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Russia Banned From Winter Olympics — the Reactions

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Dozhd TV / Twitter

On Tuesday, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) barred Russian athletes and officials from next year's Winter Games in South Korea. IOC President Thomas Bach said the ban clears a path for clean athletes to compete under a neutral flag in Pyeongchang next February.

This is how Russia is reacting to the news:

— Irina Rodnina: three-time Olympic medalist and State Duma deputy

"How they fear us. Sorry guys. We weren't able to protect you."

Embed:

> Как они нас боятся.
> Ребята извините,не смогли защитить.
>
> — Irina Rodnina (@IRodnina) December 5, 2017

— Alexander Zubkov: head of the Bobsleigh Federation

“Everything was pointed towards Russian athletes being allowed to compete with a neutral status.

"Now athletes need to decide for themselves whether they’ll go or not to the South Korea Games. The bobsleigh federation will help those athletes who will want to go to Pyeongchang. That’s for sure.”

Related article: IOC Bars Russian Athletes and Officials From Winter Olympic Games

— Dmitry Dubrovsky: head of the Federation of Ski Jumping

“I’m convinced that Russian top athletes, should go and compete not just for themselves, but for everyone else.

"This hurts for those who have been disqualified, so we need to fight for them.”

— Nikolai Olyunin: Olympic snowboarder

“I’m not shocked by the IOC’s decision, it was all going that way, we were prepared. Now everyone will wait for instructions from our leadership, and how they see this. For now, no one knows what to do.

"I would want to participate in defense of our flag, but I understand that what’s happened is hugely disrespectful towards our country. I wouldn’t want to go under a neutral flag, but I need to think some more.”

Related article: What It’s Like to Be a Russian Athlete Today (Op-ed)

— Yelena Isinbayeva: Olympic medalist and pole-vaulter, now head of Russia’s anti-doping committee

“What remains of the Olympic principles, the Olympic spirit, the idea of the Olympic Games? Without Russia, this is a crippled Olympics!”

— Valery Gazzayev: deputy head of State Duma sports committee

“I believe the IOC’s decision should be seen as political provocation, that’s all I can say.”

— Franz Klintsevich, the deputy chairman of the Federation Council's Committee for Defense and Security

[Calling for a boycott] “A great power should not be incognito at the Olympics.”

Related article: Russia Should Stop Playing the Doping Scandal Victim (Op-ed)

— Irina Avvakumova: national ski jumping champion

“I don’t know how other athletes will react, but I haven’t trained for years to go somewhere to not compete on behalf of my country. It’s not sportslike to go to the Olympics just in order to be there. “

— Dmitry Navosha, editor Sports.ru

“My personal opinion is that, even if everything in the McLaren report, the Rodchenkov confessions, the stories of Stepanova and others is true, two years is enough time to solve the situation. To recognize the problem and announce a plan to solve it. I’m sure that would have been enough for full access to the Olympic Games.”

“And yes, the demonstrative non-firing of Mutko and his guys (in any normal country he would’ve long resigned himself) is also ridiculous. The only thing that could have been more demonstrative would have been to make him prime minister. Considering the current line — they could.”

Related article: Russia's Sports Minister Says No Chance of Winter Games Doping Ban

— Alexander Zhukov: head of Russia’s Olympic Committee, stripped of IOC membership today

“Russia’s disqualification is supposed to be lifted on the last day of the Olympics and we’ll show the Russian flag at the closing ceremony.

"The IOC hasn’t finalized formulating its decision, it would continue to formulate it. All of Russian society, not just the sports community, needs to think about the situation. We will consider this at a meeting with Russian athletes, federation heads, trainers, and Olympic athletes.”

— Maria Zakharova, Foreign Ministry spokeswoman

“What we haven’t had to put up with historically from our ‘partners.’ But they can’t bring us down. Not a world war, nor the collapse of the Soviet Union, not sanctions … We take it on board and survive.

“Russian sport is not meant to be. The global prognosis didn’t expect Russia’s resurrection as a global sports power. A new generation of athletes emerged, global sport was full of Russian athletes’ achievements, Russia held a truly great [Sochi] Olympics. Sport became a national idea, embodied in tens of thousands of schools, new stadiums, and the desire to participate in sports.

"They’re constantly trying to show us the craziness of it all: our way of life, culture, history and now sports.

“Is it painful? Very. Our soul and heart is with our athletes. Will we survive? Yes.”

— Natalya Poklonskaya: State Duma deputy, former Prosecutor General of Crimea

“The Olympics without Russia — that’s a hollow shell. Our great country and powerful athletes are an irritant to our partners abroad. But we can prove from here that Russia is strong and it’s impossible to break us. We should only participate under the flag of our great country. Victory is ours!”

— Mikhail Gorbachev: first and last president of the Soviet Union

“This is a disgrace that undermines a very important institution of international cooperation. From the very outset, I supported restoring [Russia’s status.]"

— Gerard Depardieu: French actor

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— Alexander Ovechkin: Olympic ice-hockey player

“This is humiliating and I pity the athletes. This is very painful and it’s a shock. I find it difficult to give any advice in this situation. But to go there on our own expense and participate under a neutral flag — I don’t get that at all.”

— Ilya Kovalchuk: Olympic ice-hockey player
“We should definitely go to the Olympics! To refuse is to give in. We all understand perfectly

well that the IOC's decision is pure politics and know who it targets.

"We athletes are apolitical. For us, this tournament won't differ from the others. Patriotism, love for one's country — those things are in the heart. For that you don't need to shout it out or even carry a flag on one's chest. If, God willing, we are successful, we will definitely sing our anthem."

— Sergei Sobyanin: Moscow Mayor

"Russian athletes might not be interested in politics, but that doesn't mean politics isn't interested in thmn. The [IOC's] decision is part of the political harassment of Russia. I sympathize with those people who in all honesty prepared for the 2018 Olympic Games and now won't be able to compete under the Russian flag."

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