competing on behalf of the United States is an honor and a privilege, and Team USA is excited and ready to make the nation proud.”98

In congressional testimony in May 2021, Hirshland stated that Members of Congress who had called for an athletic boycott of the Beijing 2022 Games were “understandably concerned about the conduct of the Chinese, including the oppression of the Uyghur population, which the United States has designated a genocide.” Hirshland stated her opposition to an athletic boycott of the Games, however, citing lessons from the U.S. boycott of the Moscow 1980 Olympics. She noted that 461 U.S. athletes who qualified to compete in Moscow that year were barred from doing so. “Many never had another chance to be part of Team USA and to compete at an Olympic Games,” Hirshland lamented. She argued that “their sacrifice did not even achieve the government’s policy goals” because “the Soviet Union stayed in Afghanistan for nearly another decade.”99 (For discussion of the U.S. boycott of the Moscow 1980 Games, see Appendix D.)
In an acknowledgement of risks to athletes’ personal information associated with participation in the Beijing 2022 Games, the USOPC reportedly issued an advisory document in September 2021 and a technical bulletin in December 2021 related to use of electronic devices in China. The bulletin warned, “every device, communication, transaction and online activity may be monitored. Your device(s) may also be compromised with malicious software, which could negatively impact future use.” USOPC advised athletes to use temporary (also known as “burner”) phones while in China. Canada, the Netherlands, and the UK have reportedly issued similar advice to their athletes.100

Select International Stances

The Biden Administration has not publicly called on other countries to join the United States in withholding official representation from the Beijing Winter Games. On December 6, 2021, State Department Spokesperson Ned Price stated, “When it comes to representation at the Games, this is a sovereign decision that each country needs to make.”101

Eleven countries other than the United States have so far indicated that they will not send official representatives to the Games:

- Several countries attributed their decisions primarily to reasons other than human rights (Belgium, Estonia, the Netherlands, New Zealand, and North Korea) or did not offer a reason (Lithuania). While not attributing their decisions to human rights, the Netherlands and New Zealand both mentioned human rights in their statements.
- Canada is the sole country to refer to its action as a “diplomatic boycott.” British Prime Minister Boris Johnson referred to the U.K.’s action as “effectively a diplomatic boycott.”
- China’s ally North Korea is the sole country to state that it will send neither officials nor athletes to Beijing. North Korea said it took its action “due to the manoeuvers of hostile forces and the world pandemic,” and offered praise for China’s policies.102
- The decisions of New Zealand and Lithuania preceded the announcement of the U.S. decision.
- Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom are members of the “Five Eyes” (FVEY) intelligence sharing grouping that also includes the United States.
- Belgium, Denmark, Estonia, Lithuania, and the Netherlands are among the 30 members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), of which the United States and Canada are also members. The five are also members of the 27-member European Union.
- Japan is one of the United States’ five treaty allies in Asia.

Details of all eleven countries’ statements are provided in Table 1 below. Countries are listed in the order in which they made their decisions public.

**Table 1. Countries Withholding Official Representation from the Beijing 2022 Games**

Listed in the order in which they publicly announced their positions

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<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Announcement date</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lithuania</td>
<td>12/2/2021</td>
<td>Following calls from Lithuanian Members of Parliament for Lithuania to boycott the Games over human rights concerns, the Baltic News Service reported that senior officials of the Lithuania’s Education, Science and Sport Ministry, including the minister, would not travel to Beijing for the Winter Games, although athletes would compete. The same day, Lithuanian Radio and Television cited representatives of Lithuania’s President and Foreign Minister, as saying that neither man would attend the Olympics. The news came as Lithuania, a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), was in the midst of a diplomatic and economic standoff with China over Lithuania’s decision to allow Taiwan to open a “Taiwanese Representative Office” in its capital, Vilnius.</td>
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<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>12/6/2021</td>
<td>New Zealand Deputy Prime Minister Grant Robertson stated that even before the U.S. announcement, his country had decided “that we won’t be represented at a ministerial level” at the Beijing 2022 Winter Games and had communicated that information to Beijing in October 2021. Robertson said the decision was “mostly to do with COVID and the fact the logistics of travel around Covid are not conducive to that kind of trip,” adding, “but we’ve made clear to China on numerous occasions our concerns about human rights issues.” A New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade spokesperson elaborated, stating, “We often don’t attend Winter Games at ministerial level, and especially in light of the global Covid situation, there are no plans to do so on this occasion.” The spokesperson noted, “The New Zealand Olympic Committee has sought accreditation for a small number of Embassy staff, including the Ambassador, to provide consular support to the team, should it be needed, as is standard practice for this kind of event.”</td>
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<td>Australia</td>
<td>12/7/2021</td>
<td>Noting “human rights abuses in Xinjiang and the many other issues that Australia has consistently raised” with China and the Chinese government’s unwillingness to discuss them, Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison stated, “It will come as no surprise that the Australian government will not be sending any official representatives to the forthcoming Winter Games in China.” Morrison said Australian athletes would compete, noting, “Australia’s a great sporting nation and I very much separate the issues of sport and these other political issues.”</td>
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<th>Country</th>
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<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>12/8/2021</td>
<td>Responding to questions from Members of Parliament concerned about China’s human rights record, U.K. Prime Minister Boris Johnson announced, “There will be effectively a diplomatic boycott of the winter Olympics in Beijing. No Ministers are expected to attend, and no officials.” With regard to athletes’ participation, Johnson stated, “I do not think that sporting boycotts are sensible, and that remains the policy of the Government.” 107</td>
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<td>Canada</td>
<td>12/8/2021</td>
<td>Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau cited “the repeated human rights violations by the Chinese government” in announcing that Canada “will not be sending any diplomatic representation to the Beijing Olympic and Paralympic Games this winter.” He said, “A diplomatic boycott doesn’t amount to a full boycott and Canadian athletes will still represent Canada at the 24th Olympic Winter Games.” 108 Trudeau added that athletes “will continue to have all of our fullest support.” 109</td>
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<tr>
<td>Estonia</td>
<td>12/12/2021</td>
<td>On December 12, 2021, Estonian President Alar Karis announced that he would not attend the Winter Olympics in Beijing, citing “political factors.” 110 A month later, on January 17, 2022, Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Kristina Ots told Estonian Public Broadcasting (ERR), “[t]he Ministry of Foreign Affairs does not know of any Estonian government members planning to participate in the Beijing Olympics.” Government Spokesperson Sten Otsmaa confirmed to the broadcaster that neither Prime Minister Kaja Kallas nor any government members were planning to attend the Games. 111</td>
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<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>12/14/2021</td>
<td>In response to questions from a Member of Belgium’s Chamber of Representatives, Belgian Prime Minister Alexander De Croo stated, “the federal government does not intend to send representation of any sort to the Winter Olympic Games in Beijing.” A spokesperson subsequently clarified, “Belgium regardless did not intend to send representation to China for two simple reasons: firstly, no delegation has ever been dispatched to the Winter Olympic Games, because typically only a few athletes participate. Secondly, the health situation does not permit it. No representation was sent to Tokyo this past summer for the same reasons.” 112</td>
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110 “President Alar Karis poliitilistel põhjustel Pekingi olimpiamängudele ei lihe” (“President Alar Karis Will Not Go to the Beijing Olympics for Political Reasons”), Postimees, December 12, 2021.  
Japan announced that it would not send government representatives to the Beijing Winter Olympics, but that several prominent Japanese citizens would attend. Those expected to travel to Beijing for the Games include the head of Japan’s Olympic Committee, the head of the country’s Paralympic Committee, and a member of the upper house of the Diet, Japan’s parliament, who served as the president of the organizing committee for the Tokyo 2020 Summer Games. Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida’s statement included a reference to human rights: “Japan believes that it is important that the universal values of freedom, respect for basic human rights and the rule of law be guaranteed in China, and we have been working directly with the Chinese side at various levels to promote this position held by Japan.”

