

Mr. Thomas Bach
International Olympic
Committee
Château de Vidy
1007 Lausanne
Switzerland

Ref: The Moment for Olympic Reform

Dear Mr. Bach,

As Russia's controversial Winter Games come to a close, we write to you to ensure that future Olympics faithfully reflect the principles of the Olympic Charter, including Principle 6, which forbids discrimination of any kind. There cannot be a truly successful Olympics where there exist state-sponsored discrimination and other major human rights violations.

The worldwide wave of outrage spurred by Russia's discriminatory anti-LGBT laws should be a warning – one that should not need ever to be repeated. Although no country has a perfect human rights record, prospective Olympic hosts should be held to the high standards of the Olympic Charter. Countries with laws designed to discriminate against or attack the dignity or human rights of any individual or group are clearly inconsistent with the Olympic Charter and should not be given the honor and privilege of hosting the Olympic Games. By consistently enforcing the standards set forth in the Olympic Charter, the Olympic Movement could indeed be a force for good.

With a united voice, **we urge the IOC to take three simple but effective steps:**

1. **Strengthen the Olympic Host City Bid process** to include requirements that host countries do not have laws in place that discriminate on protected grounds and against groups, including LGBT people, in violation of international law, and that there are effective mechanisms in the country to impartially resolve possible complaints regarding human rights abuses linked to Olympic preparations in a timely and effective manner. The process of selecting a host country should include input and analysis from independent human rights organizations regarding the country's human rights record.
2. **Future host city contracts should include specific human rights pledges and a commitment not to introduce laws or policies that violate human rights law before the Games.** The contracts should include clear sanctions for failing to respect these commitments, up to and including a relocation of the Games.
3. **Amend Principle 6 of the Olympic Charter, to include "sexual orientation and gender identity."** The Principle currently states: "Any form of discrimination with regard to a country or a person on grounds of race, religion, politics, gender or otherwise is incompatible with belonging to the Olympic Movement."

The Olympic Movement is facing a watershed moment for respect for the Olympic Charter's principles of human dignity and non-discrimination. Just as the IOC assesses environmental concerns and media freedom in host city applications—and put in place major reforms after doping and corruption scandals—the Olympic Movement can and should back a binding commitment to the Olympic principle of non-discrimination and other fundamental human rights from prospective host cities.

Already, 52 Olympians have come together to condemn Russia's discriminatory law and support respect for the Olympic principle of non-discrimination in the face of Russia's anti-gay laws. We now ask you to stand with these Olympians to ensure that future Games faithfully reflect the principles of the Olympic Charter.

The Olympic Flame will be extinguished on February 23rd in Sochi. But the hopes of people throughout the world for fairer future Olympics should not be.

Sincerely,



The Ally Coalition



Amnesty International



Arcus Foundation



The Ben Cohen Stand Up Foundation



Brache the Silence



Campus Pride



COC Netherlands



Council for Global Equality



Courage Campaign



Egale Canada Human Rights Trust



Family Equality Council



Freedom House



Fundación Triángulo, por la Igualdad Social de Lesbianas, Gais, Bisexuales y Trans (Spain)



GLEN - Gay & Lesbian Equality Network, Ireland



Human Rights Campaign



Human Rights First



Immigration Equality



International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission



International IDAHO Committee



Kaleidoscope Trust



LGBT Denmark



LSVD



National Center for Lesbian Rights



PEN American Center



RUSA LGBT



Seta – LGBTI Rights in Finland



Stonewall



Trans* Athlete



United for Equality in Sports & Entertainment



Women's Sports Foundation