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Jacques Rogge  
President  
International Olympic Committee  
Lausanne, Switzerland

September 11, 2007

Dear Mr. President,

When China won the bid for the 2008 Summer Olympic Games in 2001, both the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and the Chinese government predicted the Games would have a positive impact on human rights and development in China. Since then, you have said the Olympics “can only be a catalyst for change and not a panacea.” We agree—there is no magic bullet for complex human rights problems. However, with greater transparency and accountability, the Games could help generate lasting improvements and launch reforms beyond 2008.

Human Rights in China (HRIC) requests that the IOC make public the Host City Contract with Beijing (the Contract), which sets out the legal, commercial and financial rights and obligations of the IOC and the Beijing Organizing Committee for the Olympic Games (BOCOG). You have expressed confidence that Beijing will host a successful Games and that BOCOG “will fulfill these requirements and obligations of the Host City Contract.” Without public disclosure of this Contract, however, the public cannot hold the IOC or BOCOG accountable to fulfilling these requirements and obligations.

Although restrictive state secrets provisions often limit the public’s right to know, disclosing the Contract would reinforce domestic Chinese open government initiatives underway, including a new law, the Provision of the PRC on the Disclosure of Government Information (effective May 2008). Releasing the Contract would also contribute to your efforts to ground public expectations regarding Beijing’s obligations as the host city. This action would also follow the spirit of transparency adopted by other host cities such as Atlanta, Sydney, Salt Lake City, and Athens.

As an international Chinese human rights organization, HRIC sincerely hopes that the Games will be successful and will benefit all the Chinese people—in 2008 and beyond. We look forward to your response and would welcome an opportunity to meet with you.

Sincerely,

Sharon Hom  
Executive Director

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