North Korea’s state media reported that North Korea’s Ambassador to China delivered a letter to a senior Chinese sports official stating that North Korea would not attend the Games “due to the manoeuvres of hostile forces and the world pandemic.” The “hostile forces” language appears to refer to the IOC’s September 2021 decision to suspend North Korea’s National Olympic Committee (NOC) until the end of 2022, “as a result of the NOC’s unilateral decision not to participate in the Olympic Games Tokyo 2020.” The IOC had indicated that it would consider participation by individual North Korean athletes. The North Korean letter lauded China’s preparations for the 2022 Winter Games “under the correct leadership of Xi Jinping, general secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China,” and denounced “the U.S. and its vassal forces” for their anti-China smear campaign to block the successful holding of the Olympic Games.

A spokesperson for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands confirmed to Dutch news agency ANP that the country would not send an official government delegation to the Beijing 2022 Winter Games. According to ANP, “The Cabinet decided not to send a delegation because no Dutch spectators will be allowed to be present.” The spokesperson also told ANP that COVID-19 restrictions meant that it would be difficult for the Netherlands to engage with the government of China on “major concerns about the human rights situation in a meaningful way.”

Noting that, “It is no secret that we from the Danish side are very concerned about the human rights situation in China,” Danish Foreign Minister Jeppe Kofod said, “The government has decided that we will not attend the Winter Olympics in China.”

113 Satoshi Sugiyama and Jesse Johnson, “Japan Not Planning to Send Senior Officials to Beijing Olympics, Japan Times, December 24, 2021.
The European Parliament has supported broader participation in efforts to press China on human rights by withholding official representation at the Games. On July 8, 2021, it passed a non-binding resolution urging

[The European Commission, the Council of the European Union, and the Member States to decline invitations for government representatives and diplomats to attend the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics unless the Chinese Government demonstrates a verifiable improvement in the human rights situation in Hong Kong, the Xinjiang Uyghur Region, Tibet, Inner Mongolia and elsewhere in China.]

Nonetheless, most European Union governments have not announced plans to withhold official representation from the Games. Explaining why France would not do so, French President Emmanuel Macron stated, “You either have a complete boycott, and not send athletes, or you try to change things with useful actions.” Macron stated that he supported “action that has a useful outcome,” and said France would be working with the IOC on a charter to protect athletes. (Paris is scheduled to host the 2024 Summer Olympics.)

South Korean President Moon Jae-in said the United States had not requested that his country withhold official representation from the Games and “the Korean government is not considering it.” Asked about Moon’s statement, State Department Spokesperson Price said that the decision “is theirs to make. It is not for the U.S. or any other government to make” for them. High-profile figures who have committed to attend the opening ceremony for the Beijing Winter Games include U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, Russian President Vladimir Putin, Polish President Andrzej Duda, and Argentine President Alberto Fernandez. In remarks on January 13, 2022, Guterres stated that the Games are “an event that symbolizes the role of sports in bringing people together and in promoting peace, and it is in this strict context and without any political dimension that I intend to be present in the opening.”

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The International Olympic Committee and Human Rights

The IOC’s Evolving Approach to Human Rights

Cities accepted by the IOC as candidate cities must complete and submit a candidature questionnaire, which occurs at least seven years prior to the scheduled Olympics. Neither the questionnaire for the 2022 nor the 2024 Olympics included any reference to human rights. The 2026 questionnaire included two passages requiring host governments and cities to protect and respect human rights. Consistent with the absence of human rights from the 2022 candidature questionnaire, the host city contract (HCC) for the 2022 Olympics also does not mention human rights. On February 28, 2017, the IOC announced that henceforth—beginning with the 2024 host city contract—it would include in the HCC, among other items, a provision regarding human rights.

One of the core requirements for the 2024 Olympics, which will be held in Paris, includes protecting and respecting human rights. According to the 2024 Host City Contract-Principles, Paris, the host NOC, and the organizing committee of the Olympic Games (OCOG) (i.e., Paris 2024) shall ensure any violation of human rights is remedied in a manner consistent with international agreements, laws and regulations applicable in the Host Country and in a manner consistent with all internationally-recognised human rights standards and principles, including the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, applicable in the Host Country.

On December 1, 2018, the IOC announced it had established an IOC Advisory Committee on Human Rights and that HRH Prince Zeid Ra’ad Al Hussein, a former Jordanian diplomat and United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, had agreed to chair the committee. The IOC acknowledged that its decision to create the committee was a “direct result of Olympic Agenda 2020,” a set of 40 detailed recommendations “identified and collated through a collaborative and consultative process involving Olympic Movement stakeholders and outside

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125 Written by CRS Specialist in American National Government L. Elaine Halchin.
127 Ibid., p. 88.
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experts,” the overarching goal of which was to safeguard Olympic values and strengthen the role of sport in society. The IOC added that the decision to create an advisory committee “follows the inclusion of human rights standards into the ‘Operational Requirements’ of the Host City Contract for the Olympic Games 2024 and beyond.”

