

Secretary-General to take part in London Olympics torch run



Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon (second from right), holding the Vancouver 2010 Olympic Torch. UN Photo/Eskinder Debebe

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[Secretary-General](#) Ban Ki-moon will head later this week to London, where he will take part in the torch run for the 2012 Summer Olympic Games on Thursday and attend the opening ceremony on Friday, his spokesperson announced today.

“At the invitation of the London Olympic Organizing Committee and the International Olympic Committee (IOC), he will carry the Olympic Torch on the final leg of its journey in the United

Kingdom,” Deputy Spokesperson Eduardo del Buey told reporters at United Nations Headquarters in New York.

According to a news release issued by the UN Office on Sport for Development and Peace (UNOSDP), Mr. Ban will attend the opening ceremony in London on Friday as a way of promoting sport and physical activity to further development and peacebuilding efforts.

UNOSDP is taking part in a series of events, meetings and activities in the lead-up to the Games to encourage and facilitate dialogue and partnerships and promote awareness and observance of the Olympic Truce.

In October 2011, all 193 UN Member States exhorted nations to observe the Olympic Truce individually and collectively for six weeks, starting with the opening of the XXX Olympiad on 27 July and ending with the closing of the XIV Paralympic Games for disabled athletes on 9 September.

The resolution calls on Member States “to cooperate with the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and the International Paralympic Committee in their efforts to use sport as a tool to promote peace, dialogue and reconciliation in areas of conflict during and beyond the Olympic and Paralympic Games period.”

The resolution has itself become a tradition at the UN, being passed every two years preceding the holding of the Summer and Winter Games respectively.

Mr. Ban’s Special Adviser on Sport for Development and Peace, Wilfried Lemke, is also in London, where he will address sports ministers at a meeting tomorrow, and will meet with Government and sports officials throughout the Games.

Other UN agencies will also be present at the Games to raise awareness on a range of issues. The Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees ([UNHCR](#)), for example, will be collecting sports clothing to be sent to designated refugee camps around the world, and the Joint UN Programme on HIV/AIDS ([UNAIDS](#)) will hold an advocacy event as part of the Africa Utopia Festival on Saturday.

The UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization ([UNESCO](#)), the UN Children’s Fund ([UNICEF](#)), the UN Office on Drugs and Crime ([UNODC](#)), and the World Health Organization ([WHO](#)) will also hold events during the Games.

While in London, the Secretary-General will hold bilateral meetings with British Government officials, including Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg and Foreign Secretary William Hague. He will also take part in an event with the Foreign Secretary with other dignitaries to highlight the Olympic Truce.

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