

**February 16, 1988**

**Letter from the International Olympic Committee  
President to Fidel Castro regarding North Korea's  
Participation in the 1988 Olympics**

**Citation:**

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**Summary:**

Letter from the International Olympic Committee President to Castro in response to Cuba's decision not to attend the 1988 Seoul Olympics.

**Original Language:**

English

**Contents:**

Transcript - English

LETTERS FROM : H.E. Juan Antonio SAMARANCH, IOC President  
TO : Dr. Fidel CASTRO RUZ, President of the Council of State and the  
Government of Cuba  
DATE : 16th February 1988

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Dear President and Friend,

I am writing to you from Calgary, where the XVth Winter Games are taking place with great success, in response to your letter of 13th January in which you informed me of the decision by the Cuban Olympic Committee to decline the invitation to participate in the Games of the XXIVth Olympiad in 1988.

I was extremely sorry to learn of this, as once again Cuban athletes will not be present at the greatest sporting event in the world, the Olympic Games.

May I remind you, dear President, that after our last conversation during which you asked me to improve our offer to the Olympic Committee of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which we did, we hoped that this gesture would have brought about a definitive solution to the problem. This, unfortunately, has not been the case.

I had intended, and I still intend to go to Pyongyang in order to meet the highest authorities of the country and make one last effort to achieve that which we all seek, namely the presence of all countries at the great meeting place of friendship, cooperation and peace called the Olympic Games.

Even though the official deadline for confirming participation at the Olympic Games has passed, we are continuing to leave the door open in an attempt to reach a positive solution. I have to say, however, that time is passing very quickly and an agreement must be reached as soon as possible.

Dear Commandant, I am appealing to your well-known love for sporting in asking you to try to help us, and also to reconsider your own position regarding the athletes of your country whom we all admire so much, not just for their ability but for their customary exemplary conduct.

Sincere greetings of affection and friendship, as always.

(signature)