In addition to ensuring that it and the other relevant parties (e.g., Paris and the NOC) commit to “their responsibility to respect human rights,” Paris 2024 is responsible for developing and implementing a human rights strategy. Per the Host City Contract-Operational Requirements, which is dated June 2018, this strategy shall:

- Include detailed measures to be taken by the OCOG to identify potential human rights risks and avoid causing or contributing to adverse human rights impacts through its own activities relating to the management and delivery of the Games;
- Detail the processes and measures that will be implemented to address and remedy such adverse human rights impacts, if and when they occur;
- Seek to prevent or mitigate adverse human rights impacts directly linked to the OCOG’s operations, products or services through its business relationships with third parties;
- Rely on effective consultation with potentially impacted groups, internal and external communications and assessment; and
- Ensure transparent and timely reporting on the OCOG’s, Host City’s, Host NOC’s, Host NPC’s [National Paralympic Committee’s] and Host Country Authorities’ efforts to respect human rights with regard to Games-related activities, as well as service providers or other stakeholders assisting them in the Games delivery.

In 2019, the IOC commissioned Prince Zeid and Rachel Davis, Vice President of Shift, a nonprofit center that focuses on business and human rights, to develop a human rights strategy for the IOC. Their report, which was published in March 2020, notes that “the human rights impacts that could be connected to the [2022] Games are severe—as our consultations with expert civil society stakeholders also confirmed—and addressing them remains challenging.” One of the recommendations included in the report mentions Beijing:

The IOC may want to consider that: 1. The Human Rights Strategy commit[s] the IOC to an ongoing process of strengthening human rights due diligence across its operations, including more routinely integrating the perspectives of affected stakeholders, while

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132 Although the IOC referenced its Olympic Agenda 2020 in this statement, the agenda did not mention human rights. International Olympic Committee, “Olympic Agenda 2020,” at http://www.olympic.org/olympic-agenda-2020. The agenda is undated, but it was presented at the 127th IOC Session in December 2014.


135 Ibid.


focusing on a series of priorities in the first phase. These should include: a. Advancing the agreed strategic approach to engaging with Beijing 2022 on human rights, with support from the top levels of the organization and informed by the IOC’s own consultations with expert stakeholders.138

During a news conference in July 2020, Thomas Bach, President of the IOC, was asked whether the IOC had discussed with Chinese authorities China’s treatment of its Uyghur minority. Apparently referring to the IOC, he reportedly responded that its role is limited to “whatever is related to the Olympic Games rather than society as a whole.”139 In March 2021, Reuters reported that in response to a question “about claims of rights violations in China,” Bach said:140

We are taking this very seriously. . . . Human rights and labour rights and others are and will be part of the host city contract. We are working very closely with the organising committee. We are monitoring supply chains, labour rights, freedom of press and many other issues. This is our responsibility. . . . We are not a super world government where the IOC could solve or even address issues for which not a United Nations security council, no G7, no G20 has a solution. . . . This is in the remit of politics. We have to live up to our responsibilities in our areas of responsibility.141

Neither of the two IOC statements issued in January 2021 and May 2021 about the Beijing Games mentions human rights.142 Both statements concluded with the following sentence: “Beyond this, the two leaders discussed all other matters which are important to the success of the Olympic Games and the long-term mutual cooperation.”143

In an interview with the German press agency DPA on December 7, 2021, IOC President Bach described the IOC’s “responsibilities related to the Games” as including “no discrimination, freedom of the press, open internet, freedom of expression for the athletes.” He said the IOC was “in close contact with the organizing committee,” but added, “The IOC does not have the power and the means to change political systems. The political neutrality of the IOC and the Games applies here.”144

Rule 50.2 of the Olympic Charter

Rule 50.2 of the Olympic Charter—formerly known and sometimes still referred to as “Rule 50”—prohibits athletes and other accredited persons (e.g., coaches and trainers) from engaging in protests or demonstrations in certain Olympic venues.145 The rule states: “No kind of

138 Ibid., p. 32.
141 Ibid.
143 Ibid.
145 Although the Olympic Charter was amended earlier in 2021, creating Rule 50.1 and Rule 50.2 (this is the rule that prohibits protests and demonstrations), some publications or documents may still refer to “Rule 50.” International Olympic Committee, “IOC Athletes’ Commission’s Recommendations on Rule 50 and Athlete Expression at the Olympic Games Fully Endorsed by the IOC Executive Board,” press release, April 21, 2021, at https://olympics.com/
demonstration or political, religious or racial propaganda is permitted in any Olympic sites, venues or other areas.”

In 2019, the IOC’s Athletes’ Commission began drafting guidelines for Rule 50. The guidelines distinguish between protests and demonstrations, which are not permitted, and expressing one’s views, which is acceptable. The commission’s guidelines, which were released in January 2020, note that protests and demonstrations are prohibited during the Olympics, lists examples of Olympic venues where such activities are not permitted (e.g., field of play, Olympic Village, Olympic medal ceremonies, and all other official ceremonies), and provides examples of activities that constitute a protest (e.g., displaying a political message, making a gesture that is political in nature, and refusing to comply with Olympic ceremonies protocol). Noting that athletes should respect local laws, the guidelines also state that athletes may express their views in various settings, including press conferences, interviews, team meetings, and through digital or traditional media. Finally, the guidelines advise that if an individual, such as an athlete or other accredited participant, violates Rule 50, “each incident will be evaluated by their National Olympic Committee, International Federation and the IOC, and disciplinary action will be taken on a case-by-case basis as necessary.” (For its part, the USOPC has announced that “Team USA athletes will not be sanctioned by the USOPC for peacefully and respectfully demonstrating in support of racial and social justice for all human beings.”)

Groups of Olympic athletes, as well as a few individual athletes who competed in the 2020 Tokyo Summer Olympics, support the notion that Olympians may protest or demonstrate. On December 10, 2020, the Team USA Council on Racial and Social Justice released a statement regarding Rule 50 of the Olympic Charter. An excerpt reads as follows:

The Team USA Council on Racial and Social Justice, with support of the United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee and the Athletes’ Advisory Council, today released its recommendations related to Rule 50 and Section 2.2 to the International Olympic Committee and International Paralympic Committee, respectively, that requests to end the prohibition of peaceful demonstrations by team members at the Olympic and Paralympic Games. The Council’s recommendation is built on the foundation that athletes should have

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150 Ibid., p. 3.
the right to peacefully protest and demonstrate against racial and social injustices and to promote human dignity through global sport.152

Global Athlete, “an international athlete-led movement,” also objects to Rule 50. A Global Athlete press release stated, in part: “The International Olympic Committee’s (IOC) archaic approach to limiting athletes’ rights to freedom of expression is another sign of an outdated sport system that continues to suppress athletes’ fundamental rights.”153 In July 2020, the Los Angeles Times reported that Casey Wasserman, chairperson of the Los Angeles 2028 Organizing Committee of Olympic and Paralympic Games (LA28), had sent a letter to the president of the IOC the previous month, asking that the IOC “allow and encourage athletes to advocate against racism anywhere they can, including on and off the field of play.”154

