

Beijing 2008: Race for Tibet

ICT has grave concerns about the International Olympic Committee (IOC) decision to award the 2008 Olympic Summer Games to China, a communist state that is acknowledged around the world to be a gross violator of human rights. After a half century, China continues to illegally occupy Tibet where its policies are designed to erode the Tibetan national identity and suppress the fundamental freedoms of the Tibetan people. Such policies are inconsistent with the behavior of great nations.

The goal of the Olympic movement is to build a peaceful and better world and promote international understanding by educating the youth of the world through sport and culture. ICT will therefore actively oppose any attempt by China to misuse the Games or its athletes to misrepresent the relationship between China and Tibet or appropriate what is Tibetan and portray it as "Chinese."

Opportunity exists in the lead-up to the Games for China to take measures that would promote and protect human rights, including by speaking directly with the Dalai Lama to find a peaceful and legitimate solution for Tibet. As the stresses of Chinese migration, cultural assimilation, development and environmental degradation escalate in Tibet, so too does the urgency of ICT's mission to save Tibet. Therefore, Beijing 2008 is more than sport, it's a Race for Tibet.

As the Beijing 2008 Games rapidly approach, China must make some tough choices: will China make a mockery of the Games by using them to continue its false claims about its rule in Tibet, or will China work towards a genuine solution for Tibet by reaching an agreement with the Dalai Lama and gain world acclaim?



The International Campaign for Tibet recommends that:

China take up this historic opportunity and show the world that it is a worthy host of the 2008 Olympics by:

- Ending human rights abuses in Tibet; and
- Directly engaging the Dalai Lama to find a negotiated solution for Tibet.

How you can help...

Help make the Beijing 2008 Olympics a catalyst for change in China!

1. Join the Beijing 2008: Race for Tibet team by registering your details at www.racefortibet.org
2. Link to Us! Do you have your own website or blog? If so, please link to ICT's official Beijing 2008: Race for Tibet website: www.racefortibet.org
3. Sticker, Buddy Icon, Poster. Promote the Beijing 2008: Race for Tibet campaign and educate others about the situation inside Tibet by using and distributing ICT's free stickers, buddy icons and posters available via www.racefortibet.org

Q & A:

What has the Beijing 2008 Olympics got to do with Tibet?

The IOC awarded Beijing the 2008 Olympic Games in 2001, contending that the Games will "improve human rights in China" and therefore Tibet. However, as we approach the Games, human rights violations remain systematic and widespread. ICT holds that China and the IOC should be held accountable to the promises they made during Beijing's bid for the 2008 Olympics.

Is it appropriate to politicize the Olympic Games?

The Olympics have a long history of politicization, including the 1936 Berlin Games and 1980 Moscow Games. Past hosts have used the Games to promote a certain view of their country and political system. Beijing 2008 will be no different.

By including Tibetan costumes in the Chinese performance at the close of the 2004 Athens Games and choosing a Tibetan animal as one the 2008 Olympic mascots, China is already politicizing the Olympics by deliberately misrepresenting the culture of occupied-Tibet as Chinese.