

Mr Chairman, members of the IOC Evaluation Commission,

Our candidacy will evoke for many people throughout the world echoes of the past. Both of the spirit of the ancient games and of the hopes raised by the Olympic revival one century ago.

At the dawn of the 21st century, Greeks can look to the future with optimism. Our country is living through a period of political stability and economic development. In Greece today, some of Europe's greatest projects, such as the Athens Metro and the new International Airport, are under construction.

These, together with thousands of other projects, will, by the date of their completion in the year 2000, have brought the country's infrastructure fully up to date.

The people of Athens honoured their Olympic victors this year in a celebration of unprecedented jubilation in the Panathenaic Stadium. It is thus no accident that the candidacy of Athens for the Olympic Games of 2004 is supported, according to a recent opinion poll, by 97 per cent of the population.

The Greek Government guarantees the financial support necessary for the creation of the infrastructure required for the holding of the Olympic Games.

Specifically, the Greek Government guarantees :

- a. that it will contribute to the fulfillment of all the obligations of Athens as a candidate city in accordance with the provisions of international conventions and of the Olympic Charter of the IOC;
- b. that the Olympic symbols and emblems will be protected, and that the free movement of accredited persons to the Olympic Games will be ensured;
- c. that if there is a financial deficit on the budget of the Organising Committee, it will be covered, as it is obliged to do in accordance with the IOC Manual.

We are thus in a position to organise with success the Olympic Games of 2004 - here in Athens, as we did a hundred years ago. In doing so we will prove that Greece does not only have a rich past; but also a creative present