

The Role of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) on United States-China Bilateral Relations, Case Study: Beijing 2022 Winter Olympic Games

Siti Rabbani Hakim

**International Relations Department, Faculty of Humanities, University of Darussalam
Gontor**

Email: siti.rabbani.hakim@mhs.unida.gontor.ac.id

ABSTRACT

Sport is one of the marginalized issues, with the globalization of sport beginning to be considered as a means of uniting society and repairing the rift that occurred after the conflict, either symbolically or by holding sports agendas to campaign for peace and development. The International Olympic Committee (IOC) is an organization formed to revive the Ancient Greek Olympics and serves as an observer of the Modern Olympics which are held every four years. The 2022 Winter Olympics to be held in Beijing has a strong political background. This makes it a recreation of the Berlin Summer Olympics in 1936 under the Nazi leadership, as well as the Olympics to be held in Beijing in 2022. At the time of the Olympics, the Chinese Communist Party used the Olympics as an opportunity to express its desire to gain status in the international order, this was hampered by the diplomatic boycott sent by the United States government against the Olympics, causing a rift in relations between the United States and China during the Olympics. Thus, this research aims to find out how the dynamics of bilateral relations between the United States and China and the reasons for the US to conduct a Diplomatic Boycott of the Winter Olympics. In addition, this study will also examine how the role of the IOC as a mediator in handling conflicts between countries concerned with the Olympics. This research uses a qualitative method in analyzing the role of the IOC in handling bilateral conflicts between the US and China at the 2022 Winter Olympics. Analysis of the role of institutions in this study uses the role of institutions developed from Liberal Institutional theory. From this analysis, it can be concluded that the IOC succeeded in maintaining peace during the Olympics. However, despite all the efforts made by the IOC, the United States Government still refused to present its diplomatic officials during the Olympics.

Keywords: Diplomatic Boycott, IOC, Olympics

1. INTRODUCTION

Sport is one of those issues that were initially marginalized, either in terms of international politics in general or more specifically.¹ However, when examined more deeply, the relationship between sport and the issue of peace conflicts is quite complex and important. Both in terms of the idea of violence between fans causing riots, which has a significant impact on building a more peaceful world. It can be argued that sport itself has been indirectly involved in conflicts between countries.

At the same time, sport is often seen as a means to bring people together and heal rifts in post-conflict societies, either symbolically or in the form of sporting agendas towards development and peace, which are usually run by non-governmental organizations with support and donations from international organizations.²

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) is an organization formed to restore the Ancient Olympic Games held in Greece and holds sporting events held every four years.³ The IOC itself is a truly global organization, acting as a driving force for collaboration between all Olympic stakeholders, including athletes, National Olympic Committees, International Federations, and Organizing Committees for the Olympic Games. In addition, the IOC also works closely with public and private authorities including the United Nations and other International Organizations⁴.

The IOC itself has the principle of Political Neutrality⁵, where the organization does not mix political issues in the continuity of the Olympics held in each country every four years. In this era of globalization, issues that used to be in the Low Politics stage have risen to High Politics due to the many issues in the international world so what needs to be considered is not only political issues. Historical records state that there are many sports organizations have sprung up in recent

¹ Laurence Cooley, "The Governance of Sport in Deeply Divided Societies: Actors and Institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cyprus and Northern Ireland," in *Sport and Diplomacy*, ed. J. Simon Rofe, First Edit. (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2019), 13.

² Joseph Eaton, "Decentering US Sports Diplomacy: The 1980 Moscow Boycott through Contemporary Asian-African Perspectives," in *Sport and Diplomacy*, ed. J. Simon Rofe, First Edit. (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2019), 203.

³ IOC, "IOC Overview," *IOC Official Website*.

⁴ Ban Ki-Moon, "Cooperation With the UN," *Olympic Principles Are United Nations Principles*, last modified 2009, accessed June 19, 2022, <https://olympics.com/ioc/cooperation-with-the-un>.

⁵ IOC, "IOC Principles," *IOC Official Website*, last modified 2021, accessed June 19, 2022, <https://olympics.com/ioc/principles>.

years⁶. In addition to the IOC, international sport is also shaped by people and policies from outside the Olympic Movement⁷.

Etymologically, "neutrality" has been a source of debate for centuries. According to Robert A. Bauslaugh, the ancient Greeks had nothing to say about diplomatic neutrality.⁸ However, a few centuries later the International Sport Association (ISA) showed the meaning of neutrality as flexible, referring to Switzerland's neutrality model as the oldest neutral country in the world and where many neutral organizations were established. This is validated by the European Commission and Swiss association law. So, the principles applied by the ISA itself refer to the historical legitimacy drawn from the Swiss neutrality model. An example of some of the organizations that have adopted the ISA's founding principles is the International Olympic Committee (IOC), which states that the universal fundamental ethical principles, universality, and political neutrality of the Olympic Movement are included. The prime mover for the relationship between Swiss neutrality and the IOC was Baron Pierre de Coubertin, who formulated the Swiss principle of neutrality as his attempt to create a meeting place free of politics, making former enemies into friends.⁹

The IOC itself has the task of promoting the Olympic Games around the world and leading the Olympic Movement, in addition, the Olympics will take action to strengthen the unity of the Olympic Movement, protect its independence, maintain and promote its political neutrality, and preserve sports autonomy. So that the Olympics held by the IOC often become a forum for diplomacy between countries, by sending each diplomatic delegation between countries and creating good relations and relations for each country.¹⁰

⁶ S. W. Pope and John Nauright, *Routledge Companion to Sports History*, Routledge Companion to Sports History, 2009.

