



#Expel Russia Restore Olympic Integrity

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Global athletes, citizens call on IOC to expel Russia from Olympic/Paralympic family and to clean up the Games.
Call for reforms to restore integrity, equity, and legitimacy to Games and prevent repeat of '2022 China/Russia Games'.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: San Francisco USA/Barcelona, Spain - February 26, 2022 – Athletes and global citizens from around the world are calling on the International Olympic (IOC) and Paralympic (IPC) Committees, stewards of their respective Games, to immediately expel Russia from the global Olympic/Paralympic (O/P) community and to take steps to restore integrity, legitimacy, and equity to the Olympic/Paralympic movement. The plea come mid-way through the 2022 Beijing Winter Games (Olympic competitions ran February 4- 20; Paralympic run March 4-13).

“Dramatic steps are needed to save the Games and send a message that Olympic and Paralympic values and ideals still matter” said two-time USA Olympian Charles Altekruze who earlier this month teamed up with fellow international Olympians and Paralympians to launch the **#OlympicParalympicValuesMatter (#OPVM)** platform/petition. #OPVM calls out the O/P values of **Inspiration, Excellence, Courage, Respect, Determination, Friendship, and Equality** and ideals of **“educating youth through sport to contribute to building a better and more peaceful world”**. *“3 weeks ago, we were worried about China’s commitment to these principles. Russia’s assault on Ukraine introduces a new level of Olympic abuse and demands a swift, clear, and unified response from the entire global O/P family,”* said Altekruze.

#OlympicParalympicValuesMatter (#OPVM) and **#ExpelRussiaRestoreOlympicIntegrity (#ER2OI)** are attempts by other members of the global O/P family to gain voice and agency in the movement, saying: Enough is enough! Both call on the IOC to stop appeasing violators of Olympic principles and start defending basic Olympic standards.

#ExpelRussiaRestoreOlympicIntegrity (#ER2OI) follows on the #OPVM initiative as is a direct response to Russia’s entry into Ukraine. Many members of the global O/P family view Russia as a serial offender of international and O/P norms, from its state-sponsored doping schemes to its strategically timed military incursions. Russia has invaded foreign territory 3 times in the past 14 years around the Games (Georgia in 2008, the Crimea in 2014, and Ukraine now) – actions that violate the ‘Olympic Truce’ pact Russia signed mandating a cessation of conflicts and hostilities for the Games.

Russia’s actions came near the conclusion of the 2022 Winter Olympics, Games characterized by both transcendent athletic performances and unprecedented controversy, conflict, and anti-Olympic behavior. *“It was chilling to see Chairman Xi of China and President Putin of Russia, leaders of two authoritarian regimes, use the ‘2022 China/Russia Games’ to declare ‘our partnership has no limits’,”* adds Altekruze. *“We now have an idea what that statement meant and call on the IOC to clarify limits of indecency and consequences for crossing them to discourage further behavior antithetical and corrosive to Olympic values and ideals.”*

Russia’s repeated and flagrant violation against Olympic/Paralympic Spirit puts pressure on the IOC to stop justifying inaction behind assertions of not wanting to ‘politicize the Games’. *“The O/P movement has the right and responsibility to define and defend core principles and to take appropriate action against those who repeatedly and flagrantly violate them - including temporarily expelling them and revoking their privilege to compete in the Games,”* says Altekruze who, as a member of the 1980 US Olympic team was prevented from competing in the Moscow Games by his government. *“I feel for the athletes, but this is different. Here the O/P community - not a government – is deciding who gets to compete in the Games, which is a privilege, not a right, granted and denied all the time by the IOC and IPC.”*

Altekruze sees **#OlympicParalympicValuesMatter (#OPVM)** and **#ExpelRussiaRestoreOlympicIntegrity (#ER2OI)** as necessary first steps for reforming the O/P movement and demanding greater accountability from all members of the global O/P family, including the IOC, athletes, sponsors, and others. *“Stating and defending our core values, ideals, and principles does not politicize the Games, but rather humanizes them. It helps us reclaim their moral basis and original purpose – to serve society,”* says Altekruze. *“We must all champion Olympic/Paralympic Spirit to save the Games for future generations -- tragically, that now means temporarily expelling Russia as a first step in cleaning up the Games.”*

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Please visit www.OlympicParalympicValuesMatter.org for more info about the **#OlympicParalympicValuesMatter (#OPVM)** and **#ExpelRussiaRestoreOlympicIntegrity** campaigns and petitions. **Media or Press Inquiries.** Please contact: Charles Altekruze OLY, + 1 (510) 913-3669 (Mobile/WhatsApp/Skype), caltekruze@caconsult.org or charlie@olympicparalympicvaluesmatter.org (Email)