

December 4, 1984

**Letter from International Olympic Committee (IOC)
President Juan Antonio Samaranch to Fidel Castro**

Citation:

"Letter from International Olympic Committee (IOC) President Juan Antonio Samaranch to Fidel Castro", December 4, 1984, Wilson Center Digital Archive, International Olympic Committee Archives (Switzerland), SEOUL '88 / POLITICAL MATTERS DE 1982 A MAI 1986. Obtained by Sergey Radchenko and translated by Sebastian Naranjo Rodriguez <https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/113917>

Summary:

Letter from Juan Antonio Samaranch, President of the International Olympic Committee, to Cuban leader Fidel Castro on the 1988 Olympic Games in Seoul

Credits:

This document was made possible with support from Leon Levy Foundation

Original Language:

Spanish

Contents:

Translation - English

Mr. Fidel CASTRO RUZ
President of the State Council and the Government
The Government Palace
Havana City/ Cuba

Lausanne, 4th of December 1984

Ref. No. 13151 /34

Esteemed Mr. President,

I replied to the letter of the 29th of November and I want to thank you, in the first place, for your repeated and well-known interest in sports.

I deeply regret the problem that emerged with respect to the attribution of the hosting of the Pan-American games of 1987. This is a decision in which the international Olympic Committee, which I have the honor of presiding, cannot and should not assume any responsibility -- scrupulously respecting the independence and autonomy of the sport organization, in this case PASO. Our position with respect to the Pan-American games is to give our sponsorship and seek to help in the [one word unreadable] of our efforts. I sincerely lament what is occurring, which could present a fissure in the unity that should prevail above everything among the members of the American sports.

You refer to the games celebrated last summer in the city of Los Angeles. We did everything possible -- and you well know -- to have all the National Olympic Committees present. It could not be made this way and one of the absences that most affected us was of the athletes from your country; the Cuban athletes, who have shown again and again, in the past years, what a small country can achieve, if its leaders become interested in the development of sports. In spite of the difficulties, we were able to count the participation of 140 National Olympic Committees. The important economic result of the games you cite must be dedicated, in its integrity, to the development of sports in the U.S.A. following the contract the IOC signed in 1979.

With respect to the 1988 games in Seoul, I sincerely thank you for your advice and I can assure you that the IOC is willing to chair a meeting with the two different parts of Korea, as long as both voluntarily agree to assist with the compromise that they will not, at any given moment, address political issues. With respect to the schedules for the sporting events, rest assured that we will respect, at all moment, the advice of the International Federations, which are the ones that ensure, above everything, the interests of the participating athletes.

I very fondly remember my trips to Cuba, the attention that you, Mr. President, had given me and the joy that I was able to share with my friend José Ramón Fernández, the Olympic Order.

With my best wishes for the sport of your country, affectionate regards,

Juan Antonio Samaranch

IOC President