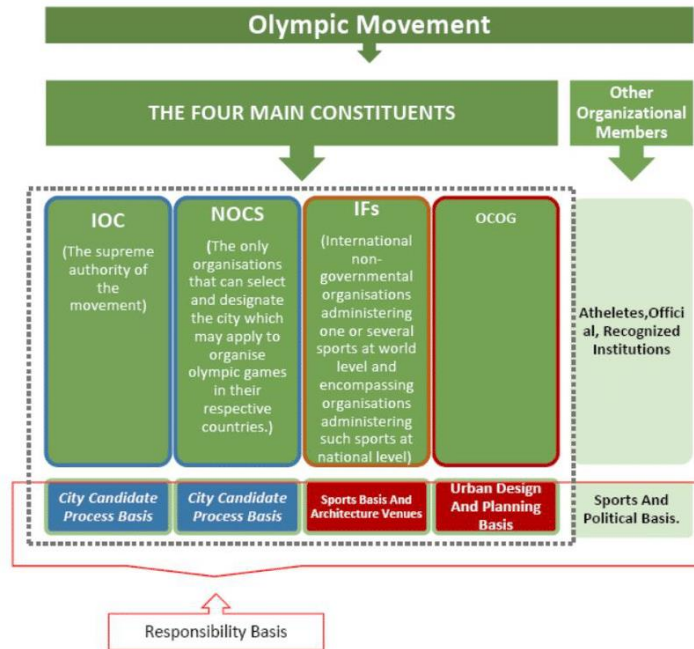
⁷ Jörg Krieger, Lindsay Parks Pieper, and Ian Ritchie, "International Federations and National Governing Bodies: The Historical Development of Institutional Policies in Response to Challenging Issues in Sport," *Sport History Review* 51, no. 1 (2020): 1–6.

⁸ Robert A. Bauslaugh, *The Concept of Neutrality in Classical Greece* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1991).

⁹ Hans Erik Næss and Hans Erik Næss, "The Neutrality Myth : Why International Sporting Associations and Politics Cannot Be Separated," *Journal of the Philosophy of Sport* 00, no. 00 (2018): 1–17, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00948705.2018.1479190>.

¹⁰ Jung Woo Lee, "Olympic Winter Games in Non-Western Cities : State , Sport and Cultural Diplomacy in Sochi 2014 , PyeongChang 2018 and Beijing 2022," *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 38, no. 13–14 (2022): 1494–1515, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09523367.2021.1973441>.

Figure 1. Olympic Movement



Source: Noorhan Hanafi, 2019

The Olympic Movement consists of three main constituencies, namely, the International Olympic Committee (IOC), the International Sports Federations (IFs), and the National Olympic Committees (NOCs). In addition to these three constituents, the Olympic Movement also consists of all organizations that recognize the authority of the IOC such as the Organizing Committee of the Olympic Games (OCOG), athletes, judges and referees, associations and clubs. The function of the Olympic Movement itself is explained in the Olympic Charter, *"The purpose of the Olympic Movement is to contribute to building a peaceful and better world by educating youth through sport conducted in accordance with the Olympic Games and its values."*¹¹

As part of modern life, the sport has a powerful capacity to touch individuals and societies around the world in ways that traditional forms of diplomacy and those traditionally considered diplomats rarely can. The role played by sport in global affairs as a whole is poorly understood and often overlooked. Simply put, sport today is a multibillion-dollar global business. New media companies that include television networks, and their predecessor's radio, have paid huge sums of money to broadcast major sporting events ranging from the Olympic games and the FIFA world

¹¹ International Olympic Committee and The IOC, "Olympic Charter," *Olympic Charter*, no. August (2020): 1–110.

cup¹². Given their transnational character, they enable the deployment of public diplomacy to win hearts and minds in most conflicts.

The passing of the cold war era meant that the era of sports boycotts had passed. However, considerations for the use of boycotts have become more developed. Past classic cases of Olympic boycotts have illustrated a country's willingness to suffer in pursuit of its national interests.¹³ These two classic cases, along with the apartheid boycott in South Africa, represent the high point of state-based sports boycotts. With the growing calls for boycotts on a range of lesser issues, there has been a decline in the influence of boycotts among the western publics in making such calls.

The Olympics has a track record that is on the bad side of history, one of the biggest cases is the Berlin Olympics in 1936, at that time the country led by the Hitler regime hosted the Olympics which was a boycott demand from several countries. In 1931 IOC delegates met in Barcelona, Spain to determine the location of the 11th Summer Olympics.¹⁴ One month later the IOC awarded the 1936 Olympics to Berlin. By the time the Games took place, Hitler had been in power for three years, and by then German democracy, including its athletic community, was in ruins. News of Hitler's human rights abuses led to widespread international discussion about the appropriateness of Olympic violations in a country that had violated the humanitarian principles on which the Olympic Games are based. This led to a heated debate, with some countries threatening to withdraw from the Games, but the boycott failed.¹⁵

Seeing the tensions that occurred between Hitler's regime and several countries, resulted in the Olympics at that time being referred to as the "Nazi Games", and now history is repeating itself with a different country, China. The 2022 Winter Olympics in Beijing will be held with a strong political background. This has similarities with the case of the Berlin Summer Olympics in 1936. During the Olympics, the Chinese Communist Party will look for opportunities to express its desire to gain status in the current international order by hosting the Winter Olympics. However, communist China's Winter Olympics diplomacy faced major obstacles, and the geopolitical contest

¹² J. Simon Rofe, "Introduction: Establishing the Field of Play," in *Sport and Diplomacy*, ed. J. Simon Rofe, 1st Editio. (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2017), 1–2.

