



JANEZ JANŠA

Prime Minister of Slovenia



MARGARITIS SCHINAS

Vice-President of the European Commission
Promoting our European Way of Life

Brussels, 18 July 2021

Dear President,

On Friday 23 July, the 2020 Olympic Games will open in Tokyo, a celebration of sport and togetherness much anticipated across the globe. The 2020 Olympic Games are particularly special as they come after more than a year of hardship for our societies all over the world. Their postponement demonstrated the unprecedented impact of the pandemic considering the Olympic Games have only ever been prevented from happening by war. The International Olympic Committee took the right decision last year on the need to postpone the Games; and it took the right decision to hold the games this year as an example of perseverance and of in the enduring ability of humanity to adjust in challenging times and as a symbol of how unity in sport can offer encouragement, joy and inspiration to people.

Ever since their creation in Greek antiquity and their rebirth in modern times, the Olympic Games have promoted peace and unity for centuries. They are a powerful symbol of peaceful coexistence, tolerance and solidarity – values that lie at the foundation of the European Union. Sport itself is recognised in the European Union Treaty especially for its social and educational function and the EU now has specific programmes to promote sport for youth. More recently, the creation of a portfolio on promoting the European Way of Life included sport in its composition as a signal of its contribution to the European Union's values and foundations.

We believe that, as two organisations united by these shared values, the European Union and the International Olympic Committee are uniquely positioned to promote peace and understanding at a time when the world needs it most.

Mr Thomas Bach
President of the International Olympic Committee
Maison Olympique
1007 Lausanne
Switzerland

As Prime Minister of the country holding currently the Presidency of the European Union and as the European Commission Vice President for the Promotion of the European Way of Life, we would therefore like to propose that on the occasion of the presentation of national teams at the official opening ceremony of the Olympic Games, the Slovenian Olympic team enter the stadium bearing the Slovenian flag alongside the flag of the European Union. This will render Slovenian athletes ambassadors for European unity and the values underpinning our Union which match those of the Olympic movement.

We will fully support you in any way you see appropriate in introducing this special and historical gesture which can serve as a powerful representation of how unity and peace must be celebrated through this event, fundamental as they are to both the European and Olympic spirit.

Yours faithfully,

Janez JANŠA

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Margaritis SCHINAS

A handwritten signature in blue ink, featuring a long, sweeping horizontal line at the top and a shorter, curved line below it.

Mr Thomas Bach
President of the International Olympic Committee
Maison Olympique
1007 Lausanne
Switzerland