

Committee: International Olympic Committee (IOC)

Delegation: Iran National Olympic Committee

Topics: Harnessing sports diplomacy for the advancement of democracy and human rights



N.O.C.I.R. IRAN

“Diplomacy is an art, and sports diplomacy is about bringing countries closer together. Regardless of political party, race, religion, or beliefs, sport unites people from all backgrounds,”<sup>1</sup> stated Alireza Delkosh, director of the Foreign Ministry’s Department for Public Diplomacy in Iran. The Islamic Republic of Iran, with its rich cultural heritage, has participated in the Olympic Games since 1948 and has consistently used sports diplomacy to strengthen international relations. Iran’s achievements, including the Iranian Paralympics team’s 26 medals at the 2012 London Paralympics<sup>2</sup>, demonstrate the value of sports in fostering global connections. The International Olympic Committee (IOC) organizes major sporting events as neutral platforms free from political influence and has published key documents such as the Olympic Charter and the 2024 Declaration, which aims to prevent the politicization of sports.<sup>3</sup>

The Iran National Olympic Committee believes that all nations participate in sports and thus have access to sports diplomacy by sending athletes to major sporting events, regardless of cultural or religious beliefs. The Iran National Olympic Committee is part of many organizations ensuring the respect for human rights and sports diplomacy, such as the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) and the Asian Olympic Council (OCA)<sup>4</sup>, actively participating in regional events, and strengthening cooperation through them. Our Glorious Nation has not only been partaking but hosting tournaments as well, inviting regional athletes and building connections through politically neutral grounds. It had also signed bilateral sports agreements with Kenya and Qatar to ensure fairness and cooperation. Regional dynamics influence the location of competitions and the safety of Iranian athletes. Improved relations with Saudi Arabia and ongoing cooperation with Turkey are helpful. In contrast, antagonistic rivals such as the USA, UK, and Israel present challenges through visa restrictions, travel barriers, and selective enforcement in competitions, which underscores Iran’s commitment to anti-politicization measures.

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<sup>1</sup> ““Sports Diplomacy” Can Reduce Political Conflicts: Alireza Delkhosh.” *Tehran Times*, 12 Jan. 2021, [www.tehrantimes.com/news/456917/Sports-diplomacy-can-reduce-political-conflicts-Alireza-Delkhosh](http://www.tehrantimes.com/news/456917/Sports-diplomacy-can-reduce-political-conflicts-Alireza-Delkhosh). Accessed 17 Nov. 2025.

<sup>2</sup> Wikipedia Contributors. “Iran at the 2012 Summer Paralympics.” *Wikipedia*, Wikimedia Foundation, 17 Nov. 2024, [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iran\\_at\\_the\\_2012\\_Summer\\_Paralympics](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iran_at_the_2012_Summer_Paralympics).

<sup>3</sup> IOC. “Declaration by the IOC against the Politicisation of Sport.” *Olympics.com*, International Olympic Committee, 19 Mar. 2024, [www.olympics.com/ioc/news/declaration-by-the-ioc-against-the-politicisation-of-sport](http://www.olympics.com/ioc/news/declaration-by-the-ioc-against-the-politicisation-of-sport).

<sup>4</sup> “OCA» Islamic Republic of Iran.” *Oca.asia*, 2025, [oca.asia/noc/31-iri-islamic-republic-of-iran.html](http://oca.asia/noc/31-iri-islamic-republic-of-iran.html). Accessed 17 Nov. 2025.