¹³ Carloe Gomez, "Boycotts and Diplomacy: When the Talking Stops," in *Sport and Diplomacy*, ed. J. Simon Rofe, First Edit. (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2019), 169.

¹⁴ Jonathan Grix, Paul Michael Brannagan, and Barrie Houlihan, "Interrogating States' Soft Power Strategies: A Case Study of Sports Mega-Events in Brazil and the UK," *Global Society* 29, no. 3 (2015): 463–479.

¹⁵ Mario Kessler, "Only Nazi Games ? Berlin 1936 : The Olympic Games between Sports and Politics," *Socialism and Democracy* 25, no. 2 (2011): 125–143.

between China and the West led to a pessimistic view of the implementation of the Winter Olympics in the communist country. Regarding geopolitical tensions, a dispute between these two countries with great political influence broke out in 2018, and this dispute has further deepened the China-US conflict. In this situation, many political campaigns have sprung up against the Winter Olympics in China. The news of human rights violations and Uighur Muslim concentration camps that spread before the Olympics further worsened China's image, with many activists and media calling it the "Genocide Games of 2022".¹⁶

A diplomatic boycott can easily undermine cooperation between countries. According to the dictionary, boycott itself is defined as conspiring to refuse cooperation, such as trade, talk, participation, and some of them¹⁷. For months, human rights groups and some politicians in Western countries have urged nations to boycott the 2022 Winter Olympics in Beijing over the Chinese government's rights abuses. The United States became the first major power to launch a diplomatic boycott, announcing two months before the games that it would not send diplomatic officials to Beijing. Other countries, including some in the European Union (EU), may follow the US boycott.

Beijing became the only city in the world to host both the summer and winter games. It was a huge victory for China in making a big propaganda splash. The Olympics is the most prestigious and honorable sporting event globally and it is a privilege for a country to be chosen as the host. China's track record as a host and its current severe and ongoing human rights violations, make it a poor choice to host such a special sporting event and uphold the name of Human Rights. So it becomes an opportunity for western countries to cut off China's hopes in the Olympics by encouraging the IOC to move the Olympic host.¹⁸

US diplomats sought to use the Olympic platform for US 'national projection' reasons and the benefit of other countries. In this regard, Nationalist China's desire for international recognition and legitimacy fits well with America's cold war interests.¹⁹ This paper will explain the role of

¹⁶ Palki Sharma, "Gravitas: Why the World Must Boycott 2022 Winter Olympics" (New Delhi: WION: Gravitas, 2021), <https://youtu.be/wIWNjGtaZb0>.

¹⁷ "KBBI," *Official KBBI*, last modified 2012, accessed June 19, 2022, <https://kbbi.web.id/boikot>.

¹⁸ Michael A. Peters, "US-China Relations: Towards Strategic Partnerships," *Educational Philosophy and Theory* 0, no. 0 (2021): 1–6, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00131857.2021.1937994>.

¹⁹ Susan V Lawrence, Caitlin Campbell, and Thomas Lum, *US-China Relations*, 2019.

the International Olympic Committee (IOC) as a mediator in building bilateral relations and mediating conflicts between countries during the Olympics.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

In this study, researchers used qualitative research methods, which are the most prominent in IR studies²⁰. Qualitative research can be defined as an intuitive and systematic research technique to help a researcher generate knowledge efficiently and coherently²¹. The qualitative method is used by the author to get a picture that wants to be researched so that it makes it easier for the author to do research. Qualitative methods do not use numbers or counts so what is used in understanding research variables is using literature in the form of ideas, perspectives, and motivations taken from previous researchers' data to reinforce arguments in conducting research. The qualitative method itself aims to analyze how the role and function of the International Olympic Committee on bilateral relations between the US and China amid the rampant diplomatic boycott announced by the US before the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics took place. with this method, the discussion is descriptive following the data and sources taken.

Before conducting this research, the author conducted pre-research. Pre-research was conducted by the author by looking for secondary data to strengthen arguments in writing, what the author does is read research on the research title both before and after the research issue. This research uses secondary data, this data is data that has been created or researched by others, this data is descriptive in nature from journals, books, reports, and newspapers to complete the author's analysis.²²

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 United States Boycott of China at the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics

The Winter Olympics, awarded to a non-Western city such as Beijing, involve the interplay of state diplomacy, sport, and culture to enhance international status. The Winter Olympics are often seen as a showcase of strength and capability for non-Western countries to be recognized as advanced cultural economies. With the 2022 Winter Olympics being held in Beijing, a year ahead

²⁰ Umar Suryadi Bakry, *Metode Penelitian Hubungan Internasional*, ed. Dimas Wids, 1st Editio. (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2016).

²¹ Sandy Q. Qu and John Dumay, "The Qualitative Research Interview," *Qualitative Research in Accounting and Management* 8, no. 3 (2011): 238–264.

²² Bakry, *Metode Penelitian Hubungan Internasional*.

of 2021, China is sending a message to the world about its efforts to project its image as a developed and responsible country. The launch of the Beijing 2022 Olympic torch was design as a form of hope for all humanity who are fighting Covid-19 at that time.²³ However, the Olympic Diplomacy carried out by the Chinese Government experienced major obstacles with the stretching of diplomatic relations between China and America.

The strained diplomatic relations between the United States and China caused by China's expansionism towards the South and Central Asian and African regions through the "Belt Road Initiative" program became an opportunity for America to propagandize the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics.²⁴ The political tensions and trade disputes between the two giant economies reached a peak in 2018, and these disputes further deepened the US-China conflict. Under these circumstances, political campaigns against the Winter Olympics in China began to emerge.

