



International Olympic Committee

Open Agenda

Ediz Efe Dural

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1. Letter from the Secretary-General

2. Letter from the Under-Secretary-General

Esteemed Delegates,

As the Under-Secretary-General of the Olympic committee, I would like to welcome you all to the 1973 Model United Nations Conference. I have to start my letter by thanking the executive team of the conference for their marvelous works that went into organizing this splendid occasion and inviting me to make this committee possible which was in the thought procedure for so long. I congratulate the works they have already succeeded and fully trust they will pursue their utmost care until the very last day of the conference.

With this committee, we are getting to explore an old tradition and a familiar setting with the Olympic Games. I am sure that all of us have been exposed to some form of the Olympics with nations preparing to compete in many fields, athletes wearing cool flags all around them to represent their nation, broadcasters getting a little bit too excited whenever their country accomplishes something in this monumental event and perhaps most importantly, people that are from the more than 200 represented countries tuning in to watch the same event with the same excitement. Remarkable, yes, but also very much familiar for all of us, I would imagine. With that said, this committee gives us a chance to dive deeper into the themes of the Olympics and discuss controversies surrounding them by getting to know these magnificent events even further.

Throughout these 3 days, we will be having discussions under an open agenda and consider 8 main sub-sections of controversies around the Olympic games. As the delegates, you will put yourselves in the shoes of the members of the International Olympic Committee either as nations or as institutions and organizations to solve the problems currently faced by the committee and debate upon your own views and solutions while not defying the traditional ideals of the movement, but also not disregarding any of these issues faced by the institution. After all, institutions aren't judged by the splendor of their traditions, but by the resilience they show when those traditions are put to test.

With all that, I wish all of you a fun and most importantly productive experience.

Furthermore, I wish you a hopefully bearable and maybe even a little delightful reading for the next 15 or so pages of reading you have.

Best Regards,

Ediz Efe Dural

Under-Secretary-General of the International Olympic Committee

3. Letter from the Academic Assistant

Dear Delegates,

I am delighted to welcome you to the International Olympic Committee at the 1973 Model United Nations conference. I am very excited to serve as your Academic Assistant throughout this conference and to see the unique perspectives each of you will bring to the committee.

The International Olympic Committee stands at the center of the Olympic Movement, responsible for safeguarding its principles while navigating complex global challenges. In this committee, you may find yourselves addressing issues such as political influence in sports, athlete rights, boycotts, corruption, and the balance between commercial interests and Olympic values. Your role will require you to think not only as representatives, but also as decision makers shaping the future of international sport.

Preparation will certainly guide you, but openness will distinguish you. Some of the best debates come from ideas that are out of the blue and people working together. Talk to each other, respectfully disagree with each other's points of view, and don't be afraid to look for creative solutions. Speak up, take the lead, and let yourself learn and grow along the way.

By the end of these three days we'll spend together, we'll have taken another step toward becoming visionary individuals. Most importantly, remember that you're not alone in this experience. If you ever need clarification, guidance, or even reassurance, please feel free to contact me anytime. I'm here on this committee not only to support you academically but also to ensure you feel confident, comfortable, and happy.

I look forward to seeing your ideas take shape, your confidence grow, and the dynamic discussions you will create together.

Best regards,

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4. Introduction to the Committee

The International Olympic Committee is the international organization responsible for the modern Olympic Games. They are a non-governmental organization behind the organization of Summer Olympics, Winter Olympics and Youth Olympics. The International Olympics Committee also has 206 officially recognised National Committees which operate within nations that partake in the International Olympic Games. The Olympic Committee was initially founded in 1894, based in Lausanne, Switzerland. Being one of the earliest non-governmental organizations ever founded, it still holds its place as one of the most influential among many others.

At its very core, the IOC's mission is to preserve and further advance ideals and values of the Olympic Movement which include unity, ethics and respect. As a broader ideal, Olympics also aim to encourage the utilization of sports as a means of promoting international peace and cooperation. Olympic Games are meant to bring athletes from many nations around the world together in an environment of fair and peaceful competition. With that said, with the inclusion of many states, global media, financial interests and representation crucial for many nations, responsibility of IOC increases very much.

As previously mentioned, the influence IOC holds as an institution is very large in impact and very unique. Not a part of any state or UN or any private company, IOC operates through its Olympic Charter which is the legal and constitutional framework of the organization. The charter grants the committee authority over the organization, the rules, the principles and many other aspects of the games which results in the IOC having significant power regarding any decision-making for the Olympics.

The commercial significance of the Olympics significantly increased with the modern era. Today, the Olympics are events that billions of viewers tune in to support their countries, watch the games and overall enjoy this remarkable experience for many. Although this interest is generally positive for the organization, it also results in participants and especially the host cities investing many political and financial resources into promoting them. Today, the Olympics are not seen as only a sports event, but a stage in which the world's greatest social and political matters are to be observed.