Our nation had been falsely accused of taking actions against human rights and democracy by many of our rivals who wish to impose their ideologies on our people, repressing their traditional cultural norms. The Islamic Republic of Iran, therefore, aims to strengthen international ties and disprove the accusations and the false claims present in resolutions aiming to restrict our nation's sovereignty, such as the "study" published by the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission (FFMI) of the United Nations Human Rights Council<sup>5</sup>. Despite the numerous unfounded and baseless attack on the post- Islamic Revolution, Our Nation has been excelling in both sports and in the field of human rights. Take for instance the achievements of the Islamic government by contributing 16 to our 20 gold medals which we have earned over the course of our history.<sup>6</sup> There had also been instances of athlete activism targeting Iran's religious and cultural values, making domestic questions targets of international action. We condemn these actions as they are solely destructive actions against the chivalry of sports as exemplified, the Ukrainian athlete, Ivan Cuprinko, who has refused to shake hands with an Iranian competitor during a bench-press world championship ceremony. <sup>7</sup>The Iran National Olympic Committee firmly believes that parading sports as a field for politics has no positive contribution to the international community and encourages high-level sports events to remain neutral grounds.

"The National Olympic Committee of Iran believes that all athletes, regardless of their country, deserve fair treatment, and sporting events must remain free from political interference," - stated Reza Salehi Amiri, National Olympic Committee President in 2019<sup>8</sup>, illustrating the stance that Iran still takes to this day. In the committee, the Iran National Olympic Committee aims to achieve a resolution that underlines the necessity of keeping high-profile sporting events and politically neutral places and easing foreign pressure put on certain nations through the said events. We hope to achieve a solution where no nation is unrightfully excluded and provide equal opportunity for all member states to participate by establishing a committee assessing the cases separately. We believe that recognizing cultural diversity when adopting principles is also a key element in ensuring neutrality and impartiality, therefore, we look forward to discussing the importance of upholding cultural diversity in sporting events. We also advocate for more funds to be allocated for developing nations, so that Iranian athletes have an equal opportunity to train and excel in high-level sporting events, regardless of their background.

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<sup>5</sup> "OHCHR | Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Islamic Republic of Iran." *OHCHR*, [www.ohchr.org/en/hr-bodies/hrc/ffm-iran/index](http://www.ohchr.org/en/hr-bodies/hrc/ffm-iran/index).

<sup>6</sup> "Iran's Achievements in Sports Can't Be Compared with Pre-Revolution Era: Sport Minister." *Iranpress.com*, 2019, [iranpress.com/content/8789/iran-achievements-sports-can-t-compared-with-pre-revolution-era-sport-minister](http://iranpress.com/content/8789/iran-achievements-sports-can-t-compared-with-pre-revolution-era-sport-minister). Accessed 17 Nov. 2025.

<sup>7</sup> "Activist Hails Ukrainian Athlete Who Refused to Shake Hands with Iranian Participants." *Iran International*, [www.iranintl.com/en/202306015727](http://www.iranintl.com/en/202306015727).

<sup>8</sup> <https://oca.asia/news/630-iran-noc-chief-salehi-amiri-says-olympics-postponement-an-opportunity-not-a-threat.html>

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Topics: The inclusion of transgender, intersex and non-binary athletes in competitive sports



N.O.C.I.R. IRAN

The Islamic Republic of Iran positions itself as a regional leader and guardian of peace and cultural values in the Middle East. Guided by Shia Islamic ideology, we prioritize preserving our culture and traditions. Iran believes equality in sports cannot be achieved, as men and women have different strengths and roles, as stated in the Quran (4:1)<sup>9</sup>. Thus, we restrict certain sports for women to ensure protection. We believe that the Western nations' propaganda on homosexuality is a radical take preached to cause the human race's extinction. As the Iranian president, Ebrahim Raisi, has stated, the West is "acting against the inheritance and culture of nations"<sup>10</sup> by promoting such values. We aim to protect our sovereignty and uphold our cultural values through the storm of liberal Western ideology and its actions targeting our society and religion. Take for instance our brave struggle against the pressure of sanctions or suspension from sports events, and the pressure of Western-biased organizations such as the United Nations. We condemn the accusations of repression and discrimination and believe that there is no reason for such concerns or to violate our national sovereignty.