3.1.1 Causes of the 2022 Winter Olympics Boycott

The selection of Beijing as the host for the 2022 Winter Olympics has come under scrutiny from the United States and other countries. This is because the authoritarian political system and poor human rights record are of particular concern to many critics, especially Beijing's status as host of the 2022 Winter Olympics with ongoing human rights violations in the Xinjiang region which Trump and Biden have called genocide.²⁵ Much of the legislation cited the deteriorating human rights situation in China after the 2008 Beijing Summer Olympics, leading the Biden administration to call for moving the 2022 Beijing Olympics to another country or boycotting the Games.²⁶

²³ Susan V. Lawrence et al., *The Beijing 2022 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games : Issues for Congress The Beijing 2022 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games : Issues for Congress* (Washington DC, 2022), <https://crsreports.congress.gov>.

²⁴ Victor Cha, "The Biden Boycott of the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics," *Center for Strategic and International Studies*, last modified 2022, accessed December 23, 2022, <https://www.csis.org/analysis/biden-boycott-2022-beijing-winter-olympics>.

²⁵ Sharma, "Gravitas: Why the World Must Boycott 2022 Winter Olympics."

²⁶ The Olympic Games et al., "The Beijing Olympics" 14, no. 02 (2008).

Figure 2. Map of China



Source: Graphic by CRS

The US boycott of the Beijing Olympics comes as a result of China's oppression of Uyghur Muslims, a predominantly Turkic-speaking ethnic group primarily from the Xinjiang region in northwestern China. China's abuses began after the inauguration of the "Strike Hard Campaign against Violent Terrorism" by the Chinese government in May 2014.²⁷ Under the guise of counter-terrorism, Chinese authorities have established "re-education camps" for the estimated 11 million Uyghurs in the region and detained an estimated 800-2 million Uyghur and other Muslims, including ethnic Kazakhs and Uzbeks.²⁸

China has faced strong criticism for its record of human rights violations.²⁹ Several countries, including the United States, have reported that China is committing genocide against Uyghurs and other Muslim minorities in Xinjiang. Human rights groups also called attention to the repression in Tibet and its crackdown on freedoms in Hong Kong, as well as the disappearance of Chinese tennis star Peng Shuai from public view in November.

²⁷ Zhang Jiadong and Zheng Xin, "The Role of Nontraditional Security in China-U.S. Relations: Common Ground or Contradictory Arena?," *Journal of Contemporary China* 21, no. 76 (2012): 623–636.

²⁸ Sarika Rahman et al., *U.S. Diplomatic Boycott of Beijing Olympics*, n.d.

²⁹ Shanna McCarriston, "China Responds after U.S. Announces Diplomatic Boycott of 2022 Beijing Olympics," *CBS Official*, last modified 2021, accessed December 10, 2022, <https://www.cbssports.com/olympics/news/china-responds-after-u-s-announces-diplomatic-boycott-of-2022-beijing-olympics/>.

For months, human rights groups and some Western politicians have urged countries to boycott the 2022 Winter Olympics to be held in Beijing over the Chinese government's rights abuses. The United States became the first major power to impose a diplomatic boycott by announcing two months before the games that the U.S. government would not send diplomatic officials to Beijing. The boycott was followed by other countries, including some in the European Union (EU).

3.1.2 Countries Boycotting the 2022 Winter Olympics

Biden's Press Secretary, Jen Psaki, announced the humanitarian violations committed by the Chinese government in Xinjiang against the Uighur Muslim population as the main reason for the US boycott.³⁰ The United States claims China has committed genocide against the Uyghur population through forced re-education camps, imprisonment, forced labor, forced sterilization, and other crimes against humanity.³¹

The Biden administration is moving forward with a Diplomatic Boycott of the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics. Subsequently, the White House announced the Olympic Boycott in December, followed by the British, Canadian, Australian and Japanese governments announcing that their governments would also refuse to send high-level officials to Beijing.³² In addition to the four countries that followed, there are several countries in Europe and Asia that have expressed negative views towards the Xi Jinping government. With the 2022 Winter Olympics just around the corner, many global publics are expressing their opinions on how they view the Chinese government's disregard for human rights. In addition to the four countries that followed, there are several countries in Europe and Asia that have expressed negative views towards the Xi Jinping government. With the 2022 Winter Olympics just around the corner, many global publics are expressing their opinions on how they view the Chinese government's disregard for human rights.³³

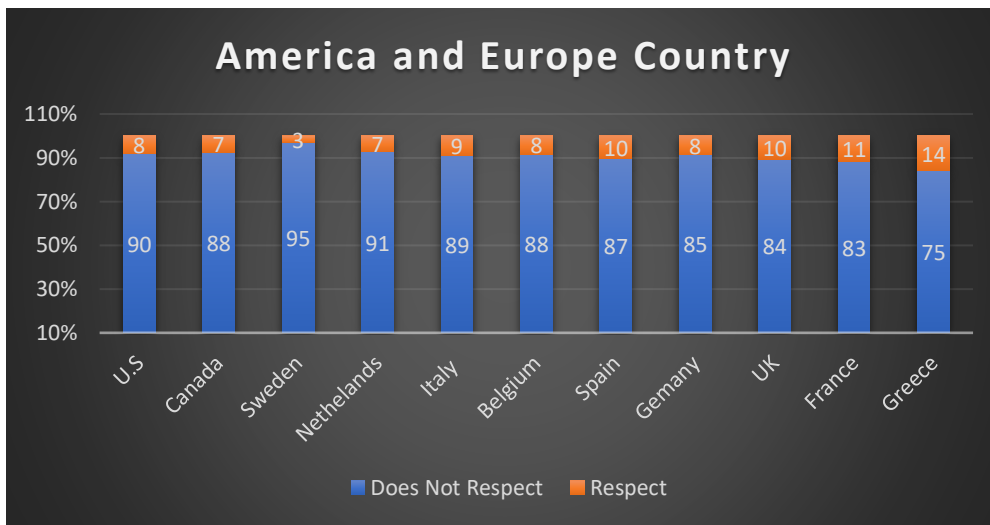
³⁰ Victor Cha, "The Biden Boycott of the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics."