Using a gesture and a written symbol, two American athletes may have violated Rule 50.2 during the 2020 Summer Olympics (which were held in 2021 due to the pandemic). Raven Saunders, who won a silver medal in shot-put, crossed her arms over her head while standing on the medal podium.155 A second Team USAMember, American fencer Race Imboden, had a symbol written on the back of his right hand when he appeared besides his teammates on the podium with their bronze medals in men’s team foil.156

The Government of China’s Goals for the Games157

The government of China appears to see Beijing’s hosting of the Games for a second time as serving multiple national purposes. They include spurring progress on one of Communist Party of China (CPC) General Secretary Xi Jinping’s signature initiatives, the development of a new megacity in north China; boosting national pride, to be harnessed in the drive for realization of Xi’s “Chinese dream of national rejuvenation”;158 demonstrating to the world the alleged superiority of China’s political system; boosting the global profile of Chinese brands; and developing winter sports in China, including in Xinjiang. With the CPC due to convene its 20th National Congress in the last quarter of 2022, Xi is believed to be seeking to ride national pride to reelection at the Congress to an unusual third term as China’s top leader.159 China’s goals for the Games are discussed below.


157 Written by CRS Specialist in Asian Affairs Susan V. Lawrence.


159 For more information on the Communist Party of China’s 20th National Congress, see CRS Report R46977, China’s Political System in Charts: A Snapshot Before the 20th Party Congress, by Susan V. Lawrence and Mari Y. Lee.
Catalyzing a New Northern Megacity

In “important instructions” that Xi issued in November 2015, ahead of the first meeting of the CPC’s Central Leading Group for the Work of the 24th Olympic Winter Games, he presented hosting the 2022 Games as an “important measure to implement the strategy for coordinated development of Beijing, Tianjin, and Hebei,” the latter being China’s capital, a nearby port city, and the province that surrounds them.\(^\text{160}\) Xi envisions that “integrated development” yielding a new metropolitan area of 130 million people, to be known as “Jing-jin-ji,” that will serve to ease population pressure in the capital.\(^\text{161}\) In part to catalyze Xi’s vision, China’s Olympic planners selected three locations for Olympic venues that are distant from each other: central Beijing; Yanqing, an outlying district of Beijing adjacent to the border with Hebei Province; and Chongli District of Hebei Province’s Zhangjiakou, a city 125 miles from Beijing.\(^\text{162}\) A new high-speed rail line and a new expressway link them. China’s government presents its leveraging of the Games for the development of Jing-jin-ji as consistent with the International Olympic Committee’s (IOC’s) Olympic Agenda 2020, which supports Olympic projects “that are better aligned with future hosts’ long-term development plans.”\(^\text{163}\)

Boosting National Pride

Xi has frequently spoken of the national morale-boosting power of the Olympics. In 2016, he predicted that having the world’s eyes on Beijing for the Games “is bound to greatly stimulate the national spirit and will be conducive to rallying the sons and daughters of China at home and abroad to strive hard in unity for the achievement of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.”\(^\text{164}\) The pursuit of “rejuvenation” is a Party rubric for fostering national effort to propel China “closer to center stage” in the world by 2049, the hundredth anniversary of the 1949 founding of the People’s Republic of China (PRC).\(^\text{165}\) Xi has said that achieving rejuvenation will require sacrifices and hard work.\(^\text{166}\) The U.S. Department of Defense characterizes the Chinese Communist Party’s quest for rejuvenation as “a determined pursuit of political and social modernity that includes far-ranging efforts to expand China’s national power, perfect its governance systems, and revise the international order.”\(^\text{167}\)

\(^{160}\) “习近平对办好北京冬奥会作出重要指示” (“Xi Jinping Issues Important Instructions on Doing a Good Job Holding the Beijing Winter Olympics”), Xinhua, November 24, 2015.

\(^{161}\) Ian Johnson, “As Beijing Becomes a Supercity, the Rapid Growth Brings Pains,” New York Times, July 19, 2015. The Jing-jin-ji name derives from the proposed megacity’s component parts: Beijing (“Jing”), the port of Tianjin (“Jin”), and Hebei Province, whose traditional name is “Ji.”


Showcasing the Alleged Superiority of China’s Political System

Xi has sought to present China’s Olympic preparations, in the midst of a global pandemic, as demonstrating the superiority of China’s political system. Inspecting competition venues in January 2021, Xi suggested that China’s speedy construction of Olympic-related infrastructure and rapid training of winter sport athletes “fully reflects the Party’s leadership and the nation’s system, and the institutional advantages of being able to focus efforts to do big things.” China’s state news agency amplified Xi’s words in a dispatch that declared the “smooth progress” of preparatory work for the Olympics to be “a profound manifestation of the advantages of our country’s system.”

Boosting Chinese Brands

The Beijing Organising Committee for the 2022 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games (BOCOG) has presented corporate sponsorship of the Games as an opportunity to “showcase to the world the strength and appeal of Chinese brands,” and share “extensive benefits from the Olympic brand, and achieve both economic and social returns.” As of January 2022, BOCOG had signed 44 corporate sponsors, almost all of which are based in China.

BOCOG’s official partners include iFLYTEK Corporation, exclusive supplier of automated translation software to the Games. The U.S. Department of Commerce’s Bureau of Industry and Security added iFLYTEK to its Entities List in 2019, saying the firm was “implicated in human rights violations and abuses in the implementation of China’s campaign of repression, mass arbitrary detention, and high-technology surveillance against Uighurs, Kazakhs, and other members of Muslim minority groups” in Xinjiang.

BOCOG corporate partners also include Anta Sports Products, official sportswear uniform supplier to the Tokyo 2020 Olympics and Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics, and Hengyuanxiang (HYX) Group, supplier of formal IOC uniforms at both Olympics. Both companies reportedly continue to use cotton produced in Xinjiang, prompting some Members of Congress to warn of “a worrisome possibility that IOC personnel or others attending the 2022 Olympic Games will be...”

