

May 31, 2014

The Honorable Thomas Bach, President
The International Olympic Committee

c/o Mr. Mark Adams, Communications Director
The International Olympic Committee
Chateau de Vidy
Case postale 356
100 Lausanne (IOC), Switzerland

Dear President Bach,

We appreciated the IOC's letter dated 28 May 2014, from Mr. Mark Adams, IOC Communications Director, on your behalf. We are pleased that the IOC is committed to respecting the environment and creating a sustainable future for the 2020 Olympic venue. Your statement that environmental concerns are important in the planning and operation processes right through to the long-term effects of Olympic Games is heartening.

We understand that your representative contacted the Japan Organising Committee about our concerns, namely that the Japan Sports Council (JSC) has violated the Olympic Movement's Agenda 21, paragraphs 3.1.6, 3.2.2, and 3.2.3. We also understand that the Organising Committee assured your representative that the Committee recognizes our concerns and that the Japan Sports Council is examining the optimal solution for the design of the stadium.

Unfortunately, the Japan Organising Committee and the Japan Sports Council lied to the IOC. The JSC is ramming their new stadium project forward in spite of rising objections by a broad-scoped alliance of citizens, architects, city planners, historians and media reporters. The situation is extremely urgent because the JSC is all ready for the demolition of the existing stadium. As Mr. Adams noted in his above-mentioned letter, the iconic 1964 Tokyo Olympic Stadium is an important part of Japanese sports' history.

The JSC is determined to replace the stadium with a new one. They have ignored our repeated requests to renovate the relatively young 56-year-old stadium. They have refused to consider cost-effective and low-impact alternatives to the JSC's proposed stadium – designs suggested by many eminent architects including the 2013 Pritzker Laureate Toyo Ito.

On Wednesday, May 28, 2014, JSC announced the new stadium design, which, though scaled back from the original, is still a mammoth totally out of sync with its verdant surroundings. This whole area was landscaped in 1926 as the outer garden of the Meiji Jingu Shrine, a place of worship dedicated to the spirits of Emperor and Empress Meiji. The historic area has been carefully conserved with strict building height limits for any construction in the area. Its precious green space serves as an oasis for Tokyoites and visitors alike. The planned 70-meter-high new stadium with its affiliated facilities will inevitably decimate the landscaping and greenery in this area.

The JSC's new stadium plan clearly violates the Olympic Movement's Agenda 21, paragraph 3. 2. 3, Sports facilities:

“A special effort must be made to encourage the best possible use of existing sports facilities, to keep them in good condition and to improve them by increasing safety and reducing their environmental impact.

The creation of new sports facilities must be confined to cases in which demand cannot be satisfied by using or renovating existing facilities.

The location and construction of new facilities must be in compliance with the provisions of paragraph 3. 1. 6 of this Agenda 21. These facilities will have to comply with local legislation and be designed to fit in with the surrounding natural or man-made scenery.”

The JSC has ignored the IOC’s above stipulations by canceling the original renovation plan for the existing stadium. Their switching to building a new stadium violates your stated policies. In the 2012 international design competition that the JSC organized, they intentionally ignored the area’s historic and environmental value by eliminating local legislative limits in the terms of building specifications they released to competition entrants.

Other relevant authorities, including the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports, the Tokyo Metropolitan Government, and the Japan Olympic Committee, have minimized publicity on the new design’s detrimental environmental impact in order to evade public criticism. The environmental assessment for this project, in compliance with IOC’s requirements, has, in truth, yet to be completed.

We request you, therefore, to alert the Organising Committee and the Japan Olympic Committee to the JSC’s violations of Agenda 21 and to order them to stop the existing stadium’s imminent demolition. We ask you to remind them that we Tokyo citizens are stakeholders in the national stadium issue and that they should have more respect for our opinions.

Thank you very much for your kind understanding of the grave concerns we have about the violations of the Olympic Movement’s Agenda 21 and the fate of historic Meiji Jingu outer garden area. With every desire for the unparalleled success of the 2020 Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics, we ask for your support.

Sincerely yours,

(Mrs.) Nobuko Shimizu
Co-chair
The Custodians of the National Stadium, Tokyo