Upon taking all that into consideration, it is obvious why the Olympics remain highly influential and relevant in many international discussions. Olympics are an environment in which sports are parallel to issues regarding human rights, inclusion, climate change, athlete welfare, inclusion and many other subjects. The Committee is responsible for pursuing the idealistic purposes of the committee which were the initial reasons for its establishment, but shouldn't look over any of the practical results and controversial reality of the environment in which the events take place.

5. General Controversies

Controversies faced by the committee caused by its previously mentioned nature are many. With that said, it is possible to establish certain main, essential titles and revolve our discussions around them. For the purpose of this committee, there are 8 main controversies/problems to be discussed which are:

Integrity of Competitions and Doping:

The Olympics pride itself in hosting fair competitions for all. Furthermore, this belief is what the Olympics depend on for the most part. For this exact reason, doping scandals damage the representation of not only the individual athletes, but the whole organizations, nations and events. This topic can be discussed separated into 4 further sub-sections:

- **Anti-Doping Enforcement:**

The ban of Performance-Enhancing Drugs has been in place for many years but the sustained usage of them and their inclusion in many scandals involving the Olympics sparks the question of the efficiency of current testing systems. It is crucial for the delegates to explore the options to strengthen the testing systems and further ways to enforce current rules.

- **Systematic Doping:**

Some sections of the previously mentioned doping scandals go beyond the individuals and suggest the questioning of whole institutions and national bodies. Oversights and exploits of larger scale not only spark an issue of enforcement, but an issue of diplomacy, since punishing entire national organizations or institutions might ignite even further diplomatic controversy.

- Medical Enhancement:

With technology advancing every day, it is becoming harder and harder to define an absolute line between unfair enhancement and completely legal sports technology/enhancement. The committee should establish a definite line for current medically supervised performance enhancements and optimizations and recovery technologies. This is not only important for current events, but for future organizations also since in the future, Olympic governance may need to address other practices and having a solid framework or an approach is crucial for an absolute solution.

- Athlete Rights:

Anti-Doping enforcement and regulations do also raise concerns regarding athletes rights and mainly their privacy. The committee must debate and come up with solutions that prevent doping scandals without being overly intrusive to the athletes and disregarding their privacy.

Political Reality:

The Olympics are a truly politically neutral event and organization. With that said, the games get constantly affected by diplomatic situations such as occupation, war, sanctions and perhaps the most obvious being national propaganda. It is the Committees claim and focus to keep the event politically neutral and separate from global politics but to what extent that is possible and the means to do so is up for debate for the delegates. The 4 main sub-sections regarding this issue are:

- States in Conflict:

The Olympics saw many controversies over athletes competing under neutral flags or national flags during war situations and global crises/disputes. The Committee should resolve these issues and have a reliable response in order to address the questions of national responsibility, athletes rights and collective punishments.

- Diplomatic Pressure:

Olympics boycotts are a means of sending global political messages for many groups and have been this way for a long time historically. With that said, these instances damage the events' reputation of being a universal event. Delegates can debate whether the IOC should resist this pressure further or adapt to them.

- Athletes' Political Expression:

The Olympics restricts many forms of political demonstration during competition with Rule 50 of its Olympic Charter to preserve neutrality. With that said, many critics argue that this is a means of suppression for athletes' legitimate right of free speech in political or social situations such as human rights, racism or war.

- The Olympic Truce:

The Olympic Truce is an ancient tradition for the Olympics, originating from ancient Greece, which declares a truce before and during the Olympics to ensure the safety of host cities and the travelers to see them. This tradition was renewed by the modern Olympic Committee in 1992 in cooperation with the United Nations. Currently, the truce starts a week before the opening ceremony of the Olympics and ends a week after the Paralympics. Although strong in symbolizing the Olympics' peaceful and cooperative nature, lack of its practical impact on real conflicts makes it just a symbolic and rather ineffective practice. The committee should discuss whether to approach the truce and its enforcement more strongly.

Human Rights:

The Olympic Games undoubtedly bring great prestige and investment, especially for the host countries, but it can also see labor abuse and restrictions on civil liberties. IOC faces increasingly constant pressure to focus on ensuring the host cities' human rights standards and practices such as:

- Labor Conditions:

Olympic events generally require large-scale infrastructure projects for the host cities which depend on intense labor that are loosely regulated. Delegates can debate on and consider the host countries to include strong labor protections along with the Committee's own enforcement mechanisms.

- Urban Difficulties:

Hosting Olympic events and the projects that come with the responsibility sometimes leads to displacement or marginalization of local communities which raises a question of priority for the committee. Delegates can debate and address the committee prioritizing local residents over its events' infrastructure and setting.

