

International Olympic Committee: London 2012

Welcome:

My name is Arjun Vaidya and I am a sophomore at Brown currently studying International Relations, Economics and History. I live in Mumbai, India, and went to high school there before coming to Brown. Other than MUN, I am interested in playing squash and cricket. I am also very fond of playing the drums and debating. Last year, I was involved in BUSUN as a chair in the Indian Cabinet for the India-Pakistan Joint Cabinet Crisis. I hope you enjoy reading this background guide that will serve as a precursor to your research for committee.

Looking forward to seeing you in November,

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Topic 1: The Fight Against Doping in Sport

The use of performance-enhancing drugs has been a part of the Olympic Games since the ancient Olympics. In ancient times, athletes used to try and prepare lizard meat in a special manner to gain an athletic edge. In the modern games, drug use was first documented during the 1904 Olympics. With increasing drug use at the Olympic Games, the IOC had to take certain steps. By 1967 performance-enhancing drugs were banned and drug controls were introduced for the first time at the 1968 Winter Games.

Eventually these controls were systematically formulated and testing regimens were established. Today, the authoritative body on the use of performance enhancing drugs is the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA), which oversees the testing of athletes for several sports federations including the IOC.

WADA was established in 1999 to be the premier global anti-doping agency. It has been structured in such a manner that it receives half

of its funding from the International Olympic Committee and the other half from various government contributors. Its key activities include scientific research, education, development of anti-doping capacities, and monitoring of the World Anti Doping Code — the document that is considered the global code for sports doping offenses WADA's mission statement reads, "The World Anti-Doping Agency's (WADA) mission is to promote, coordinate and monitor the fight against doping in sport in all its forms."

WADA continues to evolve and innovate as drug makers continue to sophisticate their methods.

Case Study

"Zero Tolerance for Doping" was adopted as an official slogan for the Beijing Olympic Games. Six athletes were eliminated from the 4,500 samples that were tested before the Olympics. These samples will be frozen and stored for the next 8 years. One problem with this testing is that it is still unclear who owns the samples, the host country or the IOC. Additionally, the quality of testing by the IOC in 2008 was a cause for concern. BBC reported that some of the positive tests were marked negative by the Chinese authorities. Also, the number of reported cases was much less than those reported in Athens. This might be an indication of decreased drug use, but could also mean poor testing or increased innovation by the drug manufacturers to bypass testing.

Topic 2: Ensuring the Safety of Athletes and Spectators during the Games

With less than two years until the Olympics in London and facility construction underway, the question still remains: is London safe from a terrorist threat? London has recently become a target for international terrorism. Ironically, the day after the city was awarded the Olympics, four homegrown suicide bombers attacked the city's subway and bus network, killing 52 commuters.

Sir Ian Johnston, Director of the London 2012 Olympics Security Committee, says the official threat level during the games will be set at “severe” — just one notch below the most extreme level of “critical.” “You can’t run at critical for very long,” Johnston said during a three-day world press briefing on Olympic preparations this week. “We can escalate to critical, but when you’re running at severe, that’s already a pretty high level of threat.” Johnston also said that security will be at a 100% search regime in 2012 and every spectator will be screened. This tight security policy in London marks a shift from last February’s Winter Olympics in Vancouver, where the threat was minimal.

Security has always been a big issue at the Olympics since the slaying of 11 Israeli athletes and coaches at the 1972 Munich Games. Britain is viewed as a high security threat, and the Olympics offer a platform for any terrorist group looking for maximum impact and publicity. According to Bob Ayers, a US Intelligence Agent, Britain is Al Qaeda’s second target after the US. “Here’s this massive event coming up. You know exactly when it’s going to occur ... If you’re a terrorist planner, it doesn’t get any better than this.” Ayers also stressed how difficult it would be for authorities to stop a determined suicide bomber.

The task of guarding the Olympics is huge: protecting 10,500 athletes, 15,000 officials, 25,000 media personnel and hundreds of thousands of visitors and spectators. About 12,000 police officers will be on duty each day — more than double the 5,000 per day used to guard a Group of 20 summit meeting last year in east London, which was held close to the Olympic site.

The centerpiece complex is the 1-square-mile Olympic Park in the Stratford area, where venues include the 80,000-seat main stadium, aquatics center, velodrome, basketball and handball arenas and the main media center. The outer structures of the venues are mostly complete. The event is expected to have 250,000 spectators per day in the Olympic Park.

But the Olympics also feature venues around the city, including Lord’s Cricket Ground (archery), Wimbledon (tennis), the Horse Guard’s Parade (beach volleyball) and the O2 Arena (basketball and gymnastics). The sailing venue is in Weymouth on England’s south coast, and soccer matches will be played across Britain, including Glasgow, Manchester, Cardiff and Coventry. National Olympic teams will also have pre-Games training camps around the country.

Security outside the Olympic venues is another major challenge, particularly on the public transport network. Hundreds of thousands of people will be riding subway trains and the Javelin shuttle train running from central London to the Olympic Park. This is another major concern and possibility for terrorist activity that members of the opposition have. Some believe the government has not made enough efforts in this area.

