

**Gro Harlem Brundtland
Prime Minister of Norway**

**Address to the 102 Session of the International Olympic Committee
Lillehammer, 7. February 1994**

Mr. President,
Your Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen.

Five and a half years ago I had the privilege of addressing you during your session in Seoul. There, the city of Lillehammer and to the whole of Norway were greatly honoured by being chosen to host the 1994 Winter Olympic Games. Since then, the ties between the International Olympic Committee and Norway have grown stronger. We believe we are well prepared to welcome the youth of the world and the entire Olympic Family to the Games in Lillehammer starting less than a week from now.

Arrayed in the robes of winter, and passionate to perform only the best, Lillehammer is well prepared. We have done everything in our power to show that we are equal to the task, and will be presenting a Winter Olympics in a spirit of genuine hospitality and with all the enthusiasm and respect befitting the Olympic ideals.

We wish to reaffirm and renew the purposes of the Olympic Movement in the year of the Centennial Congress of the IOC, making 1994 truly a year of sport and Olympic achievements.

The Government has assumed wide responsibilities for the financial solidity of the Games, and for new infrastructure, transport facilities, communications and environmental excellence. The organizing committee has set out to integrate environmental concerns fully into the Games. It has defined clear environmental targets and developed expertise which we hope will be of use to future organizers of Olympic Games or major international championships.

The tasks have been considerable. We were well aware of this in advance and have spared no effort.

It is my hope that the Olympic Winter Games of 1994 will go down in history as a solid example that smaller countries and communities too can rise to the challenge of hosting Olympic Games when given the opportunity.

Ten years ago, we hoped that the 14th Winter Olympic Games would bring lasting prosperity and progress to the city of Sarajevo, and that the ideals that unite the Olympic Movement would contribute to the development of that

region, which for centuries had been torn by war and contention between civilizations, empires and religions, and which had only partially been able to enjoy the fruits of tranquillity during the lifetime of the Yugoslav state and in the non-aligned movement.

Today, our thoughts go to the people of Sarajevo on whom so much pain and suffering has been inflicted. The Norwegian Government shares with you the hope that, as a first step, the proposition of an Olympic Truce will be respected by all parties concerned. The strangulation of Sarajevo is an affront to the world community and an insult to the Olympic idea. The atrocious attack on civilians this week-end calls for new protective measures.

The Games at Lillehammer cannot force peace upon the troubled regions of the world. They cannot force the Olympic idea on aggressors or oppressors. But they can be a forceful means of persuading countries and peoples to use their capabilities in the service of friendly competition, and to aspire beyond perceived limits of human accomplishment.

As we await the arrival of the torch from Olympia, the people of Norway are ready to turn out in vast numbers in support of the Games of which we believe we will have reason to be proud. We expect hundreds of thousands of sports enthusiasts to provide a joyous, spontaneous frame for these Games. We have retained warm memories of the 1952 Games in Oslo for more than 40 years and expect to have equally warm memories of Lillehammer far into the next century. Many of the Olympic winter sports were born in Norway and are part of our national identity.

In this spirit we hope that the billions of people following the Games around the world will share the pleasure and excitement on this momentous occasion.

We are grateful to the International Olympic Committee for giving us this opportunity. I wish you all a warm welcome as our guests here in Norway and a most memorable stay in our country.

With this wish, I hereby declare the 102nd Session of the International Olympic Committee open.