168 “习近平在北京河北考察并主持召开北京 2022 年冬奥会和冬残奥会筹办工作汇报会时强调 坚定信心奋发有为精益求精战胜困难 全力做好北京冬奥会冬残奥会筹办工作” (Xi Jinping Conducted an Inspection Tour in Beijing and Hebei and Presided over a Meeting to Hear About the Work of the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics and Paralympics, Emphasizing Strengthening Confidence, Working Hard, Striving for Perfection, Overcoming Difficulties, and Doing Good Preparatory Work for the Beijing Winter Olympics and Paralympics; Han Zheng Attended the Meeting”), Xinhua, January 20, 2021.


wearing clothing contaminated by forced labor.”175 (Anta is the owner of several popular Western brands, including Arc’teryx.)176

Two Chinese companies, Alibaba Group Holdings Ltd. and China Mengniu Dairy Company Ltd., are among 16 businesses that are worldwide sponsors of the Games through participation in the IOC’s TOP Programme. Mengniu’s participation is through a joint agreement it inked with the Coca-Cola Company, whose headquarters is in the United States, in 2019.177 (For a full list of corporate sponsors of the Games, see Appendix C.)

Promoting Winter Sports, Including in Xinjiang

Xi has stated that he sees the 2022 Olympics as an opportunity to promote mass participation in winter sports and to develop competitive Chinese talent in snow sports, in which China sees itself as relatively weak. In 2016, Xi presented popularizing winter sports as a way “to strengthen the physique of the people.”178 In January 2021, Xi declared that building China into a “sporting power” was an important part of “comprehensively building a modern socialist country.”179

Xinjiang has been a focus for the efforts to popularize winter sports because unlike most of China, areas of Xinjiang are endowed with natural snow suited to winter sports. According to Xinjiang Daily, Xinjiang’s government has been building winter sports facilities to support the Olympics. In 2017, the General Administration of Sport of China designated an ice sports center and two ski resorts in Xinjiang as “national sport training bases.” A ski resort in Xinjiang’s Altay Prefecture later also received that designation.180 Altay, located in northern Xinjiang, borders Russia, Kazakhstan, and Mongolia, and has a majority ethnic Kazakh population.181 In addition to hosting national team athletes, the prefecture has reportedly been training locals to serve as Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics volunteers and offering ski lessons to students.182


179 “习近平在北京河北考察并主持召开北京 2022 年冬奥会和冬残奥会筹办工作汇报会...” (‘Xi Jinping Conducted an Inspection Tour in Beijing and Hebei and Presided Over a Meeting to Hear About the Work of the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics and Paralympic Winter Games Preparations,...’), Xinhua, January 20, 2021.


As the Beijing 2022 Olympic and Paralympic Games get underway, Congress may consider such questions as:

- Should congressional leadership take a position on Member travel to attend the XXIV Olympic Winter Games and the XIII Paralympic Winter Games in Beijing?
- Has the USOPC done enough to prepare U.S. athletes for potential risks associated with their participation in the Beijing 2022 Games? Such risks may include:
  1. health risks related to the COVID-19 pandemic;
  2. reputational risks related to engagement with corporate sponsors under U.S. sanctions (iFLYTEK) or dependent on supply chains that may include forced labor;
  3. personal security risks related to PRC surveillance and PRC authorities’ intolerance of expression on topics the PRC government deems sensitive, such as human rights; and
  4. risks related to disclosure of personal information and health data, such as those associated with COVID-19 testing and with mandatory use of the BOCOG-developed MY2022 smartphone app.
- How can Congress judge whether the Biden Administration decision to withhold official and diplomatic representation from the Beijing 2022 Games has been effective in serving as a rebuke of China over its human rights record? To what extent might any such rebuke be undercut by the presence at the Games opening ceremony of the U.N. Secretary-General and official representatives from close U.S. allies, such as France and South Korea?
- Has scrutiny of the Games’ corporate sponsors by some Members of Congress resulted in changes in the practices of those sponsors with regard to China and human rights? Should Congress take other steps to encourage corporations to prioritize human rights with regard to the Games? If so, what should those steps be? To what degree might such efforts undermine the competitiveness of U.S. brands in the PRC marketplace? How important a consideration should U.S. corporate competitiveness be in congressional deliberations?
- In June 2019, the IOC adopted “a flexible new approach to future host elections,” and it used this new approach in selecting Brisbane, Australia, to host the 2032 Summer Games and Paralympics. Despite the change in election procedures for host cities, should Congress seek ways to ensure authoritarian countries are not awarded the right to host future Olympics? Given that the IOC is an independent international organization, would such an effort be feasible? Or

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183 Karen M. Sutter, CRS Specialist in Asian Trade and Finance, and Michael D. Sutherland, Analyst in International Trade and Finance, contributed to this section.

might Congress consider supporting what some have proposed: establish permanent hosts for the summer and winter Olympics? Such an arrangement would, one commentator argues, “cut costs, environmental damage and displacement” and “end the churn of a bidding process that invites corruption.” Alternatively, given the interconnectedness of the world, the same commentator suggests holding “individual events in already built sites across the globe.”

- The EAGLE Act (H.R. 3524), and H.Res. 466, would call on the IOC to “propose a set of clear, executable actions to be taken by the International Olympic Committee upon infringement of freedom of expression by a host country’s government during any Olympics.” What such actions might be most effective?

- The EAGLE Act would also call on the IOC to “rescind Rule 50 of the Olympic Charter, which restricts the freedom of expression by athletes when competing during Olympics events, and affirm the rights of athletes to political and other speech during athletic competitions, including speech that is critical of their host countries.” Should Congress engage the IOC further or directly on the subject? (See “Rule 50.2 of the Olympic Charter” above.)

- What actions, if any, might the United States consider taking in the event China seeks to use its domestic laws to “punish” any member of Team USA who speaks out on a sensitive issue?  

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## Appendix A. Legislation in the 117th Congress

### Table A-1. Legislation in the 117th Congress Related to the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics and Paralympics

Arranged by chamber and type of legislation, and chronologically by date introduced

