



INTERNATIONAL
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COMMITTEE

Thomas Bach
President

Opening Ceremony of the Olympic Winter Games PyeongChang 2018
PyeongChang, 9 February 2018 FINAL ENGLISH

Hello, PyeongChang

Dear Olympic fans around the world

Your Excellency, Moon Jae-in, President of the Republic of Korea,

Your Excellency, Antonio Guterres, Secretary general of the United Nations

Excellencies,

Dear athletes

Dear members of the Olympic family,

Ladies and gentlemen.

Welcome to the Olympic Winter Games PyeongChang 2018!

This is the moment that we have all been waiting for: the first Olympic Games on snow and ice in the Republic of Korea.

This is the moment that the Organising Committee, the public authorities and so many Korean people have been working for with great dedication and commitment. You all can be very proud tonight. Now is the time for PyeongChang!

Thank you to everyone who has made this moment possible. A special thanks goes to the thousands of volunteers who have welcomed us so warmly:

Thank you, volunteers.

Dear athletes, now, it's your turn! This will be the competition of your life.

Over the next days, the world will be looking to you for inspiration.



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2

You will inspire us all to live together in peace and harmony despite all differences we have. You will inspire us by competing for the highest honour in the Olympic spirit of excellence, respect and fair play.

You can only really enjoy your Olympic performance if you respect the rules, and stay clean. Only then will your lifelong memories be the memories of a true and worthy Olympian.

While you compete with each other, you live peacefully together in the Olympic Village, respecting the same rules, sharing your meals and your emotions with your fellow athletes. This is how you show that in sport we are all equal. This is how you show the unique power of sport to unite people.

A great example of this unifying power is the joint march here tonight of the two teams from the National Olympic Committees of the Republic of Korea and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. We thank you.

All the athletes around me, all the spectators here in the stadium, and all Olympic fans watching around the world... we are all touched by this wonderful gesture. We all join and support you in your message of peace.

United in our diversity, we are stronger than all the forces that want to divide us.

Two years ago in Rio de Janeiro, with the first ever Refugee Olympic Team, the IOC sent a powerful message of hope to the world. Now in PyeongChang, the athletes from the teams of the ROK and DPRK, by marching together, send a powerful message of peace to the world.

Let us share this Olympic experience with the world.

Let's go together, PyeongChang!

And now I have the honour of inviting the President of the Republic of Korea, His Excellency Moon Jae-in, to declare open the 23rd Olympic Winter Games, PyeongChang, Republic of Korea.