



КОНГРЕС УКРАЇНЦІВ КАНАДИ

UKRAINIAN CANADIAN CONGRESS

CONGRÈS DES UKRAINIENS-CANADIENS

February 3, 2023

Ms. Tricia Smith
President, Canadian Olympic Committee
Member, International Olympic Committee
250 Yonge St, Suite 3000
PO Box #19
Toronto, ON Canada M5B 2L7

Dear President Smith:

Re: Contemplated participation of Russian athletes at the Paris 2024 Olympics

The Ukrainian Canadian Congress (UCC) was appalled to learn that the vast majority of the leaders of the stakeholder groups of the Olympic Movement and the International Paralympic Committee favoured exploring a pathway to participation in the 2024 Olympic Games in Paris for athletes from the Russian Federation and Belarus.

Since February 2022 the Russian Federation has waged a genocidal war of aggression against Ukraine. Thousands of Ukrainians, including athletes, have been murdered. Millions have been brutally displaced. The Russian Federation is committing systematic, wide-scale war crimes, crimes against humanity, rape, abduction of children, deportation and other unspeakable crimes. The scale of the horror that Russia is visiting upon Ukraine has not been seen in Europe since WWII.

Many of the Russian and Belarusian athletes that the IOC now seeks to allow to participate in the 2024 Olympics support Russia's genocide against Ukraine and Russian colonialism. This is evidenced by the behaviour of Russian athletes where they brazenly displayed the Russian flag and symbols of the genocidal Russian war (Z) at international sporting events. Their families and fans do the same. It is important to note that the hosts and organizers of many of these sporting events tolerate this behaviour, do not censure it, and are helpless to prevent it. This gives lie to the stated intention of the IOC to ban any "flag, anthem, colours or any other identifications whatsoever of these countries being displayed at any sports event or meeting, including the entire venue."

As Canada's Richard Pound stated: "At a certain point, there is a shared national responsibility for national conduct." To allow Russian athletes who, either through their actions, or through their silence, are complicit in Russia's crimes to participate in the Olympics is to signal an endorsement by the IOC of those crimes.

The UCC sincerely hopes that the IOC will reflect upon the lessons of history and the ignominy which befell the IOC in allowing Hitler's Germany to host the 1936 Olympics. Simply put, should the IOC allow these athletes to participate in the Paris 2024 Olympics, the IOC would itself be seen as a promoter of war, murder and destruction. The Ukrainian Canadian Congress expects that the Canadian Olympic Committee will strongly oppose the IOC's intention to allow Russian and Belarusian citizens to participate in the Paris 2024 Olympics.

In the event that the Russian and Belarusian athletes are permitted by the IOC to participate in these Olympics, the UCC expects that the Canadian Olympic Committee will join Ukraine and other partner nations in boycotting these Games as an event that reflects neither Canada's values nor the spirit in which international athletic competitions ought to be held.

Yours very truly,

UKRAINIAN CANADIAN CONGRESS



Alexandra Chyczij, National President

cc: The Honourable Mélanie Joly, PC, MP, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Canada
The Honourable Pascale St-Onge, PC, MP, Minister of Sport of Canada
Mr. Dmytro Kuleba, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine
Mr. Vadym Huttsait, Minister of Sports and Youth of Ukraine