

January 1, 2008

Dear IOC President Jacques Rogge,
members of the International Olympic Committee,
members of the National Olympic Committees,
Olympic athletes, coaches and sponsors:

Doctors Against Forced Organ Harvesting (DAFOH) is concerned about unethical organ procurement practices in China. The report "Bloody Harvest" by co-authors David Kilgour and David Matas examined these allegations, provided circumstantial evidence and came to the conclusion it is reasonable to say that in China organs are removed from executed prisoners as well as from living, non-consenting donors, in particular from practitioners of the peaceful meditation movement Falun Gong (Falun Dafa). As medical doctors, we are extremely concerned about these practices.

Recent remarks by the organizer of the Olympic Games as well as the evidenced 8-year-long persecution of Falun Gong indicate that the Chinese government will continue to persecute and discriminate Falun Gong during the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing. As medical doctors we identify the discrimination, probably even hatred, against Falun Gong as underlying reason for the live organ harvesting from Falun Gong practitioners in China.

We believe that the exclusion and discrimination of Falun Gong at the 2008 Olympic Games, as indicated by the director of the Beijing Olympics media center in November 2007, is violating the Olympic Charter, the Olympic Movement as well as the Olympic Spirit. Discrimination against any athlete or audience at the Olympic Games due to individual belief is a disgrace to the Olympic Spirit and the Olympic movement.

The Olympic Charter assigns the IOC to oversee compliance with the regulations of the Olympic Charter. We therefore strongly request from the IOC to demand from the organizer of the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing to conform with the Olympic Charter and to refrain from any kind of discrimination against Falun Gong or any other religious group during the Olympic Games.

We ask the IOC to assure unrestricted access of Falun Gong to the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing at all Olympic sites and venues.

We believe that our request to the IOC is for the good of the Olympic Movement, the IOC as well as thousands of innocent victims.

We would appreciate hearing from you within 3 weeks after receipt of this letter.

Sincerely

Torsten Trey, MD
Chief Executive Director DAFOH

cc:

George W. Bush, President of the United States of America
Hans-Gert Pöttering, President of the European Parliament
Edward McMillan-Scott, Vice-President of the European Parliament
Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations
Kenneth Roth, Executive Director Human Rights Watch
Lucie Morillion, Reporters Without Borders
Steven Spielberg, Film director and producer
Mia Farrow, Actress

Detailed background of our request to refuse any discrimination at the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing:

A) The Deputy Minister of Health, Huang Jiefu stated publicly in 2006 that the majority of the organs for transplantations in China, approximately 95%, come from executed prisoners. Dr. Wang Guoqi had previously described this practice in a 2001 US congressional hearing. It is noteworthy that in 2001, the official stance of the Chinese government was, that organs were not harvested from executed prisoners, which was subsequently proven untrue by Huang Jiefu's admission to the contrary in 2006. Most of the major medical associations around the world condemn this practice of harvesting organs from executed prisoners.

B) In 2001, China embarked on a new practice of organ procurement, putting a new spin on their prior practice of harvesting organs from executed prisoners. Prisoners of conscience, mainly Falun Gong practitioners, who have been subject to torture and torture death in the thousands since 1999, were introduced as a living organ bank. There is a reasonable consensus that unethically acquired organs have fueled the exponential surge of transplantations in China over the past 6 years. Chinese citizens, outlawed for no particular legal reasons, were detained and tissue-typed. An "organ-on-demand-system" provoked hospitals in China to advertise that different types of organ transplantations could be arranged within 2-3 weeks.

It is important for the International Olympic Committee to note that China began these practices approximately at the same time when the IOC awarded the 2008 Olympic Games to Beijing. According to the available data China has continued these practices during the preparation for the Olympic Games.

C) Falun Gong is a peaceful self-cultivation method with elements of Daoism and Buddhism. It is a practice of five qigong-like physical exercises combined with teachings about the three virtues Truthfulness, Compassion, and Forbearance. It was publicly spread in China from 1992 to 1999. At that time, up to 70 - 100 million Chinese practiced this form of qigong.