³¹ Ibid.

³² Pertanyaan Kritis, "Boikot Biden Pada Olimpiade Musim Dingin Beijing 2022," *Center for Strategic and International Studies* (2022): 1–9, <https://www.csis.org/analysis/biden-boycott-2022-beijing-winter-olympics>.

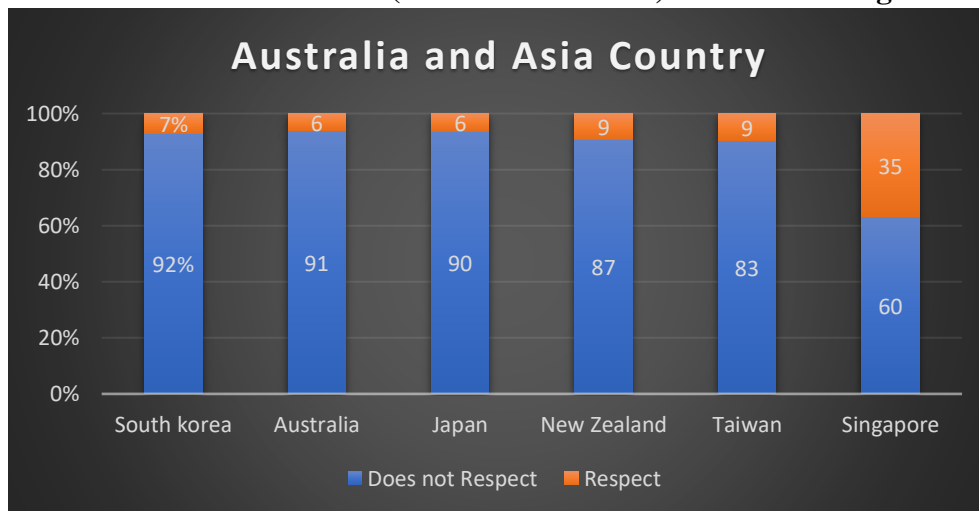
³³ Paw Research Center, "Research Topics □ All Publications Methods Short Reads Tools & Resources Experts Abo," *Paw Research Center*, no. July 2013 (2021): 1–11, <https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2012/12/18/global-religious-landscape-jew/#ftn15>.

Figure 3. International Public (American and European) views on China's government



Source: Spring 2021 Global Attitudes Survey. “Large Majorities say China Does not Respect the Personal Freedoms of its people”, PEW Research Center

Figure 4. International Public View (Australia and Asia) of the Chinese government



Source: Spring 2021 Global Attitudes Survey. “Large Majorities say China Does not Respect the Personal Freedoms of its people”, PEW Research Center

The majority in the public said that China does not respect the personal freedom of its people. In Singapore³⁴, 60% of adults say China does not respect the personal freedom of its people. Chinese President Xi Jinping gets negative reviews from almost every global public.³⁵ Several countries other than the United States have so far indicated that they will not send official representatives to the Olympics.

3.1.3 United States Administration's Stance on Boycotting the 2022 Winter Olympics

The 2022 Beijing Olympics are not the first Olympics to be entangled in political and human rights issues. The 1936 Berlin Olympics became the first Olympics to experience a diplomatic boycott. And in 1980, the US led an official boycott of the Moscow Olympics in response to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

The idea of a boycott has gained some traction, as it is something the US Government can control. Many coalitions of 180 human rights groups, for example, petitioned the government to boycott the Olympics in order to avoid China's increasingly authoritarian behavior.³⁶ Some of the US efforts in carrying out its boycott were to pressure media such as NBC not to broadcast the Olympics,³⁷ pressuring Olympic sponsors to withdraw their support and advertising from the Games, and encouraging journalists to cover human rights in China during the Games.

In addition to some of the efforts made by the United States government, there are several other efforts that will be considered by the Government:

- Build a Coalition backed by international politics to pressure the IOC to postpone the 2022 Olympics to conduct a new host selection
- Lead a Coalition that makes diplomatic participation in the Olympics contingent on accountability and transparency.

³⁴ Jun Wang et al., "The Road to the Beijing Winter Olympics and Beyond: Opinions and Perspectives on Physiology and Innovation in Winter Sport," *Journal of Science in Sport and Exercise* 3, no. 4 (2021): 321–331, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s42978-021-00133-1>.

³⁵ Laura Silver, "China's International Image Remains Broadly Negative as Views of the US Rebound," *Pew Research Center*, last modified 2021, <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2021/06/30/chinas-international-image-remains-broadly-negative-as-views-of-the-u-s-rebound/>.

³⁶ Rahman et al., *U. S. Diplomatic Boycott of Beijing Olympics*.

³⁷ BBC, "2022 Beijing Winter Olympics : China Criticises US Diplomatic Boycott," *BBC Official*, last modified 2022, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-59559703>.