The IOC, however, has expressed its full support of Britain on its security measures. Britain’s new Conservative-led coalition government is urgently reviewing security plans for the Olympics. It has pledged not to cut the \$950 million core security budget, even though there have been major budget cuts in other departments to recover from the national debt.

British military generals and the Defense Secretary have also stated that they will play a role in maintaining security. It has been rumored that British commandos (who were deployed in Afghanistan) may also be used to check roads for bombs and other security hazards.

London will also likely see a range of new technologies deployed to protect the Olympics, including CCTV systems to check for suspicious activity among spectators and unmanned drone aircraft to monitor crowds.

Ultimately, the Olympics is a public spectacle and although security is a major concern, the authorities have to try and find a balance between being safe and maintaining the pleasure of attending the Games for the fans.

Topic 3: Discrimination at the Olympics

According to Webster's dictionary, discrimination is defined as a social, economic, political or legal distinction made between individuals or groups such that one has the power to treat the other unfavorably. Its definition is extended to the policy of treating someone differently and possibly denying those rights because he or she differs from the majority. In the field of sports, discrimination has occurred on the basis of race, gender, sexual orientation, and other classifications. As seen in the two case studies below, sports and sporting events like the Olympics have been surrounded by the controversy of discrimination. In our committee, we will discuss ways to avoid and eliminate such discrimination in the 2012 London games.

Case Study: Past Gender Discrimination

What can be called "sanctioned sex discrimination" in a publicly funded exercise on the scale of the Olympics is a major cause for concern. According to the Women's Court, Canada, "it reinforces and perpetuates a troubling but traditional discriminatory message about women, athletics, and social citizenship."

Although 37 years ago the US Congress passed Title IX of the Education Amendment, prohibiting discrimination based on sex in educational programs and activities that have funding assistance from federal sources, the Salt Lake Olympics in 2002 flouted this. Ski jumping remained the last Olympic sport that bars female participation. Women hoped for a change in the 2010 Winter Games. However, despite a 2006 vote by the International Ski Federation (FIS) to approve a request that the IOC add women's ski jumping to the 2010 Games, the IOC Executive Board decided not to include the sport. President Jacques Rogge claimed that this was decided based on technicalities and not on gender, but he has been greatly rebutted by women athletes who feel this remained a judgment of their abilities being 'inferior' While top-level ski jumpers are satisfactory, in 2006 when the decision was

made there were 83 competitors from 14 nations jumped at the top level, while in a sport like women's ski cross which was added that year, there were 30 skiers from 11 nations. As a result, there will now be greater difficulty for women ski jumpers to find funding and sponsors when the event is not inclusive of an Olympic standing, which may further deteriorate the number of women excelling the sport or even taking the sport.

In 2008 women ski jumpers launched a lawsuit against the Vancouver Olympic Committee (VANOC) seeking to participate in the 2010 Winter Games. The Canadian Supreme Court recently upheld a lower court ruling that acknowledged gender discrimination as well as VANOC's status as a government entity, but the court refused to hold the IOC to Canada's human rights charter.

Case Study: Previous Racial Discrimination

Understandably, a sporting event between countries and cultures provides great potential for racism to flourish. Examples of this were seen in the Beijing Olympics 2008 when Spain's Basketball Federation published a good luck advertisement for its men's team (the world champions), in which the team is pictured pulling at the sides of their eyes in a slit-eyed gesture. There was no obvious intention to upset their Olympic hosts in Beijing, but the irresponsible picture caused controversy and was interpreted as a racial slur. It was also the fear of racism that ended up marring Spain's bid to host the 2016 or 2020 Olympics.

Further Resources

Topic 1:

<http://www.wada-ama.org>

<http://www.sports-reference.com/olympics/athletes/hi/tom-hicks-1.html>

[http://www.dw-world.de/
dw/article/0,2144,786574,00.html](http://www.dw-world.de/dw/article/0,2144,786574,00.html)

[http://www.newsweek.com/2000/09/10/
the-drug-charade.html](http://www.newsweek.com/2000/09/10/the-drug-charade.html)

Topic 2:

<http://www.london2012.com/making-it-happen/>

[http://www.mobbu.com/
Blog/50/security-at-london-2012-olympics](http://www.mobbu.com/Blog/50/security-at-london-2012-olympics)

[http://www.info4security.com/
section.asp?navcode=421](http://www.info4security.com/section.asp?navcode=421)

Topic 3:

[http://womenscourt.ca/2010/04/
sex-discrimination-at-the-2010-winter-olympics/](http://womenscourt.ca/2010/04/sex-discrimination-at-the-2010-winter-olympics/)

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/
michele-morris/olympic-gender-
discrimina_b_461592.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/michele-morris/olympic-gender-discrimina_b_461592.html)

[http://www.la84foundation.org/SportsLibrary/JSH/
JSH1976/JSH0303/jsh0303d.pdf](http://www.la84foundation.org/SportsLibrary/JSH/JSH1976/JSH0303/jsh0303d.pdf)

[http://btr.michaelkwan.com/2008/07/25/
the-inherent-racism-of-the-olympics/](http://btr.michaelkwan.com/2008/07/25/the-inherent-racism-of-the-olympics/)