

Thomas Bach

# A milestone in the evolution of the Olympic Games

As the Winter Youth Olympic Games take place for the first time in the wonderful city of Lausanne and in Switzerland, they set a milestone in the evolution of the Olympic movement.

The Winter Youth Olympic Games Lausanne 2020 are a special moment for everyone in the Olympic capital. With local youth involved in so many aspects of the preparation and organisation, these are truly Games by young people, for young people. It is especially exciting to see the strong engagement of schools and universities throughout the city, including the University of Lausanne. The UNIL campus is of course where the Youth Olympic Village is located, right in the heart of the university in the impressive Vortex building, which, as a tangible legacy of these Winter Youth Olympic Games, will subsequently be used as student housing. The Winter Youth Olympic Games Lausanne 2020 are featuring some key innovations in the way these Games are organised. This is the first winter edition of the YOG that is more youthful, more inclusive and more female. For the first time at Winter Youth Olympic Games,

## More youthful, more inclusive and more female

there is complete gender equality, with the same number of male and female athletes taking part. Innovations like accommodating the athletes in Lausanne in two waves means that more youngsters have the chance to compete. New sports, such as 3x3 ice hockey, make the programme appealing to a young audience. Lausanne 2020 is also bringing these Winter Youth Olympic Games to the heart of the Olympic capital, by having the medals plaza in the city centre and engaging the local population with a festival of youth, sport, and culture.

## Shaping a sustainable future

While the city of Lausanne is at the centre of the Youth Olympic Games, the programme sees sport events take place in three Swiss regions – in the Cantons of Vaud, Valais as well as Grisons – also involving neighbouring France. This is the first time that Youth Olympic events are shared across national borders. Great attention has been given to ensure that existing venues and facilities are being used for the competitions, or that new constructions, like the Vortex, fit into the long-term vision of the city. For example, bobsleigh, skeleton, luge and speed skating events all take place using existing venues in St. Moritz and the only newly renovated venue used during these Winter Youth Olympic Games, the Vaudoise Aréna in Lausanne, is part of the city's long-term plans.

With all these innovations, the Winter Youth Olympic Games Lausanne 2020 reflect many of the elements that are defining the future of the International Olympic Committee and of the Olympic Games themselves. The reform programme of Olympic Agenda 2020 is at the heart of this. When the IOC adopted Olympic Agenda 2020 in 2014, it brought about far-reaching changes for how the Olympic Games of the future are organised. The Olympic Games are the only event that brings the entire world together in peaceful competition. All recommendations of Olympic Agenda 2020 have one overarching goal: to strengthen and even enhance this relevance of the Olympic Games in our world today.

In our fast-changing world, you cannot rest on yesterday's success. Constant improvement and evolution are necessary to ensure the success of tomorrow. This holds true for the world of sport as well as the world of business. For the IOC, everything we do ultimately depends on the success of the Olympic Games. This is why we have taken a completely new approach to how Olympic Games are organised. With our Olympic Agenda 2020 reform programme, we have turned the page and are writing a new chapter on the future of the Olympic Games.

In the past, bidding for the Olympic Games was like applying for a franchise. We were asking cities how they would change their cities in order to host the Olympic Games.



Thomas Bach was born on 29<sup>th</sup> December 1953 in Würzburg, Germany. Married and a lawyer by profession, he has had a successful career in sports both on and off the field of play. He became an Olympic champion when he won a gold medal in fencing (team foil) at the Games of the XXI Olympiad in Montreal in 1976 and in 2006, he was named as the founding President of the German Olympic Sports Confederation (DOSB).

Thomas Bach was an athletes' representative at the XI Olympic Congress in Baden-Baden (1981) and a founding member of the IOC' Athletes' Commission. He became an IOC member in 1991, was elected as a member of the IOC Executive Board in 1996 and served as an IOC Vice-President for more than 10 years. He has also chaired several IOC Commissions. On 10<sup>th</sup> September 2013, Thomas Bach was elected as the ninth President of the IOC.

With Olympic Agenda 2020, we have fundamentally transformed the candidature and selection process. Now we ask the hosts: how can we adapt the Olympic Games to best fit the long-term needs of your city or region? Making the Olympic Games more feasible and sustainable to organise is at the heart of Olympic Agenda 2020.

