

Prominent personalities speaking out on China's human rights

Athletes taking a stand:

John Carlos: Medallist from 1968 Olympics, protested against racism in the United States in the 1960's, encourages athletes to take action.

"When you make that kind of public declaration, you send a message of courage to the world...One of the key points in the Olympic charter is non-violence. How can we talk about non-violence in such a violent environment as China?" (Reuters Africa, 15 April 2008)

Mark Todd: The double Olympic medallist has said that he will peacefully protest the issue of Tibet if he is selected for Beijing.

"I think athletes in general would be obliged to do something like that." (NZ Herald, 18 March 2008)

Dawn Fraser: The Swimming Legend has confirmed she will boycott the Beijing Olympics because of Tibet. (*The Herald Sun*, 10 April 2008)

Pieter Van den Hoogenband: The 'Flying Dutchman' has called on the president of the IOC to -

"on behalf of all athletes publicly call for an improvement of the human rights situation in China. He can count on my full support and sympathy." (www.stuff.co.nz, 6 March 2008)

German team: Exploring possibilities for peaceful protest such as wearing orange bath-robos to highlight human rights and freedom of the press. Canoeing Olympic bronze-medallist Stefan Pfannmoeller said:

'As athletes we carry a big responsibility and must show it. If not us, who else?' (www.thaindian.com, 30 March 2008)

Roland Schoeman: Champion South African swimmer has urged the IOC to -

"stand up and say, the way these people (the Tibetans) are being treated is not acceptable," (International Herald Tribune, 17 March 2008)

John Amaechi: Former Orlando Magic player will travel to Beijing as Amnesty International's sporting ambassador and encourages athletes to -

"simply acknowledge that being an ambassador for human rights in China is the most Olympian thing to do." (The Guardian, 31 May 2008)

Kristina Veasey: Paralympian has urged other sportspeople to speak out:

"The bottom line is that people in China cannot speak out without fear of repression, so it is all the more important that others speak out for them." (The Eastbourne Herald, 4 June 2008)

Others taking a stand:

Jacques Rogge: The President of the IOC, called on Beijing to improve human rights ahead of the Games.

"I would definitely ask China to respect its moral intentions." (IOC executive Board Meeting, 10 April, 2008)

Richard Boock: Sports journalist has come out strongly on China's violations.

"Any Kiwi athlete who speaks out against current events deserves a medal. Any who might decide to make a symbolic stand should be feted as a hero. You never know, they might even spark a movement." (Sunday Star Times, 23 March 2008)

Angela Merkel: German chancellor has said she will not attend the opening ceremony as a protest. (*One News*, 13 April 2008)

Steven Spielberg: The director quit his work for the Olympics due to China's policy in the Sudan. (*NZ Herald*, 14 February 2008)

Hilary Clinton/ Barack Obama: The presidential hopefuls have urged Bush not to attend the games unless China's human rights situation improves. (*NZ Herald*, 11 April 2008)

Kevin Rudd: Australian Prime Minister has encouraged China to open dialogue with Tibet. (*The Herald Sun*, 10 April 2008)

Mia Farrow: The actress is focussed on putting pressure on China over its support for Sudan by calling on world leaders to boycott the opening ceremony.

"There's no sort of pretty way to put this: China is underwriting the atrocities in Darfur." (One News, 2 May 2008)

