



LEMKIN INSTITUTE STATEMENT ON BEIJING WINTER OLYMPICS

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With the 2022 winter Olympic games wrapping up in Beijing, *the Lemkin Institute once again expresses its disappointment and objection to international engagement with a regime that has committed, and continues to commit, gross human rights violations toward the Uyghur minority population present within its borders.* The International Olympic Committee's support for regimes which are accused of committing genocide is not apolitical and should deeply concern the international community.

According to reporting by independent experts, at least a million Uyghurs and other Muslims in the region have been apprehended and either held in extra-judicial camps or sent to prisons, with survivors making accusations of "torture, forced sterilization and sexual assault." In turning a blind eye to such reporting and suggesting that Olympic support does not amount to political support, the IOC, corporate sponsors, and dignitaries in attendance provided their tacit acceptance of China's flagrant human rights abuses.

Despite resolutions accusing China of genocide being passed in countries like the UK, Canada, the Netherlands, and Lithuania, as well as an accusation of genocide by US President Biden, it is not enough to call attention to such abuses if China avoids consequences all the same. Following the findings of a UK-based Uyghur Tribunal this past December that the "birth control and sterilization measures allegedly carried out by the [Chinese] state against the Uyghurs" amount to genocide, a Chinese government spokesman told the BBC that "the body was a 'pseudo tribunal' and a 'political tool used by a few anti-China elements to deceive and mislead the public'."

Just as support for the Olympic Games of 1936 provided Adolf Hitler with a green light for increased persecution of Jews and other minorities, so too will this year's games appear to demonstrate an international lack of concern about China's gross human rights abuses, including credible accusations of genocide. If there is any real commitment to "Never Again," it would be wise not to hold the Olympic games in a perpetrator state, no matter how powerful.

The *Lemkin Institute reminds the international community that the massive scale of today's Olympic games, which cost millions of dollars and involve massive displacements, are the result of an enduring Nazification of the Olympics.* Hitler viewed 1936 as an opportunity to promote his government and its ideology of racial supremacy by building massive arenas and stadiums to "outdo" what had been done in past games. In the wake of the Beijing Olympics, we urge the world

to shine an even brighter light on China's human rights abuses and to marshal all tools at its disposal to encourage China to conform to international law.

Going forward the Lemkin Institute urges the International Olympic Committee to allow the games to return to their more modest roots, so that they can once more become a tool for global peace rather than a vehicle for oppression.