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March 4, 2016

Thomas Bach  
President  
International Olympic Committee  
Château de Vidy  
Case postale 356  
1001 Lausanne, Switzerland

Dear President Bach:

This year marks the 44<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the brutal hostage-taking and massacre of 11 Israeli athletes at the 1972 Olympic Games in Munich. This despicable act of terrorism by the Palestinian militant group Black September has forever tarnished the memory of the Munich Olympics, an event which would have otherwise been remembered like all Olympic Games as a symbol of international cooperation, camaraderie, and unity.

That is why our continued vigilance against prejudice, hate, and intolerance remains absolutely critical. As we approach the 2016 Summer Olympics in Brazil, I implore you to schedule a minute of silence during the opening ceremonies to honor the memories of the Munich 11 athletes. Such a solemn display of unity at this year's games would be a powerful reminder that those who espouse violence are overwhelmingly outnumbered by those who defend tolerance.

In response to my similar previous requests, your predecessors and other members of the IOC have argued that a minute of silence would politicize the Olympic Games and that there have been various memorials or tributes to the Munich 11 in Germany, Israel, the United States, and on the margins of other Games during the last four decades. I remain entirely unpersuaded by such arguments.

The Munich 11 were athletes, coaches, and referees proudly representing their country when they were racially targeted and murdered in an act of pure barbarism. For the victims' families, whose painful loss is all the more palpable with each and every Olympic Game, a minute of silence would be a fitting recognition of their sacrifice and ultimate display of respect for their memory.

Your birth country of Germany has never wavered when it comes to remembering those who were persecuted during the darkest chapter in human history. As my late colleague Congressman Tom Lantos, a Holocaust survivor, once said, "*The veneer of civilization is paper thin. We are its guardians, and we can never rest.*"

It is my sincere hope that the International Olympic Committee will heed these words, and while the whole world watches, finally pay tribute to the Israeli athletes in the most respectful way possible – devoting one minute of silence during this year’s opening ceremony to their memory.

In advance of your meeting with the victims’ families, I appreciate your consideration of this request, and I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



Nita M. Lowey  
Member of Congress