



International
Paralympic
Committee

All IPC Members
Via e-mail

Bonn, 27 January 2019

2019 World Para Swimming Championships

Dear IPC member,

This morning, the IPC Governing Board unanimously decided to strip Malaysia of the right to host the 2019 World Para Swimming Championships, which were due to be held in Kuching between 29 July and 4 August.

The decision was taken after the Home Ministry of Malaysia failed to provide the necessary guarantees that Israeli Para swimmers could participate, free from discrimination, and safely in the Championships. This includes full compliance with the IPC protocols related to anthems and flags, and, where required, the provision of relevant visas.

We informed the Paralympic Council of Malaysia (NPC Malaysia) of our decision earlier today and will issue a press release to the media at 11:00 CET. The press release is included in pages 3 and 4 of this letter and we ask that you keep this information confidential until the media is informed.

Due to the Board's decision, we are now looking for a new host for this vital World Championships, which acts as a qualifier for the Tokyo 2020 Paralympics. We will strive to maintain the same dates and conditions for the Championships as to not upset the training schedules of athletes who aim to peak for the end of July and early August. However, we may need to be flexible in this area, bearing in mind the circumstances we face.

The IPC encourages all potential hosts for the 2019 World Para Swimming Championships to express an interest in staging the event by 11 February 2019.

Kind regards

Andrew Parsons

President

International Paralympic Committee

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IPC Press Release – embargoed until 11:00 CET

IPC strip Malaysia of 2019 World Para Swimming Championships

The International Paralympic Committee (IPC) on Sunday (27 January) stripped Malaysia of the right to host the 2019 World Para Swimming Championships, which were due to be held in Kuching between 29 July and 4 August.

The decision was taken by the IPC Governing Board at its meeting in London, Great Britain, after the Home Ministry of Malaysia failed to provide the necessary guarantees that Israeli Para swimmers could participate, free from discrimination, and safely in the Championships. This includes full compliance with the IPC protocols related to anthems and flags, and where required the provision of relevant visas.

Andrew Parsons, IPC President, said: “All World Championships must be open to all eligible athletes and nations to compete safely and free from discrimination. When a host country excludes athletes from a particular nation, for political reasons, then we have absolutely no alternative but to look for a new Championships host.

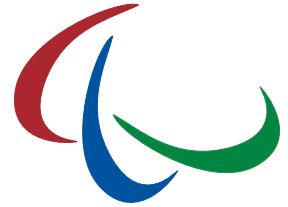
“The Paralympic Movement has, and always will be, motivated by a desire to drive inclusion, not exclusion. Regardless of the countries involved in this matter, the IPC would take the same decision again if it was to face a similar situation involving different countries.

“In September 2017 when the IPC signed the contract with the Paralympic Council of Malaysia (NPC Malaysia) to host the World Para Swimming Championships, we had assurances that all eligible athletes and countries would be allowed to participate in the event with their safety assured.

“Since then, there has been a change of political leadership and the new Malaysian government has different ideas. Politics and sport are never a good mix and we are disappointed that Israeli athletes would not have been allowed to compete in Malaysia.

“As a result of the Board’s decision today, we are now looking for a new host for this vital World Championships, which acts as a qualifier for the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games. We will strive to maintain the same dates and conditions for the Championships as to not upset the training schedules of athletes who aim to peak for the end of July and early August. However, we may need to be flexible in this area bearing in mind the circumstances we face.”

Chelsey Gotell, Chairperson of the IPC Athletes’ Council, said: “The IPC Athletes’ Council has received a great deal of correspondence from athletes around the world on this situation. We have discussed all potential outcomes and engaged with the World Para Swimming Athlete Advisory Group to gather their feedback on the situation to ensure the athlete voice was well reflected in the IPC Governing Board discussion and decision.



“Not only does this decision stress the importance of keeping sport and politics separate, but it also reinforces IPCs commitment to our fundamental moral and ethical principles that encompass inclusivity of all eligible Para athletes and nations to compete at IPC sanctioned events.”

Around 600 swimmers from 60 nations were anticipated to take part in Kuching with more than 160 world titles up for grabs. The IPC encourages all potential hosts for the 2019 World Para Swimming Championships to express an interest in staging the event by 11 February 2019.

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