The Chinese constitution protects freedom of belief. Also, members of the government have practiced Falun Gong before 1999. In 1999, the former president Jiang Zemin started to outlaw the Falun Gong movement without legal authorization.

D) According to an article by the Associated Press dated November 8, 2007, author Anita Chang is referring to Li Zhanjun, director of the Beijing Olympics media center, who said:

- “... texts and other items from major religious groups ... for personal use by athletes and visitors are permitted.”
- “... religious services -- Christian, Muslim, Jewish, Hindu and Buddhist -- will be available to athletes in the Olympic Village.”
- “However these policies do not apply to Falun Gong. We don't recognize it because it is a cult. So Falun Gong texts, Falun Gong activities in China are forbidden.”

This citation highlights the discrimination, marginalization and persecution that the Falun Gong movement has been experiencing by the Chinese government since 1999. It is congruent with observations from other human rights organizations and eye-witnesses. We therefore interpret these statements as the official policy on how the Chinese government plans to treat Falun Gong during the Olympic Games.

E) This policy is worrisome in many regards:

1. As stated under C) Falun Gong is widely spread all over the world. In more than 70 countries it is a legal and respected form of self-cultivation and qigong-like practice. Tens of millions of people practice it worldwide; therefore we consider it being a large spiritual movement. - The Chinese government designates the Falun Gong as an “evil cult” as a convenient means to marginalize, discriminate against and persecute Falun Gong. However the testimony of thousands of awards and recognitions in more than 70 countries is evidence that such a policy of ostracizing Falun Gong is a one-sided distorting attempt to justify an exclusion of Falun Gong from the Olympic Games and does not reflect the overall appreciation of Falun Gong in the world.

2. Li Zhanjun's referral to all 'major' religious groups provokes further questions: Are adherents to other, presumably 'minor' belief systems, like the Mormons, the Ba'hai, the Sikhs, or the Jehovah's Witnesses allowed to participate in the Olympic Games? Will they be permitted to bring their religious texts and to have religious services? Who will decide which of these groups belong to a major religion and who will be allowed to bring particular religious texts?

Falun Gong incorporates elements of Daoism and Buddhism. According to Li Zhanjun, Buddhism is one of the religious groups that are "permitted" at the Beijing Olympics. Therefore, even under these questionable conditions, it is still incomprehensible why Falun Gong would not be granted free access to the Beijing Games.

We understand that the Olympic Charter has adopted the position that religion or spiritual inclination should not play any role in determining who is allowed to attend the Olympics, be it as a spectator or as a competitor.

3. The policy formulated by Li Zhanjun clearly discriminates against Falun Gong. This is not compliant with the Olympic Charter, as stated in the version from July 7, 2007. Paragraph 5 of the Fundamental Principles of Olympism states:

"Any form of discrimination with regard to ... a person on grounds of ... religion, politics... or otherwise is incompatible with belonging to the Olympic Movement."

We cannot help but notice that the IOC is not adhering closely enough to the Olympic Charter and not strictly enforcing the Fundamental Principles of Olympism at the Olympic Games in Beijing.

4. The IOC rule 51 states, "*no kind of demonstration or political, religious or racial propaganda is permitted in any Olympic sites, venues or other areas.*" -

We presume this applies to the audience as well as to the host of the Games.

We consider the policy of misinformation about Falun Gong to be part of the national 'political and religious propaganda' against Falun Gong. We therefore demand that this form of misinformation about Falun Gong must cease during the period of the Olympic Games at any Olympic site and venue. Excluding Falun Gong at Olympic venues appears to be a violation of IOC rule 51 and must not be accepted by the IOC.

5. As medical doctors, we are particularly concerned with these developments and the current policy of discrimination against Falun Gong, because it suggests a form of hatred against Falun Gong.

The previously stated order to “destroy Falun Gong physically” is assigned to former President Jiang Zemin. The 8-year-long persecution of Falun Gong affirms the CCP’s scheme to eradicate the movement. The same sentiment is most likely also the driving force behind the inhuman organ harvesting from living people, described above (see under B).