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number and Sponsor</th>
<th>Latest Action</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H.R. 1211 (McCaul)</td>
<td>Ordered to be reported by the House Committee on Foreign Affairs 2/25/2021</td>
<td>The American Values and Security in International Athletics Act. (Official title: To direct the Department of State to ensure persons representing the United States in international athletic competitions in certain countries are appropriately informed, and for other purposes.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H.R. 3524 (Meeks)</td>
<td>Ordered to be reported by the House Committee on Foreign Affairs 7/15/2021</td>
<td>The Ensuring American Global Leadership and Engagement (EAGLE) Act (H.R. 3524) (Section 316(b) would include sense of Congress statements, including that the International Olympic Committee should “initiate an emergency search process for suitable replacement facilities for the 2022 Winter Olympics if the Government of the PRC fails to release all arbitrarily held Uyghurs from mass detention centers and prisons”; “propose a set of clear, executable actions to be taken by the International Olympic Committee upon infringement of freedom of expression by a host country’s government during any Olympics”; and “rescind Rule 50 of the Olympic Charter, which restricts the freedom of expression by athletes when competing during Olympics events, and affirm the rights of athletes to political and other speech during athletic competitions, including speech that is critical of their host countries.”) (Section 316(c) would state that it shall be the policy of the United States “to implement a presidential and cabinet level diplomatic boycott” of the 2022 Winter Games; “to encourage other nations, especially democratic partners and allies, to do the same”; and “to call for an end to the Chinese Communist party’s ongoing human rights abuses, including the Uyghur genocide.”)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H.R. 3645 (Waltz)</td>
<td>Introduced 5/28/2021</td>
<td>Beijing Winter Olympics Sponsor Accountability Act (Official title: To prohibit the Federal Government from contracting with persons that have business operations with the Beijing Organising Committee for the 2022 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games or the International Olympic Committee, and for other purposes.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H.R. 6417 (Gallagher)</td>
<td>Introduced 1/18/2022</td>
<td>Free Peng Shuai Act (Official title: To require the imposition of sanctions pursuant to the Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act to combat the perpetuation of human rights violations in the People’s Republic of China by certain members of the International Olympic Committee, and for other purposes.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H.R. 6433 (Waltz)</td>
<td>Introduced 1/19/2022</td>
<td>Irresponsible Olympic Collaboration Act (IOC Act) (Official title: To amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to eliminate the tax exemption of the International Olympic Committee and similar organizations.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H.Con.Res. 16 (Reschenthaler)</td>
<td>Introduced 2/11/2021</td>
<td>Urging that the International Olympic Committee rebid the 2022 Olympic Winter Games, and expressing the sense of Congress that the United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee should not participate if the Games are held in the People’s Republic of China and that the United States Government should lead an international boycott if the Games are held in the People’s Republic of China, and for other purposes.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number and Sponsor</td>
<td>Latest Action</td>
<td>Title</td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>H.Res. 129 (Waltz)</td>
<td>Introduced 2/15/2021</td>
<td>Urging the United States Olympic Committee, the International Olympic Committee, and the Olympic Committees of other countries to take certain actions with respect to the 2022 Winter Olympic Games.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H.Res. 160 (Perry)</td>
<td>Introduced 2/24/2021; Motion to discharge committee filed 5/11/2021</td>
<td>Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the International Olympic Committee should rebid the 2022 Winter Olympic Games to be hosted by a country that recognizes and respects human rights.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H.Res. 162 (Waltz)</td>
<td>Introduced 2/21/2021</td>
<td>Urging that the International Olympic Committee rebid the 2022 Olympic Winter Games, and expressing the sense of Congress that the United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee should not participate if the Games are held in the People’s Republic of China and that the United States Government should lead an international boycott if the Games are held in the People’s Republic of China, and for other purposes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H.Res. 466 (Malinowski)</td>
<td>Introduced 6/8/2021</td>
<td>Urging the International Olympic Committee to take into consideration the mass detention of Uyghurs and consider all options to uphold the fundamental rights of persecuted minorities in China ahead of the 2022 Olympic Games.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H.Res. 812 (Langevin)</td>
<td>Introduced 11/18/2021</td>
<td>Supporting a diplomatic boycott of the XXIV Olympic Winter Games and XIII Paralympic Winter Games in Beijing, and encouraging the International Olympic Committee to develop a framework for reprimanding or disqualifying host countries that are committing mass atrocities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H.Res. 837 (Wexton)</td>
<td>Passed/agreed to in House 12/8/2021 on vote of 428-0</td>
<td>Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that Beijing should immediately guarantee the safety and freedom of tennis star Peng Shuai. (Amended title)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.1169 (Menendez)</td>
<td>Reported by Senate Committee on Foreign Relations 5/10/2021</td>
<td>Strategic Competition Act of 2021. (Official title as introduced: A bill to address issues involving the People’s Republic of China.) (Sec. 312(a) would state that it shall be the policy of the United States “to implement a diplomatic boycott” of the 2022 Winter Games and “call for an end to the Chinese Communist Party’s ongoing human rights abuses, including the Uyghur genocide.” Section 312(b) would bar the Secretary of State from obligating or expending federal funds “to support or facilitate” any U.S. government employee’s attendance at the Games, with exceptions.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S. 1260 (Schumer)</td>
<td>Passed Senate 6/8/2021 on vote of 68-32</td>
<td>United States Innovation and Competition Act of 2021. (Section 3312(a) would state that it shall be the policy of the United States “to implement a diplomatic boycott” of the 2022 Winter Games and “call for an end to the Chinese Communist Party’s ongoing human rights abuses, including the Uyghur genocide.” Section 3312(b) would bar the Secretary of State from obligating or expending federal funds “to support or facilitate” any U.S. government employee’s attendance at the Games, with exceptions.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.Res. 13 (Rick Scott)</td>
<td>Introduced 1/22/2021</td>
<td>A resolution expressing the sense of the Senate that the International Olympic Committee should rebid the 2022 Winter Olympic Games to be hosted by a country that recognizes and respects human rights.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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### Number and Sponsor

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number and Sponsor</th>
<th>Latest Action</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| S.Res. 126 (Rubio) | Introduced 3/18/2021 | A resolution condemning the crackdown by the Government of the People’s Republic of China and the Chinese Communist Party in Hong Kong, including the arrests of pro-democracy activists and repeated violations of the obligations of that Government undertaken in the Sino-British Joint Declaration of 1984 and the Hong Kong Basic Law.  

(A “resolved” clause would call on the U.S. Government “to urge the International Olympic Committee to consider relocating the 2022 Winter Olympics from Beijing to another suitable host city located outside of China, on account of the flagrant violations of human rights committed by the Government of the People’s Republic of China and the Chinese Communist Party in mainland China, Hong Kong, the Tibet Autonomous Region and other Tibetan areas, the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, and elsewhere.”) |

| S.Res. 474 (Rick Scott) | Introduced 12/8/2021 | A resolution demanding that the Communist Party of China prove that Peng Shuai is free from censorship, coercion, and intimidation and fully investigate the sexual assault allegations against former Vice Premier Zhang Gaoli. |

**Source:** Congress.gov
Appendix B. Official PRC Bodies Leading Planning for the Games

A high-level Chinese Communist Party body, the Central Leading Group for the Work of the 24th Olympic Winter Games, is overseeing preparations in China. The Central Leading Group is headed by Han Zheng, China’s seventh-most-senior official and a member of the Party’s top decisionmaking body, the seven-man Political Bureau (Politburo) Standing Committee. His deputies are both members of the Party’s second-most senior decisionmaking body, the 25-member Politburo.

