

Swedish Minister to Snub Sochi Opening Ceremony Over Human Rights

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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STOCKHOLM — Sweden's sports minister says she will snub the opening ceremony at the Sochi Olympics for political reasons.

In an interview with state broadcaster SVT, Lena Adelsohn Liljeroth says human rights are important and her decision to skip the Feb. 7 ceremony should be seen as a "political marker."

Liljeroth says she will attend the Olympics themselves to support Sweden's athletes.

Adelsohn Liljeroth, a member of Sweden's ruling Conservative Party, called the opening ceremony a "propaganda stunt" by President Vladimir Putin. She said there are many unanswered questions about the cost of the event and its impact on the environment.

Activists have called for a boycott of the Games amid concerns for the environment, Russia's human rights record and the anti-gay law enacted last year.

Adelsohn Liljeroth spoke out at a time when Stockholm is bidding for the 2022 Winter Games.

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