If these social policies of discrimination and hatred were allowed to continue during the Olympic Games, we are afraid that it would violate the Olympic principles and that the practices of live organ harvesting from non-consenting prisoners of conscience would also continue during the Games.

6. We believe that it would be a violation of the Olympic Spirit to accept these forms of discrimination and social marginalization during the Olympics. The Olympic Charter prohibits any form of discrimination. We would like to remind the IOC that policies of discrimination or hatred against just one individual or group must not be tolerated during the Olympic Games on Olympic sites and venues.

We strongly suggest that no distinction between Falun Gong and other religious groups should be accepted during the Olympic Games and that allowing unrestricted access to the Falun Gong texts and exercise movements must be given to athletes as well as to guests at the Olympic Games. These requested actions are congruent with the Olympic Charter. In addition they would contribute to saving the lives of thousands of innocents.

If the Chinese government were not willing to suspend its policy of discrimination against Falun Gong during the Olympic Games on Olympic sites and venues, hosting the Games would not conform to the Olympic Charter.

Although China demands that guests have to abide by Chinese law, we believe China has first of all to abide by the regulations of the Olympic Charter when hosting the Olympic Games, otherwise it should not have applied for hosting the Olympic Games. When China was

bidding for the 2008 Olympic Games in 2001, the persecution of Falun Gong had already been in full progress for 2 years. By that time China should have been aware that its persecution of Falun Gong was not compliant to the Olympic Charter. We therefore believe it is China's duty to abide by the regulations of the Olympic Charter not vice versa. The IOC oversees compliance with the Olympic Charter.

F) We are aware that in the past the IOC, as well as the Chinese government has taken the position that the Olympic Games should not be politicized. This attitude provokes some remarks:

1. In 2001, China has used the argument "give us the Games so that we have a chance to improve our human rights" to win the Games. Indeed, this enticement was one of the crucial factors for some, which led to a vote in favor of China becoming the host of the 2008 Olympic Games. However, when the issue of human rights is raised recently, the Chinese government, as well as the IOC usually argue the converse, that requests for improvement of the human rights are political issues and cannot be enforced by the IOC.

This approach risks to become a double standard: on the one hand, the IOC wants to be seen as promoting human rights in China, while on the other hand, human rights are swept under the rug in an apparent attempt at appeasement.

2. The IOC stated that a boycott would be sending the wrong signal to China since it would close the doors to future improvements. In an interview with the major German newspaper, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* in June 2007 IOC President Jacques Rogge has stated that a boycott of the Beijing Games would "isolate" China and there would not be "free media".

We understand this to be a political statement in favor of the current government in China. Although it seeks to protect the Chinese government from being isolated, it does not support those who are arbitrarily "isolated" in Chinese detention due to their conscience or religious belief. However, if one rejected politicizing the Olympics, one should refrain from one-sided supportive statements.

3. We assume that the IOC is trying to be an advocate for change in China but we strongly argue that the IOC also takes a risk in passively rewarding the ongoing human

rights violations. Given the precious moral values that are part of the Olympic Movement, the IOC should rather be an advocate for those who are tortured, murdered for their organs or otherwise subject to persecution when the objective is to support social change.

4. Although some may argue that there has been some improvement of human rights in China, we are not ready to accept this statement at face value. There are numerous victims of state-sponsored persecution: Lawyer Gao Zhisheng is being detained and his whereabouts are unclear; Reporters Without Borders is excluded from the Games; Falun Gong practitioners are excluded and they will most likely continue to be subject of persecution during the Olympic Games.

The promise of improvement of human rights has not been fulfilled in substance, although there may be select areas where improvement has occurred.

5. China has participated in the Olympic boycott of the Moscow Games 1980. The conclusion must be that the Chinese government accepts the option of boycotting Olympic Games. Therefore, the Chinese government should accept the possibility of a boycott of the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing rather than using the argument that a boycott would politicize the Games.

6. At the Olympic Games in Montreal 1976, more than twenty African countries boycotted the Games to protest the discriminating policy of Apartheid in South Africa at that time. Thus there is established precedent for discrimination as a reason to boycott the Olympic Games. Discrimination against potentially tens of millions of Falun Gong practitioners at the Beijing Games is probably no less concerning than the previous Apartheid in South Africa.

