

**July 20, 1988**

**Letter from Roh Tae-Woo to the President of the  
International Olympic Committee (IOC) on North  
Korea's Participation in the Olympics**

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**Summary:**

Letter from the President of the ROK, Roh Tae-Woo, to the President of the IOC, Juan Antonio Samaranch, on North Korea's role in the 1988 Olympic Games.

**Original Language:**

English

**Contents:**

Transcript - English

PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA  
GENVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L

□ July 20, 1988

Dear President Samaranch,

Thank you for your kind letter dated June 30, 1988.

I wish to take this opportunity to express once again my gratitude for your efforts towards the success of the Seoul Olympic Games, and particularly for your effort for north Korea's participation in the games.

I believe that report conveyed to me in your letters is in line with your continued endeavors. However, as you are well aware, the co-hosting of the Olympics as demanded by north Korea poses problems because it is always shrouded in a semantic equivocation. Since the idea presented in Mr. Pissar's report appears to be a departure from the fundamental position of the International Olympic Committee with regard to the vexed issue of co-hosting, we feel that the concept in the report needs to be spelled out in the unequivocal terms.

You will agree, Mr. President; that since Seoul was awarded the Olympic games in 1981, the Korean government has every possible concession to north Korea in order to encourage its participation in the games, and, furthermore, we would spare no effort in the coming months to that end, in the hope that the Seoul Olympics with north Korea's attendance prove to be a great opportunity for national reconciliation.

I have expressed on several occasions my sincere hope for a meeting between the highest authorities of Seoul and north Korea, and guided by that spirit a special declaration was issued on July 7, designed to help the two parts of Korea do away with the confrontation and explore venues for mutual cooperation. The Korean government will take various practical measures for an inter-Korean reconciliation keeping in line with the declaration, and it is our earnest hope that north Korea come to this historic festival of peace and harmony for mankind.

I believe that a recent resolution urging north Korea to join us in the Seoul Olympics, which was unanimously adopted by the Korean national assembly, well represents the deep aspirations of the Korean people for north Korea's participation.

We will continue our efforts in close collaboration with the international Olympic committee, while keeping the door open for north Korea until the very last minute, in the same manner as we have done during the past seven years.

I avail myself of this opportunity to renew to you the assurances of my highest consideration.

□ Sincerely yours,

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□□ Roh Tae Woo  
□□ President of the  
□□ Republic of Korea

His Excellency  
Juan Antonio Samaranch  
President of the  
International Olympic Committee