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Story script and Shot log

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STORY HEADLINE: IOC President Thomas Bach and UNPGA Abdulla Shahid take part in Olympic Torch Relay ahead of Beijing 2022 Opening Ceremony

LOCATION: Beijing, China

DATE: 4 February, 2022

LANGUAGE: English

STORY SCRIPT:

The Olympic Torch Relay headed toward the Opening Ceremony of the Olympic Winter Games Beijing 2022 today with help from United Nations (UN) President of the General Assembly Abdulla Shahid and former UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon.

International Olympic Committee (IOC) President Thomas Bach handed the torch to the President of the General Assembly after he received it from IOC Member in China Hong Zhang, who had received it from Mr. Ban.

Mr. Shahid said he felt privileged to carry the torch and compared the work of the United Nations to the role of the IOC and the Olympic Games. He said the IOC “provides the platform for people of all nations, irrespective of their beliefs, political, religious, ethnic, any of these differences” to come together.

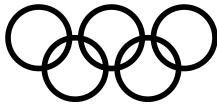
He added: “That provides the best opportunity for peace. Individuals come together and they do wear tracksuits, but they are diplomats.”

President Bach said today’s experience generated many emotions, in part because his role came so close to the official start of the Olympic Winter Games Beijing 2022.

He said: “As the General Assembly President just expressed, the Olympic Torch and the Olympic flame are symbols of peace and understanding. This is why it gives so many emotions.”

Shahid, a veteran diplomat from the Maldives, assumed his leadership role at the UN last year. In his first speech to the General Assembly last month, he delivered a message fully aligned with IOC’s mission, urging UN members to “cherish our common humanity” in this time of division.

Mr. Ban is a veteran torchbearer. He first joined the Olympic Torch Relay at the Olympic Games London 2012 and has carried the torch in other Games since then. The former UN Secretary General helped secure the UN’s decision in 2009 to grant the IOC UN Observer status, giving the IOC the right to participate in UN General Assembly work. He became chair of the IOC Ethics Commission in 2017, a year after leaving the UN.



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The Olympic Torch travelled through all three Olympic zones in Beijing, Yanqing and Zhangjiakou on its way to the Opening Ceremony. Although the relay was shortened this year as part of the countermeasures against COVID-19, it was welcomed with enthusiasm throughout its route.

About 1,200 people participated in the relay. In addition to Olympians and other prominent individuals, the torchbearers included frontline healthcare workers, teachers, and students. The Olympic Torch also visited the Great Wall, the Summer Palace and other notable sites on its way to the grand finale cauldron lighting.

The Olympic Winter Games Beijing 2022 take place from 4 to 20 February 2022 and will be followed by the Paralympic Games from 4 to 13 March 2022.

SHOT LIST

00:02: IOC President Thomas Bach receives Olympic flame from IOC Member in China Zhang Hong
00:10 IOC President Thomas Bach carries Olympic torch
00:31 UN General Assembly President Abdulla Shahid prepares to receive flame from IOC President Thomas Bach
00:41 IOC President Thomas Bach completes flame handover to UN General Assembly President Abdulla Shahid
00:47 UN General Assembly President Abdulla Shahid begins his leg of the torch relay
01:10 UN General Assembly President Abdulla Shahid lights lantern

01:15 SOUNDBITE: Abdulla Shahid, United Nations General Assembly President (English Language)

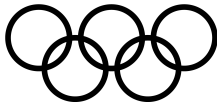
"It is a great opportunity and great privilege to carry the Olympic flame. As you would know I made a solemn appeal for the Olympic Truce to be maintained by all countries. The Olympics represents humanity at its best. The best of the world coming together to compete graciously, to accept winning with humility and defeat with graciousness. That is what the event is about. And that is what the Olympic flame represents. And as the UN President of the General Assembly I was privileged today to have that honour."

02:01 UN General Assembly President Abdulla Shahid running with Olympic Torch

Question: In what ways do the IOC and UN values align?

02:06 SOUNDBITE: Abdulla Shahid, United Nations General Assembly President (English Language)

"Well we represent peace. The United Nations, the Charter of the United Nations was established, was declared, to maintain international peace and security to avoid war and destruction. The IOC maintains and provides the platform for people of all nations, irrespective of their beliefs - political, religious, ethnic - any of these differences from bringing to that platform of the IOC. And that platform provides the best opportunity for peace. We are individuals who come together. They do wear tracksuits but they are the diplomats that we want - the young, the energetic, women and men coming together, interacting with each other and providing the energy that we so badly need for the promotion of peace."



03:14 IOC President Thomas Bach running with Olympic Torch

Question: How did it feel today to carry the Beijing 2022 Olympic flame?

03:18 SOUNDBITE: Thomas Bach, IOC President (English Language)

"It's always a great emotion to carry the Olympic flame. Even more so that this time it's happening just a couple of hours before the Opening Ceremony. This gives a lot of energy and many emotions because the Olympic flame represents our values as the UN General Assembly President has just expressed, the Olympic Torch and the Olympic Flame are a symbol of peace and understanding and this is why it gives so many emotions."

04:00 Close up of Olympic Torch

04:03: UN General Assembly President Abdulla Shahid thanks IOC President Thomas Bach as they shake hands.

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