Table B-1. Leadership of the Chinese Communist Party’s Central Leading Group for the Work of the 24th Olympic Winter Games

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Leading Group Position</th>
<th>Other Positions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Han Zheng</td>
<td>Head</td>
<td>Party Politburo Standing Committee Member; Vice Premier of the State Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sun Chunlan</td>
<td>Deputy Head</td>
<td>Party Politburo Member; Vice Premier of the State Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cai Qi</td>
<td>Deputy Head</td>
<td>Party Politburo Member; Beijing Party Secretary; President and Party Secretary of the Beijing Organizing Committee for the Olympic Games (BOCOG)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Sources:** Xinhua and the Beijing Government website, http://www.beijing.gov.cn/gongkai/sld/.

**Note:** Following Chinese convention, family names precede given names.

The international-facing Chinese entity in charge of planning for the Olympics is the Beijing Organising Committee for the 2022 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games (BOCOG), which answers to the Central Leading Group. In addition to serving as a deputy head of the Party’s Central Leading Group for the Games, Beijing Party chief Cai Qi also serves as President and Party Secretary of BOCOG.

Table B-2. Leadership of the Beijing Organising Committee for the 2022 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games (BOCOG)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>BOCOG Position</th>
<th>Other Positions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cai Qi</td>
<td>President; Party Secretary</td>
<td>Party Politburo Member; Beijing Party Secretary; Deputy Head, Party Central Leading Group for the Work of the 24th Olympic Winter Games</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gou Zhongwen</td>
<td>Executive President</td>
<td>Party Central Committee Member; Minister and Party Secretary, General Administration of Sport of China; President, Chinese Olympic Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chen Jining</td>
<td>Executive President; Deputy Party Secretary</td>
<td>Party Central Committee Member; Beijing Mayor and Deputy Party Secretary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wang Zhengpu</td>
<td>Executive President; Deputy Party Secretary</td>
<td>Party Central Committee Member; Hebei Province Governor and Deputy Party Secretary</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

187 Compiled by CRS Specialist in Asian Affairs Susan V. Lawrence.
### The Beijing 2022 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games: Issues for Congress

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>BOCOG Position</th>
<th>Other Positions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Zhang Haidi</td>
<td>Executive President</td>
<td>Chairperson of the China Disabled Persons’ Federation; Member of the Standing Committee of the National Committee of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Sources:** Websites of BOCOG (https://www.beijing2022.cn/en/about_us/leadership.htm), the Beijing Government, General Administration of Sport of China, Hebei Province Government, and the CPPCC.  
**Note:** Following Chinese convention, family names precede given names.
Appendix C. Corporate Sponsors of the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics and Paralympics

The Olympic Partners (TOP) Programme

Established in 1985, the TOP Programme is the IOC’s “highest level of Olympic sponsorship, granting category-exclusive marketing rights to the Summer, Winter and Youth Olympic Games to a select group of global partners.” This program operates on a four-year term, which coincides with the Olympiad. The duration of the TOP Programme agreements means that a program participant has agreed to provide support for more than one Olympic Games.

TOP Programme partners provide funding, technical services, or products. For example, since 1932, OMEGA has served as the official timekeeper of the Olympic Games on 28 occasions; and the Allianz Group “collaborates with the IOC to provide insurance solutions and services to support the Olympic Movement,” including the Organising Committees of the Olympic Games (OCOGs). The IOC shares revenue generated by the TOP Programme with the OCOGs (e.g., Beijing Organizing Committee for the Olympic Games) and the Olympic Movement. TOP Programme marketing rights accounted for 18% of the IOC’s revenue during the most recent period (2013-2016) for which data are available; by comparison, broadcast rights accounted for 73% during the same period.

With the exception of Dow Inc. and General Electric Co., all the TOP Programme participants are also Worldwide Paralympic Partners. Ottobuck, a supplier of prosthetics and orthotics, is a Worldwide Paralympic Partner but not a TOP partner.

189 Written by CRS Specialist in American National Government L. Elaine Halchin.


192 See footnote 15 for the description of “Olympic Movement.”


### Table C-1. Participants in the IOC’s TOP Programme

As of the publication of this report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company or Brand</th>
<th>Location of Headquarters</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Airbnb, Inc.</td>
<td>United States of America</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alibaba Group Holdings Ltd.</td>
<td>China</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Allianz Group</td>
<td>Germany</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atos Origin</td>
<td>France</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Bridgestone Group</td>
<td>Japan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Coca-Cola Company</td>
<td>United States of America</td>
<td>Joint agreement with China Mengniu Dairy Company Ltd.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dow Inc.</td>
<td>United States of America</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Electric Co. (GE)</td>
<td>United States of America</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intel Corp.</td>
<td>United States of America</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China Mengniu Dairy Company Ltd.</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>Joint agreement with The Coca-Cola Company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OMEGA</td>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>OMEGA is a brand of the Swatch Group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panasonic Corporation</td>
<td>Japan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Procter &amp; Gamble Company (P&amp;G)</td>
<td>United States of America</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samsung Electronics Co., Ltd.</td>
<td>South Korea</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toyota Motor Corporation</td>
<td>Japan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visa International</td>
<td>United States of America</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Sources:**
# BOCOG Corporate Sponsors

**Table C-2. Beijing 2022 Corporate Sponsors**  
As of January 12, 2022

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category of Sponsorship</th>
<th>Sponsors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Official Exclusive Suppliers (9)</strong></td>
<td>EF Education First, iFLYTEK Corporation, China Post, Hylink Group, Snickers, Hongyuan Group, 3TREES (Sankeshu) Paint, Dongdao Creative Branding Group, and BOSS Zhipin (online recruitment platform).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix D. Historic Approaches to Sports and Human Rights: Two Case Studies

Russia: 1980 Summer Olympics

In December 1979, the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan to bolster a faltering communist regime that had come to power a year before. In response to the invasion, President Jimmy Carter took several measures, including calling on the U.S. NOC, then known as the United States Olympic Committee (USOC), to boycott the 1980 Summer Olympics (officially known as the Games of the XXII Olympiadi) in Moscow. Although the USOC supported the President’s request, President Carter reportedly was prepared to use emergency power authorities, if necessary, to bar U.S. athletes’ travel to the Soviet Union.

