

**January 9, 1986**

**Meeting between the International Olympic  
Committee President and the ROK's National  
Olympic Committee on North Korea's Participation  
in the 1988 Olympic games**

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<https://wilson-center.drivingcreative.com/document/113460>

**Summary:**

Notes on an informal meeting between IOC President Samaranch and members of South Korea's Olympic Committee. They discussed the issue of whether or not North Korea would participate in the upcoming 1988 Summer Olympics. The group discussed sports that could possibly be given to the North Korean side to organize, whether or not North and South Korea would compete as a unified team, and plans for the next meeting between the IOC and the Olympic Committees for North and South Korea.

**Original Language:**

English

**Contents:**

Transcript - English

(stamped confidential)

INFORMAL MEETING WITH THE NOC OF THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA

Lausanne, 9th January 1986

18.00 – 19.00 hours

Persons present :

For the IOC

H.E. Mr. Juan Antonio SAMARANCH, IOC President

For the NOC of the Republic of Korea

Mr. Chong-Ha KIM, President, NOC of the Republic of Korea

Mr. Chong-sik CHANG, Vice-President, NOC of the Republic of Korea

H.E. Mr. Park, Ambassador of the Republic of Korea (Geneva)

The IOC President stated that he really did not know whether or not the North Koreans were ready to take part in the Games in Seoul, but he had advised them that it was in their best interest be present in Seoul for the meetings in April.

Mr. Kim felt that a North Korean delegation would attend the meetings in Seoul and perhaps also the Olympic Games.

Joint team

The IOC President remarked that the DPR Korean NOC strongly favoured a united team. He continued that he had been cautious by saying that this was purely a Korean problem, to be solved by the two sides and the IOC would not preside the discussions.

Mr. Kim thanked the IOC President for his co-operation in this matter. He explained that the Olympic Games in Seoul were the first Games to take place in the Korean nation and therefore the Korean people would be very disappointed if the Korean teams entered the stadium without their national flags or the name of the countries. For both sides, he considered that a better solution would be to use both flags and names but march together.

In the opinion of the NOC of the Republic of Korea, the DPR Korea wished to have a united team in order that they could participate in every event and would not be subject to qualification.

Mr. Kim felt that the possibility of a single team could work if both leaders of North and South Korea agreed. However, the North Koreans could cause problems by prolonging the negotiations for a single team, thus making organisation difficult. This was a tactic employed by the North Koreans during all joint discussions between North and South Korea.

Possible sports events which could be organised by the DPR Korea

The IOC President asked Mr. Kim which sports he considered could be given to the North Koreans, to which Mr. Kim replied that he had given this matter a great deal of thought during the previous night. Table tennis was one of the possibilities and intended to propose this upon his return to the Republic of Korea. He pointed out that there was no qualification event and the North Koreans were strong in table tennis.

Mr. Kim had also thought of a canoeing event as there was a river which ran between the two countries. However, the IOC President pointed out that the SLOOC had spent a great deal of money on a special site for the canoeing and he did not feel that this would be a good solution.

The IOC President felt that the sports offered should be ones which were easy to organise.

In reply to the IOC President's question regarding archery, Mr. Kim pointed out that the South Koreans were better at this sport, but it was a possibility.

The IOC President stressed that he was not optimistic and very much would depend upon the meeting between the two Korean leaders at the forthcoming summit in March. The IOC intended to keep the door open, but he confirmed that the IOC would always support the contract signed in Baden Baden awarding the Games to Seoul.

As far as the Asian Games were concerned, it was important to see what happened. During various international events held in Seoul, four Soviet teams had already participated.

- Next meeting

The IOC President commented that the next meeting between the three parties would be held in Lausanne, which Mr. Kim agreed was a better idea than in either of the two Koreas.

The IOC President mentioned that a delegation of the NOC of the DPR Korea would probably be coming to Lausanne in March in order to hold private discussions.

Mr. Kim informed the IOC President that the NOC of the Republic of Korea did not intend to push or reject the North Koreans as they were afraid of the repercussions. A flexible attitude would be maintained and the SLOOC and NOC of the Republic of Korea would put its trust in the IOC.