- Enhance the role and responsibilities of the IOC.³⁸

The Biden administration's diplomatic boycott did not explicitly prohibit US athletes from participating. This was one of the actions taken by the United States government under Jimmy Carter in 1980 against the Moscow Summer Olympics for the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.³⁹

3.2 The Role of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) on the United States-China Bilateral Relations

Liberal institutionalism is a theory that emphasizes the role of institutions in creating and maintaining political stability⁴⁰. This theory states that strong and well-functioning institutions can help create political stability and prevent conflict. It also emphasizes the importance of political participation and human rights. Liberal institutionalists emphasize the importance of democracy, human rights and responsible government.⁴¹

Institutions that promote cooperation across international borders by providing information, strengthening relations between countries, and reinforcing international expectations and agreements.⁴² Liberal institutionalism has an important role for non-governmental organizations in achieving peace. Non-governmental organizations can use the principles of liberal institutionalism to promote dialogue and collaboration between conflicting parties. These principles can also be used to build trust between conflicting parties and create mechanisms to resolve conflicts peacefully. These principles can also assist non-governmental organizations in creating conditions conducive to sustainable development and recovery after conflict.

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) as one of the non-governmental organizations engaged in sports,⁴³ with the aim of monitoring the Games and refereeing relations between

³⁸ By Joshua Kurlantzick and C F R Expert, "Why China 's Global Image Is Getting Worse," *Council on Foreign Relations*, last modified 2022, accessed December 8, 2022, <https://www.cfr.org/in-brief/why-chinas-global-image-getting-worse>.

³⁹ Alde Party, *Diplomatic Boycott of the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics and Associated Events* (Rome, Italy, 2022).

⁴⁰ Anna Maria Strittmatter, "Defining a Problem to Fit the Solution: A Neo-Institutional Explanation for Legitimising the Bid for the 2016 Lillehammer Winter Youth Olympic Games," *International Journal of Sport Policy and Politics* 8, no. 3 (2016): 421–437.

⁴¹ Michał Marcin Kobierecki, "Expectations, Possibilities and Effects," *International Studies INTERDISCIPLINARY POLITICAL AND CULTURAL JOURNAL* 15, no. 1 (2016): 49–74, <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/272536455>.

⁴² Robert Jackson and Georg Sorensen, *Pengantar Studi Hubungan Internasional: Teori Dan Pendekatan*, ed. Kamadani and Rianayati Kusmini, Fifth Edit. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013).

⁴³ Burak Herguner, "The IOC as a Transnational Organization: Paradigm Shift and Its Rising Role in Global Governance," *International Area Studies Review* 15, no. 2 (2012): 176–186.

countries during the Games.⁴⁴ The role of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) in this case study will be examined using the theory of Liberal Institutionalism. This theory emphasizes the importance of institutions in regulating interstate relations and maintaining international stability. By using this theory, we can analyze how the IOC influences relations between countries and how it helps maintain international stability.

3.2.1 International Olympic Committee (IOC) in providing information flow and negotiating opportunities

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) is the international organization responsible for organizing and overseeing all activities related to sports and the Olympic Games.⁴⁵ The IOC aims to provide information flow and negotiation opportunities for all parties involved in the Olympic Games. The IOC provides information flow through its official website, which provides information on various aspects of the Games, including news, photos, videos, and more. The IOC also provides a platform for information sharing between players, coaches, and sports observers.⁴⁶

In addition, the IOC also provides negotiation opportunities for the parties involved in the Olympic Games. The IOC facilitates meetings between players, coaches, and sports observers to discuss various issues related to the Olympic Games and discuss strategies and tactics to achieve the desired results. Thus, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) plays an important role in providing information flow and negotiation opportunities for all parties involved in the Olympic Games.⁴⁷

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) provides information flow and negotiation opportunities. The IOC provides various resources to assist parties involved in the negotiation process. One of these resources is the IOC Session⁴⁸, which provides guidance and tools to help the parties involved in the negotiation process.

The IOC held meetings with the governments of China and the United States to discuss the diplomatic boycott issue. In April 2021, the IOC held virtual meetings with Chinese Vice Premier

⁴⁴ Gomez, "Boycotts and Diplomacy: When the Talking Stops."

⁴⁵ IOC, "IOC Principles."

⁴⁶ Strittmatter, "Defining a Problem to Fit the Solution: A Neo-Institutional Explanation for Legitimising the Bid for the 2016 Lillehammer Winter Youth Olympic Games."

⁴⁷ Nicolien van Luijk, "The International Olympic Committee: A United Nations Permanent Observer of Post-Politics?," *International Area Studies Review* 21, no. 2 (2018): 134–149.

⁴⁸ IOC, *International Olympic Charter, Olympic Charter* (Lausanne/Switzerland, 2007).

Sun Chunlan and US Deputy Secretary of State Wendy Sherman.⁴⁹ The meeting aims to discuss the diplomatic boycott issue and find a solution acceptable to both sides.

In addition, the IOC has also provided a platform for information sharing between China and the United States on the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics.⁵⁰ The platform allows both sides to negotiate on the issue of diplomatic boycotts and seek solutions that are acceptable to both sides.

Figure 5. 139th International Olympic Session



Source: International Olympic Committee Official Website (maintained by the author)

3.2.2 International Olympic Committee (IOC) in Improving Bilateral Relations in the Olympic Games

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) is the international organization responsible for organizing and overseeing the Olympic Games.⁵¹ The IOC plays an important role in improving bilateral relations around the world through the Olympic Games. The IOC promotes cooperation between nations by providing a platform for athletes from different countries to compete in a fair and sportsmanlike manner.⁵² It helps improve relations between countries and build friendships between countries.

⁴⁹ Office of the Spokesperson, "Deputy Secretary Sherman 's Visit to the People ' s Republic of China," *United States Department of State*, last modified 2021, accessed December 9, 2022, <https://www.state.gov/deputy-secretary-shermans-visit-to-the-peoples-republic-of-china/>.

⁵⁰ Graham Dunbar, "IOC ' s Thomas Bach Warns against Olympic Boycotts , Ready to Run for 2nd Term as President," *CBC Sports*, last modified 2020, accessed December 8, 2022, <https://www.cbc.ca/sports/olympics/ioc-thomas-bach-election-1.5653234>.