All participants in the Olympics join the Games with appreciation of the Olympic Spirit. Coming together in peace without discrimination is essential to the Olympic Spirit. Discrimination may be one of the reasons why National Olympic Committees as well as athletes, coaches and audience feel uncomfortable to join the Games because they don't want to be used as passive endorser.

7. At the Helsinki Games in 1952 the People's Republic of China as well as the Republic of China (Taiwan) applied for participation. The IOC voted that both countries should be allowed to participate. One of the reasons that triggered this vote was the conviction

that the Olympic Games should be “*open for all people in the world*”.

The Helsinki example argues that the same openness should be established for the 2008 Games and that neither Falun Gong practitioners nor other respected groups should be excluded from attending the Games.

8. Regardless of how the term ‘political involvement’ will ultimately be defined, the IOC will be held accountable for its decision by the judgment of history.

The 1936 Games in Berlin remain a stain on the history of the Olympic Movement.

The IOC granted the Winter Games 1940 to Nazi Germany, despite the infamous Reichskristallnacht in 1938, the continuous persecution of Jews and the alarming re-arming of Germany. At that time, one consideration may have been that they wanted to appease Nazi Germany, but they failed: three months before the start of the Winter Games, World War II began. One of the victims was the Olympic Movement itself: the Olympic Games had to be put on hold for 12 years.

Regardless of the discussion about political involvement, if the IOC remains passive on issues of gross injustice in the hosting country, historic chronicles will not forget, and the spirit of the Olympic Movement will suffer a stain. Thus, it is incumbent upon the IOC to make a reasonable and wise decision.

9. The current discussion about human rights violations in China does not focus on the political system in China, but on basic rights of human beings. At a minimum, these are defined to be the right to life and to freedom of belief and speech. Politicians do not have the monopoly on these rights; they belong to all human beings. A discussion about these basic human rights should not be considered political. In addition these basic rights are part of the Olympic Charter and the IOC also takes charge in protecting them in the Olympic Movement.

Simply ignoring the human rights issues in China will not solve the challenges that are ahead of the IOC and the Chinese government. Mindless repetition of the official Chinese slogan that “China is on the right way”, where the facts speak differently, is likely to reflect negatively on the Olympic Movement just as it did following the 1936 Games.

Although the IOC is not a political organization, we cannot ignore that China will interpret the

IOC's current position that seems to "appreciate improvements" as approval of its policies of persecution and discrimination against unwanted social groups.

In summary, we are repulsed by China's practice of organ harvesting from living people as conclusively detailed in the investigative report by co-authors David Kilgour and David Matas. We remain concerned about unethical organ procurement practices in China. The risk that innocents are still being murdered for their organs motivates us to write to you.

The policy of discrimination against Falun Gong is one of the factors that we identified as contributive to these organ procurement practices. According to Li Zhanjun the exclusion of Falun Gong will continue during the Olympic Games. This discrimination is in clear violation of the Olympic Charter.

We are contacting you with these concerns because the IOC has to "*fulfill the mission, role and responsibilities as assigned to it by the Olympic Charter.*"

We call on the IOC to urge the Chinese government to be compliant with the Olympic Charter and to stop the discrimination of Falun Gong or any other religious group during the Olympic Games. The organizer of the Olympic Games should provide:

- unrestricted access for everyone, including Falun Gong practitioners,
- unrestricted access to Falun Gong related texts,
- unrestricted access to accompanying exercise movements of Falun Gong.

If the host of the Olympic Games cannot conform to the Olympic Charter, the IOC should take appropriate action. If the IOC cannot succeed in enforcing China to abide by the Olympic Charter and to adjust its current policy, we would consider it a loss to the Olympic Spirit. In that scenario we will call upon NOCs as well as individual athletes and coaches to boycott the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing. We would also suggest to the IOC to consider a reevaluation of the venue for the 2008 Olympic Games due to non-compliance of the host.

This is with the best intention of upholding the Olympic Spirit and in order to support the pure objective of the Olympic Movement.