The U.S. boycott unfolded in the first months of 1980. On January 20, President Carter wrote the USOC, urging it to propose to the International Olympic Committee (IOC) that the Summer Olympics be cancelled or moved to another country “if Soviet troops do not fully withdraw from Afghanistan within the next month.” Shortly after, the House and Senate passed separate versions of a concurrent resolution in support of the boycott by votes of 386-12 and 88-4, respectively (H.Con.Res. 249). In February, the IOC resolved not to transfer, cancel, or postpone the Summer Olympics and the Soviet Union ignored the deadline to withdraw from Afghanistan. As a result, President Carter reiterated the United States’ intent to boycott the Moscow Olympics. On April 12, the USOC voted by a 2-to-1 margin in favor of the boycott.

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197 Written by CRS Specialist in Russian and European Affairs Cory Welt.
198 Afghan opposition to the Soviet invasion turned into a military resistance movement that ultimately cost the USSR an estimated 15,000 combat casualties and led to its withdrawal from Afghanistan in 1989. Although actors from a wide spectrum of Afghan politics opposed the Soviet invasion, Islamist elements (many based in Pakistan) dominated the anti-Soviet opposition due to the support they attracted in terms of money, arms, and manpower from abroad, including the United States. For overviews, see Gregory Feifer, The Great Gamble: The Soviet War in Afghanistan (New York: HarperCollins, 2009); and Rodric Braithwaite, Afghantsy: The Russians in Afghanistan 1979-89 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).
The U.S.-led boycott had mixed support internationally. According to the IOC, “67 nations did not participate [in the Games], with 45 to 50 of these nations likely being absent because of the U.S.-led boycott.” According to the State Department, the “closest U.S. allies” to join the boycott were Canada, West Germany, and Israel. China also boycotted. Although many European states (and Australia and New Zealand) sent athletes to compete, several of them did not participate in the Opening Ceremony or had their athletes participate under Olympic or NOC flags rather than their national flags.

The boycott also was somewhat controversial domestically. Although the media and public opinion generally supported the boycott, several USOC members and many athletes expressed disapproval or resentment, either at the time or subsequently. In May 1980, 25 athletes sued the USOC for preventing them from competing in the Olympics; a U.S. district court dismissed the case.

In 1984, the Soviet Union reciprocated with its own boycott of the 1984 Summer Olympic Games in Los Angeles. The Soviet leadership denied that their boycott was a direct response to the 1980 boycott and instead cited concerns about the “security” of Soviet participants and the possibility of anti-Soviet protests. Around a dozen countries followed the Soviet Union’s lead.

South Africa: Anti-Apartheid-Era Sports Boycott Movement

From 1908 to 1960, South Africa sent only White athletes to participate in the Olympic Games. After 1948, when the South African government began to legally establish apartheid—a system of racial segregation and discrimination-based White minority rule—international support for banning South Africa from international sports competitions grew. Contributing factors included South African anti-apartheid advocacy groups’ efforts to oppose apartheid in sports; the growth of African anti-colonial independence efforts and anti-apartheid sports boycott efforts led by independent African governments; African National Congress and aligned global anti-apartheid movement efforts to end apartheid; the rising influence of the African-American-centered U.S. civil rights movement; and Cold War political rivalries. Starting in the mid-1950s, multiple international sports federations expelled South Africa or refused to allow South Africa membership in their associations or participation in these entities’ sports competitions.

209 Written by CRS Specialist in African Affairs Nicolas Cook.
210 Floris J.G. van der Merwe, “Africa’s First Encounter with the Olympic Games in ... 1904,” Journal of Olympic History (JOH), September 1999.
211 After initial efforts by the international federations for football and table tennis in the late 1950s—later followed by similar actions by nearly 30 international sports federations—the apartheid government denied passports to black and colored athletes seeking to compete internationally and advocates supporting them. B. Kidd, “The Campaign Against Sport in South Africa,” International Journal (43:4), 1988; and Muriel Finnigan, Chapter 7, “Case Study—South
After an unsuccessful effort by anti-apartheid sports advocates and some governments to press the IOC to ban South Africa from the 1960 Olympics, pressure grew on the IOC to counter apartheid. The IOC decided not to invite South Africa to participate in the 1964 and 1968 Olympics, and in 1970, it expelled South Africa’s NOC from the Olympic Movement. These decisions may not have been made absent substantial international pressure on the IOC.\(^2\) Several key IOC leaders, some historical analyses suggest, viewed apartheid as an internal political South African matter outside the IOC’s jurisdiction, and acted to counter apartheid in sports only when forced to do so by direct political pressure and when confronted with evidence suggesting that the apartheid sports system violated the Olympic Charter.\(^3\) After the IOC expelled South Africa in 1970, efforts to expand boycotts of South African athletes and sports bodies continued. The U.N. General Assembly, for instance, adopted resolutions opposing and/or condemning apartheid in sports, and 31 countries boycotted the 1976 Summer Olympics in Montreal, Canada.\(^4\)

How direct a role the Olympic and broader anti-apartheid sports boycott movement played in forcing an end to apartheid is difficult to determine, as its effects cannot be clearly differentiated from those of diverse parallel economic boycotts and economic and political sanctions on South Africa’s apartheid government. These sports boycott efforts, however, demonstrably kept that government’s persistent and lengthy resistance to integration under intense and enduring international public attention.

Eventually, the boycott movement prompted the apartheid government to permit some multi-racial international sports competitions, and in the late 1970s and 1980s, the government rescinded or amended some of its apartheid sports laws. A range of legal caveats, however, often rendered such reforms largely cosmetic. In the 1980s, anti-apartheid sports campaigners continued to criticize an overall pattern of continued segregation in sports and large racial disparities in access to sports facilities within South Africa.\(^5\) As a result, the IOC further acted to counter apartheid in sports. It adopted a Declaration Against Apartheid in Sport in 1985 and established an Apartheid and Olympism Commission in 1988.\(^6\) After the South African government repealed key apartheid laws in 1991 and complied with several related IOC conditions, South Africa was invited to rejoin the Olympics Movement. The country resumed its participation with the 1992 Games.\(^7\)

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\(^4\) Finnigan, Chapter 7, op cit.; Nongogo, The Effect…, op cit.; and Jones, The Struggle…, op cit. Jones documented personal correspondence between key IOC officials and South African NOC officials suggesting that the former “worked behind the scenes to silence anti-apartheid opposition and preserve South Africa’s status within the Olympic Movement” and privately were sympathetic to the views of pro-apartheid South African officials.

\(^5\) In addition to passing multiple resolutions addressing apartheid in sports, in 1977 UNGA adopted the International Declaration against Apartheid in Sports (A/RES/32/105) and in 1986 enacted the International Convention against Apartheid in Sports (A/CONF.137/Ref.4).

\(^6\) Finnigan, Chapter 7, op cit.

\(^7\) Other conditions included the racial integration of sports bodies, the establishment of relations with other African...