## The momentum is here

Ultimately, we are establishing a new norm of how Olympic Games are delivered in the future, built around close partnership with the host, starting from the candidature phase, to the delivery of the Games through to their legacy. This new norm means that potential hosts will enjoy greater flexibility in designing and planning Olympic Games that are in line with their long-term development goals, while also receiving more support than ever before from the IOC.

This is not just theory. We can already see that our reforms are benefiting future Olympic hosts. Thanks to the close coordination and partnership between the Tokyo 2020 Organising Committee, local govern-



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ment and the IOC, this joint coordination process has helped Tokyo 2020 to reduce its venue budget by USD 2.2 billion and generate an additional USD 2.1 billion in savings, mainly from the operational budget.

Ensuring sustainable and feasible Olympic Winter Games is also a key focus of Beijing 2022's operations. Whether it is innovations using natural CO<sub>2</sub> refrigeration systems for ice venues, or clean energy technology and smart grids to power the Olympic venues, high-tech solutions are at the heart of achieving this goal, in line with Olympic Agenda 2020.

### How can we adapt the Olympic Games to best fit the long-term needs of your city or region?

Other examples come from Paris and Los Angeles, the first to fully benefit from Olympic Agenda 2020 already as candidates for the Olympic Games 2024 and 2028 respectively. Both cities have a clear vision of how the Olympic Games can help them reach their long-term development objectives. We see this especially by the record number of existing and temporary facilities that are planned to be used: 95 per cent in the case of Paris and 97 per cent in Los Angeles. This is something we have not seen in this dimension in the history of the Olympic Games. This approach will lead not only to significant cost reductions in the organisation of the Olympic Games but also to overall more sustainable Games.

These reforms have created momentum. The recent candidature process for the Olympic Winter Games 2026 was guided by Olympic

Agenda 2020 from start to finish. In this respect, Milano-Cortina stood out by the 93 per cent use of existing or temporary facilities. The reforms also had an impact on the overall candidature process itself, where average costs of the candidatures were down 75 per cent compared to previous processes. In fact, all candidates said that they would not have bid, were it not for Olympic Agenda 2020.

### Credibility and integrity

What is more, already now we have expressions of interest from numerous cities and regions for the Olympic Winter Games 2030, and even for the Olympic Games 2032, twelve years in advance. This shows not only the growing relevance and global appeal of the Olympic Games, but also that the reforms of Olympic Agenda 2020 are clearly having an impact.

Ensuring the success of future Olympic Games depends not only on the organisation of the Games but also on appeal of the Games themselves. This is why we have also undertaken the most comprehensive reform of the Olympic programme in our recent history. The Olympic Games Tokyo 2020 will be more youthful, more urban, and more female than ever before. There will be new urban sports added to the programme that are popular with young people, such as sport climbing or skateboarding. We will have the highest-ever representation of female athletes in Olympic history.

We know that the global appeal of the Olympic Games rests on our credibility and integrity. For this reason, good governance is also central feature of Olympic Agenda 2020. The IOC has already implemented all good governance measures called for under Olympic Agenda 2020. With regards to the organisation of the Olympic Games, we are

now making the host contract public. While adding transparency, making the host contract public also means that after signing the contract, the IOC cannot unilaterally impose any new requirements or conditions on hosts. We also made changes to host contract itself, including a specific section designed to counter corruption.

### Adapting to a changing world

Olympic Agenda 2020 has revolutionised the candidature process. But in our fast-changing world, we cannot stand still. This is why, most recently, we have been looking into the evolution of this revolution, making the candidature process even more flexible, more targeted and more dialogue-oriented. Concretely, we have established two Future Host Commissions (summer/winter) to oversee the interest in hosting future Olympic Games and Youth Olympic Games. In doing so, we have established a permanent, ongoing dialogue with prospective hosts. We have also widened the definition of "host" to refer not only to a single city, but to also refer to multiple cities, regions or countries. With such a contextualised and more flexible approach for the selection of Olympic hosts, we will maintain the magic of the Games and ensure the fundamental principle of universality of future Olympic Games.

In a world drifting apart in so many ways, the Olympic Games stand out as the only event that still brings the whole world together in peaceful competition. This is the overarching goal of Olympic Agenda 2020: protecting and strengthening this unique unifying role of the Olympic Games, so that they can continue to be this great symbol of unity in diversity of all humankind.