According to the Sharia law, the Islamic Republic of Iran recognizes transgender individuals who undergo medical Sex Reassignment Surgery (SRS)<sup>11</sup> as either female or male and permit them to compete with the gender that matches their surgically affirmed sex. We have, for a long time, had one of the highest rates of complete SRS-es,<sup>12</sup> since we believe that biology and medical intervention are vital in such cases. The Iran National Olympic Committee had taken measures to provide the ability for individuals who have undergone the SRS to be included in their current categories of either male or female; however, if an individual transitioned from women to men, we would prohibit them from practicing sports that do not align with their gender roles, such as wrestling and swimming<sup>13</sup> for reasons already stated.

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<sup>9</sup> Surah An-Nisa - 1. (n.d.). Quran.com. <https://quran.com/an-nisa/1>

<sup>10</sup> Agence France-Presse. (2023, July 12). "Acting Against Inheritance": Iran President Attacks West On LGBTQ Rights. NDTV. <https://www.ndtv.com/world-news/iran-president-ebrahim-raisi-attacks-west-on-lgbtq-rights-4202403>

<sup>11</sup> Wikipedia Contributors. (2019, August 28). *Transgender rights in Iran*. Wikipedia; Wikimedia Foundation. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Transgender\\_rights\\_in\\_Iran](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Transgender_rights_in_Iran)

<sup>12</sup> Barford, V. (2008, February 25). Iran's "diagnosed transsexuals." *News.bbc.co.uk*. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/7259057.stm>

<sup>13</sup> file:///C:/Users/Zentai-Gall%C3%B3%20Nilla%20I/Downloads/s10691-016-9332-x.pdf

Upholding international values and principles has always been vital to our nation. That is precisely why we have ratified the Olympic Committee Charter<sup>14</sup>, and the Cairo Declaration of Human Rights in Islam<sup>15</sup>. We constantly strive to fuse international commitment with religious beliefs and implement measures according to the Sharia law.

During this debate, the Iran National Olympic Committee hopes to reach a conclusion while protecting the traditional cultural values of each state, since preserving Islamic Shia belief is a key principle of our state. We aim to strengthen participation requirements in certain categories and base them on the medical records of each athlete. We would also like to establish an expert oversight committee to further ensure eligibility and fairness without imposing on any state's cultural sovereignty in the neutral international field. We believe these ideas are as acceptable for our allies as for Western nations, which promote these ideologies. We state that these ideas do not align with Shia Islamic values; therefore, our state will not consider or recognize them. We hope for support from our regional allies and all who support cultural preservation, state sovereignty, and the importance of neutrality in international fields, especially in high-level sports.

Guided by the Holy Quran: "O mankind! Fear your Lord, who created you from a single soul and created from it its mate, and from them spread many men and women" (4:1),<sup>16</sup> Iran reaffirms its commitment to uphold moral, cultural, and religious integrity while promoting fairness and participation in international sports.

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<sup>14</sup> *Iran committed to Olympics principles: Khosravi Vafa*. (2022, October 19). Tehran Times. <https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/477795/Iran-committed-to-Olympics-principles-Khosravi-Vafa>

<sup>15</sup> Turan Kayaoglu. (2020, September 28). *The Organization of Islamic Cooperation's declaration on human rights: Promises and pitfalls*. Brookings. [https://www.brookings.edu/articles/the-organization-of-islamic-cooperations-declaration-on-human-rights-promises-and-pitfalls/?utm\\_source=chatgpt.com](https://www.brookings.edu/articles/the-organization-of-islamic-cooperations-declaration-on-human-rights-promises-and-pitfalls/?utm_source=chatgpt.com)

<sup>16</sup> Itani, T. (2025). *Quran 4:1 in English Compare Multiple Translations | an-Nisa' 1*. Quran 4:1 in English Compare Multiple Translations | An-Nisa' 1. <https://www.quranv.com/en/4/1>