



OLYMPIC COUNCIL OF ASIA

Statement by Olympic Council of Asia Director General Mr Husain Al-Musallam

Kuwait City, Kuwait, March 24, 2020

The Olympic Council of Asia would like to express its total support for the decision of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to postpone the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games until next year.

The OCA appreciates that this must have been an extremely difficult decision to make, but the rapidly deteriorating situation around the world due to COVID-19 has made this postponement a necessity. The health and wellbeing of athletes and all Olympic stakeholders must be the top priority.

The IOC, along with Japanese authorities, have tried to delay this decision as long as possible in the hope that the situation might improve in the coming weeks and months but, sadly, this has not been the case. Now is the time for the Olympic sports movement around the world to show unity and solidarity and to work as one team in preparing for a brighter future.

At this time, we would like to extend our deepest sympathies to the Organising Committee of Tokyo 2020 for all the work, planning and preparation they have put in over a number of years – only for this completely unforeseen pandemic to intervene and change the course of Olympic history. We know Japan will recover from this setback and put on an even greater show to mark the coming together of humanity after finally defeating this virus.

We would also like to send our gratitude and appreciation to the athletes of Asia for all their efforts in qualifying – or attempting to qualify – for the Olympic Games. Although you must be disappointed at this time, the dream is not over. The Olympic Games will come back stronger and with even more passion – and so will you. The OCA has always championed the interests of the athletes and it did its best to ensure that the preparations of the Asian Athletes were not affected

when this pandemic was at its peak in Asia. The OCA will continue to create the best possible environment for our athletes to train and participate in the Olympic Games which is an amalgamation of human spirit, culture and sports.

Our National Olympic Committees have worked tremendously hard behind the scenes in preparing the best conditions possible for their athletes. You have followed every guideline and met every deadline in guaranteeing a smooth build-up not only for your athletes and officials but also for the Organising Committee in Tokyo. The athletes and organisers will need you again and rely on you to bring together all aspects of management and operations in the future.

The OCA also commends the efforts of our International/ Asian sport federations, for the way you have gone about amending your qualification schedules in an effort to be fair to all athletes from all corners of Asia. This has been a near-impossible task in recent weeks due to the ever-changing picture of the pandemic around the world and this postponement will now give you time to reassess the situation and, hopefully, make new and concrete plans.

Husain Al Musallam
Director General OCA