⁵¹ IOC, *International Olympic Charter*.

⁵² *Ibid.*

In addition, the IOC also promotes cooperation between countries by providing the necessary facilities and infrastructure to host the Olympic Games. This helps improve bilateral relations between countries as athletes from different countries gather in one place to compete. The IOC also promotes cooperation between countries by providing training and education programs for athletes and coaches from different countries. This helps raise awareness about sport and the values of sport that prevail around the world.⁵³

As such, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) has an important role to play in enhancing bilateral relations around the world through the Olympic Games. The IOC has successfully promoted cooperation between nations by providing platforms, facilities, infrastructure, training programs, and education for athletes and coaches from different countries.

The IOC is responsible for organizing and overseeing all aspects of the Olympic Games, including site selection, event organization, and the organization of relations between countries.⁵⁴ The IOC is also responsible for ensuring that all countries participating in the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics receive fair and equal treatment. The IOC has made various efforts to promote bilateral relations between the United States and China during the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics. One of the efforts made is to provide a joint training program for athletes from both countries. This program will help athletes from both countries learn about each other's culture, sports, and customs. In addition, the IOC has also provided joint programs for coaches and staff from both countries to promote cooperation between countries.⁵⁵

In addition, the IOC has also made various efforts to promote cooperation between countries through social media. The IOC has used social media such as Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram to promote cooperation between countries during the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics. In this way, the IOC hopes to raise public awareness about the importance of cooperation between countries during the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics.

⁵³ Tiago Del Tedesco Guioti et al., "Independent Olympic Athletes and the Legitimacy of the International Olympic Committee in Resolving International Conflicts," *International Journal of the History of Sport* 33, no. 12 (2016): 1304–1320, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00948705.2018.1479190>.

⁵⁴ IOC, "IOC Overview."

⁵⁵ Barbara Keys, "Political Protection: The International Olympic Committee's UN Diplomacy in the 1980s," *International Journal of the History of Sport* 34, no. 11 (2017): 1161–1178, <http://doi.org/10.1080/09523367.2017.1402764>.

3.2.3 International Olympic Committee (IOC) in reinforcing expectations about the solidity of the International Agreement

As the international organization responsible for governing and overseeing all sports related to the Olympic Games. The IOC plays an important role in reinforcing expectations about the solidity of international agreements. The IOC has signed numerous international agreements to ensure that sports around the world are well-regulated and respected.

International agreements signed by the IOC include: The Convention on Anti-Doping in Sport, which was approved in 2005. This convention sets international standards for the prevention and control of doping in sport. The Convention on Human Rights and Sport, approved in 2008. This convention sets international standards for the protection of human rights in sport. The Convention against Corruption in Sport, approved in 2009. This convention sets international standards for preventing and controlling corruption in sport. The Convention against Discrimination in Sport, approved in 2010. This convention sets international standards for preventing and controlling discrimination in sport.⁵⁶

By signing such international agreements, the IOC has helped to reinforce the hope for the solidity of international agreements. It helps ensure that sports around the world are well-regulated and respected, and ensures that human rights, anti-doping, anti-corruption and anti-discrimination are respected around the world.

The IOC has adopted strict health protocols to ensure that all athletes, staff and visitors attending the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics remain safe.⁵⁷ These protocols include strict health checks, restrictions on the number of people allowed into the Olympic site, and restrictions on on-site activities. Subsequently, the IOC implemented strict policies to ensure that all athletes and staff present at the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics comply with the regulations and laws in China. This includes a ban on political activity at the Olympic site. With the strict policy that all athletes and staff must attend, some countries began sending their diplomatic officials to the Winter

⁵⁶ Al Hussein and Rachel Davis, "Recommendations for an IOC Human Rights Strategy Independent Expert Report by Prince Zeid Ra'ad," no. March (2020).

⁵⁷ IOC Session, *Beijing-2022-139th-Session-IOC-President-Bach-Opening-Speech.Pdf* (Beijing, 2022), https://stillmed.olympics.com/media/Documents/International-Olympic-Committee/Sessions/139th-Session/Beijing-2022-139th-Session-IOC-President-Bach-Opening-Speech.pdf#_ga=2.131615628.284429177.1671849298-946053341.1668397586.

Olympics. This was met with resistance from the United States government as the leader of the Boycott Movement.⁵⁸

Based on the explanation that has been described regarding the role of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) as an organization that mediates bilateral relations between countries during the Olympics, the IOC has carried out its duties as an institution that mediates conflicts between countries. Despite having the principle of Political neutralism, the IOC still strives to keep the Olympics from political interference with efforts to provide a forum for negotiations for State leaders, Athletes, IOC members, and Olympic staff. Furthermore, the IOC also seeks to maintain relations between countries during the Olympics by providing platforms and facilities for each country and is responsible for ensuring that all countries participating in the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics receive fair and equal treatment. The IOC has made various efforts to promote bilateral relations between the United States and China during the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics. This also did not escape the role of the media in publicizing the good relations between America and China.

As explained by Johan Galtung in Peace Studies, the peace achieved is divided into two, the first is Positive Peace which explains the total absence of conflict between countries. Negative peace, on the other hand, is a concept that is explained as a temporary absence of conflict.⁵⁹ This is in accordance with the IOC's efforts to maintain bilateral relations between the United States and China during the Olympics, and it is temporary, given that the Chinese government has declared a counter-boycott of the upcoming Olympics to be held in Los Angeles, United States.⁶⁰

As Johan Galtung has explained in Peace Studies, the peace achieved is divided into two, the first is Positive Peace which explains the total absence of conflict between countries. Negative peace, on the other hand, is a concept described as the temporary elimination of conflict.⁶¹ This is in accordance with what has been attempted by the IOC in maintaining bilateral relations between the United States and China during the Olympics, and it is temporary,

⁵⁸ Rahman et al., *U. S. Diplomatic Boycott of Beijing Olympics*.