- Free-Speech:

Host governments sometimes tend to use the Olympics as a means to improve their image by restricting local protests and media criticism. The International Olympic Committee and its delegates should debate and address the legitimacy of these practices and the accountability of responsible nations.

- Host Selection:

The committee should also discuss human rights as a criteria to select host nations.

Debating whether countries with poor human rights records should be allowed to host Olympic events is not a mere ethical or a political debate but also a logistical one regarding an important recurring theme for the host nations.

Gender Eligibility and Inclusion:

Controversies around gender eligibility and inclusion are very crucial for modern Olympics to address due to these subjects being related to many of the Olympics' main ideals.

Balancing inclusion, non-discrimination, fairness and privacy in events have become one of the most debated areas of the Olympics both politically and ethically. The main sub-sections under this controversy are:

- Transgender Athletes:

The question of transgender athletes competing in gendered categories has been one of the most debated issues. Institutions all around the globe debate whether and how transgender athletes should compete in the gendered categories of the Olympics. This is not only an issue of inclusion and fairness but also one of science and human rights.

- Privacy Measures:

Many eligibility verification systems can involve deeply intrusive and invasive procedures for athletes. It is highly important for delegates to decide whether these systems help protect fairness or disregard athletes' privacy.

- Athletes with Differences of Sex Development:

Approaches adapted by the Committee for intersex and DSD athletes have caused many controversies and disputes both legal and ethical. The Committee must decide how to regulate competition while not compromising from inclusion.

- Representation:
Gender equality and eligibility controversies aren't only about athletes' numbers or competitions' fairness, they are also about the media coverage, visibility, leadership and institutional power. The Committee might be forced to address any broader inequality around the Olympics and sports in general.

Governance and Transparency:

The International Olympic Committee isn't only an organization responsible for hosting major sports events, it is also a powerful and influential institution managing financial resources and global prestige. Questions regarding corruption, transparency and accountability aimed at the Committee are very much legitimate and should be addressed to sustain and increase the credibility of the organization and the events. These questions can be summarized with the following:

- Host City Bidding:
The bidding process implemented while choosing host cities has historically been the cause of many controversies regarding the Olympics. Accusations such as lobbying, favoritism and other illegitimate influences have damaged the credibility of the Committee. Delegates should decide upon the transparency of this particular decision-making procedure that, as mentioned previously, is a very prestigious occasion for many nations and cities.
- Internal Decision-Making:
Many decisions made by the Committee regarding the Olympics are by small groups with little to none public coverage and visibility. This situation raises concerns about democracy, legitimacy, accountability and representation of the decisions made.
- Ethics and Enforcement:
Ethics and their enforcement have been a general theme of previously mentioned issues which can be seen as the incompetence of the International Olympic Committee by many. The public image will be discussed in the next section but this situation raises the question of sanctioning and enforcement above that. Delegates should debate whether the IOC needs better sanctioning mechanisms, ethics commissions and review bodies.

- Public Trust:

The Olympics almost fully rely on public interest and appeal. A significant part of the Olympics' financial resources and influence come from the public which makes governance issues and scandals even more of a problem. These do not only affect the Olympics as an event but also the general image of international sports which the Olympic Committee have been very successful representing.

Economic Sustainability:

The Olympics are usually monumental and grandiose occasions which in turn make them awfully expensive. Many citizens and institutions question if the games are worth it, especially the long-term financial cost for infrastructural projects and general spendings which are represented by the following:

- Public Spending:

Olympic spending and budgets tend to exceed the initial estimates made which put pressure on governments and in turn taxpayers. These situations raise questions regarding fiscal responsibility and efficiency of public funds.

- Hosting Issues:

Fewer cities are willing to join the bidding and host Olympic games which is partly because of the cost. Other issues such as political risks are also important factors and the future of the current hosting model is questioned. As mentioned, hosting procedure is an invaluable part of the Olympics and any issues regarding it should be discussed upon by the delegates.

- Commercialization.

As mentioned, the Olympics rely heavily on public image and we should also discuss the financial aspect of this reality. Due to this highly visible nature of the Olympics, it also relies upon broadcasting, sponsorships and partnerships which causes debates on whether this situation strengthens the sports or turns them into over commercialized media material.

- Long Term Sustainability:

Host cities usually do promise long-term benefits of infrastructure projects but the reality sometimes tends to differ from these promises. Olympic infrastructure and

even venues do become less and less used and even wasteful after the games and the Committee expecting sustainable and long-term plans have been brought to its attention lately.

Environmental Sustainability:

Another crucial dependency of the Olympics is the climate. Stable weather conditions, energy usage, large-scale tourism and many topics increasingly impacted by climate change are closely related to the Olympic games and an important point of discussion in the sustainability of them. Questions of environmental sustainability are:

- Carbon Footprint:

The Olympics are major events which usually mean major emissions. Large-scale international travel, construction projects and general operations are the main causes of these concerns. Delegates should debate whether the committee should follow a stricter approach for climate related issues.

- Winter Olympics:

Climate change and the decreasing snow reliability is perhaps the most direct threat to the Olympic games and more specifically the Winter Olympics. This forces the International Olympic Committee to discuss and debate upon the future of these games both long-term and short term by re-evaluating host viability.

- Sustainable Preparation:

Practices such as encouraging the usage of existing venues in Olympics events are increasingly adopted by the International Olympic Committee which already is a step towards decreasing wastefulness and increasing sustainability. The committee can discuss how to build upon these practices for more efficient models to be implemented in the future.

- Greenwashing:

Just like many of these programs and models, the Olympics' climate sensitive policies are criticised as being more symbolic than practical. The committee can discuss ways of repairing the public image as well as re-considering its current practices and distinguishing genuine transformation from PR campaigns.

Athlete Welfare:

Athletes that participate in the Olympics are often seen as symbols of excellence and greatness but the reality is that many of them face financial, psychological and physical pressures and issues. The question of Olympic Athletes' welfare needs and rights are often brought to the committee's attention and are to be discussed under these four sub-sections:

- **Mental Health:**

Elite athletes that compete in the Olympic level usually face extreme expectations and pressure from national federations, media, sponsors and audiences both international and national which sparks the question whether the Committee should implement better mental health protections and psychological support systems.

- **Safety of the Athletes:**

Cases of emotional, physical and sexual abuse in even Olympic level sports have damaged public trust in institutions internationally. The Committee must determine ways to enforce safety standards across national and international systems and organizations.

- **Exploitation and Compensation:**

Olympic athletes, at least many of them, generate immense national prestige but not even a close level of financial or even institutional support. Unequal treatment of athletes across countries and sports that generally cause these issues raise questions of fairness and compensation for sports on Olympic level.

- **Athlete Representation:**

Some institutions consider athletes' representation in the governance of the International Olympic Committee lacking, especially considering their crucial place in the promotion and operation of the games. Expanding athlete participation in decision-making and governance might result in more legitimate and responsive operations and practices.

6. Conclusion

The International Olympic Committee remains as one of the most visible sports institutions internationally but as can be observed from this guide also one of the most debated and contested. The Olympic Games undoubtedly represent and symbolize international cooperation, peace, fair competition and sports excellence but not without being shaped by political, economic, social and ethical pressures. Mentioned areas of dispute within the institution that are mentioned in this guide further demonstrate the concerns of the modern Olympic Movement such as ensuring fairness, transparent governance, inclusion, legitimacy, sustainability, responsibility, accountability and many others.

The questions addressed by this guide and the International Olympic Committee in general aren't only subjects of public visibility and media coverage, but also deeply tied with the humanitarian and ethical questions of the modern world. Themes such as political interference, gender eligibility debates, environmental sustainability, fiscal responsibility and athlete welfare and their impacts extend further than the Olympics themselves and operate around the realities of the modern world. Addressing any given concern while adopting the Olympic Movement and its ideals is the main goal of the Olympic Committee and its delegates.

For the invaluable delegates of this committee, it is of utmost importance to have a thorough understanding of the mentioned general themes that shape Olympic governance and decision-making. The responsibilities of the International Olympic Committee is to adapt while upholding its traditional ideals, keeping strict neutrality while not compromising on moral responsibility and implementing its universal approach while keeping accountability on its actions. For these reasons, any given solution doesn't only need delegates to show creativity and diplomacy but also an understanding of institutional and political tensions surrounding the Olympic Governance.

In conclusion, the task of this committee is not to merely govern or symbolize the movement. It is to observe and determine whether the ideals upheld by the institution for more than a century at this point can stand against the tests from the ever more aspiring but divisive environment of the modern world.

Questions to be Addressed:

- How should the International Olympic Committee respond to the increasing concerns regarding doping and performance enhancing drugs while keeping the integrity and fairness of the games?
- What approach should the International Olympic Committee adopt while facing various international political and diplomatic dilemmas?
- What precautions should be implemented by the International Olympic Committee to ensure no violations of Human Rights or Ethics are made?
- How can the International Olympic Committee handle situations of gender eligibility and inclusion while also sustaining the fairness of the games?
- What institutional changes can be made within the committee to ensure accountability, transparency and limit any forms of corruption?
- What can be done to increase financial sustainability of the Olympic Games and decrease economical burden?
- What should be the place of environmental sustainability in decision-making processes of the International Olympic Committee?
- How can the International Olympic Committee enhance the athlete welfare practices to suit the needs of all athletes internationally?

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