⁵⁹ Bukkan Amos Sani, "Challenges and PRospects of Air Support," *International Journal of Humanities, Art and Social Studies (IJHAS)* 5, no. 2 (2020): 11–20.

⁶⁰ McCarriston, "China Responds after U.S. Announces Diplomatic Boycott of 2022 Beijing Olympics."

⁶¹ Sani, "Challenges and PRospects of Air Support."

considering the Chinese government declared a counter-boycott of the upcoming Olympics to be held in Los Angeles, United States.⁶²

3.3 Islamization of the role of institutions according to the Theory of Liberal Institutionalism

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) is an International Organization with a vision and mission to maintain peace and uphold human rights. The decision was made by the UN by appointing the IOC as a permanent observer at the UN General Assembly in 2009.⁶³ The UN places Sport as a tool to achieve the goals of the UN which has a program in the field of Sport for Development and Peace (UNOSDP) located in Geneva, Switzerland.⁶⁴

As one of the non-governmental organizations appointed as peace observers, the IOC has an important role in maintaining peace in sport. This is analyzed using the theory of Liberal Institutionalism which is one of the theories developed from Karl Deutsch's understanding of globalization. Then, it is further developed by Joseph Nye and Robert Keohane about the role of Institutions in maintaining and promoting Cooperation.

All three points regarding the role of institutions applied to the IOC have Islamic values. As in the first point in providing information and negotiation forums, which is something that has continuity with what Islam has taught about deliberation. As explained in the Qur'an in surah Al-Imran verse 159, which means *"So by the grace of Allah you (Muhammad) were gentle with them. If you had been harsh and harsh-hearted, they would have distanced themselves from you. Therefore, forgive them and ask forgiveness for them, and consult with them in the matter. Then, when you have made up your mind, then put your trust in Allah. Indeed, Allah loves those who put their trust in Him."* (QS. Ali Imran: 159).⁶⁵

Then, in the second point, the role of institutions according to Institutional Liberals is the role of institutions in improving bilateral relations between countries. Islam has taught about maintaining relations between nations, which means peace,⁶⁶ which is one of the vision and

⁶² McCarriston, "China Responds after U.S. Announces Diplomatic Boycott of 2022 Beijing Olympics."

⁶³ Ki-Moon, "Cooperation With the UN."

⁶⁴ van Luijk, "The International Olympic Committee: A United Nations Permanent Observer of Post-Politics?"

⁶⁵ *Al-Qur'an*, n.d.

⁶⁶ Nabila Wulandari M.A Malik, "Relevansi Konsep Damai Dalam Perspektif Islam," *Journal of Islamic World and Politics*, 2018.

mission of the IOC. The third point of the institution's role is to strengthen expectations regarding the solidity of international agreements. Referring to the Olympic Charter, all conventions signed by the IOC are aligned with Islamic values or what can be referred to as *Maqashid Sharia*.⁶⁷

Maqashid Sharia consists of Hifdz ad-Diin (Religion), Hifdz An-Nafs (Self), Hifdz an-Nasl (offspring), Hifdz Al-Maal (Treasure). In accordance with the conventions signed by the IOC, namely, the anti-doping convention which is in accordance with the concept of Hifdz An-Nafs. Furthermore, the Human Rights Convention is in accordance with the concept of Hifdz An-nasl, then the anti-corruption convention with the concept of Hifdz Al-Maal, and the last is the Anti-discrimination convention in accordance with the concept of Hifdz An-Nafs.

Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that the three roles of institutions based on the theory of liberal institutionalism have relevance to what Islam has taught, such as deliberation or negotiation, building relationships between nations, and creating peace, besides those institutions also play a role in strengthening and maintaining the solidity of international law which is relevant to maqashid sharia which has the aim of creating human welfare and happiness.⁶⁸

4. CONCLUSION

A boycott is a half-measure that will not change China's policy, but the hope was never that Biden's boycott would change China's human rights policy. Rather, the point is to reiterate that it is not "business as usual" in the context of the new competition of US-China relations and that the United States will not give China a platform to stage its Olympics. The IOC as a neutral organization that has the principle of Political Neutralism, has a vision and mission in keeping the Olympics from political interference. The role of the institution is divided into three important points, namely providing opportunities for negotiation and information exposure, improving bilateral relations between countries during the Olympics, and strengthening international hope and solidarity in peace and development.

⁶⁷ Ahmad Hidayat, "Format Hubungan Internasional Dalam Konstruksi Hukum Islam (Fiqh Diplomati Pada Masa Damai)," *AL MASHLAHAH JURNAL HUKUM DAN PRANATA SOSIAL ISLAM* (n.d.): 271–294, <https://www.ptonline.com/articles/how-to-get-better-mfi-results>.

⁶⁸ Sudirman Suparmin, "Peran Maqasid Syariah Dalam Kehidupan," *Al-Kaffah* 4, no. 1 (2001).

Based on the three institutional roles that have been described, the IOC has succeeded in becoming an institution that maintains peace during the Olympics. However, from all the efforts made by the IOC, America still refused to send its diplomatic officials during the Olympics. Thus, causing peace that is temporary, and only lasts when the Olympics take place. This is known as Negative Peace, given that the Chinese government has declared a counter boycott of the upcoming Olympics to be held in Los Angeles, United States.

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