

## Olympic Cities Summit Beijing Bound

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After its first two years in Lausanne, the annual meeting of the World Union of Olympic Cities will head to Beijing for the 2010 edition.

The announcement of Beijing as the next host for the meeting came at close of the 2009 Lausanne Summit Nov. 20-21. More than 125 delegates took part in the gathering at the Olympic Museum. The City of Lausanne is the driving force for the WUOC, along with the City of Athens.

While the meeting was the second for the WUOC, the session last year was aimed at organizing the group. This year more than a dozen high-level speakers addressed the issues of legacy and sustainability of projects built for the Olympics.

Among the speakers: Rio de Janeiro Mayor Eduardo Paes, IOC Olympic Games Executive Director Gilbert Felli, IOC Bid City Relations Director Jacqueline Barrett, Vancouver 2010 sustainability officer Ann Duffy and Andrew Altman, CEO of the London Olympic Park Legacy Corporation.



The Lausanne Summit was hosted at the Olympic Museum. (ATR/Panasonic:Lumix)

"I think it is coming together, with more of a purpose expressed this year," Los Angeles Sports Council President David Simon tells Around the Rings.

Simon was one of six U.S. delegates at the meeting – more than any other country. Along with Los Angeles, U.S. Olympic cities of Atlanta, Lake Placid, St. Louis and Squaw Valley were represented, along with Olympic hopeful Denver.

Other Olympic cities at the Lausanne Summit included Athens, Antwerp, Beijing, Calgary, Chamonix, Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Mexico City, Munich, Sarajevo, Sestriere(Turin) and Sochi.

Among the cities hoping to bid for the Games were Annecy, Busan, Doha, Quebec City and Rotterdam. 2014 Youth Olympic Games bidder Poznan attended, as did representatives from 2010 YOG host Singapore.

Arguably the presentations at the Lausanne meetings may have been of most value to the aspiring host cities. Felli and Barrett managed to provide some solid pointers on what goes into a successful bid for the Games. They revealed no secrets; their advice to bid cities smacked of common sense and the obvious.

"Don't leap into a bid", said Barrett in her presentation, noting as well that the "wow" factor is a must for a successful Olympic bid.

Along with Felli, Barrett has a unique base of experience for her observations. In the 10+ years she has served in her current position, Barrett has visited every one of the more than two-dozen cities which have bid for the Summer and Winter Games.

"Many cities are not carefully able to make their vision clear," Barrett told the Lausanne meeting.

"What makes your bid stand out from the crowd?, she asked.

Tariq S. Al-Ali of the Qatar Olympic Committee says the Lausanne meeting is part of the preparation his country needs to make for a new Olympic bid.

"The learning process is never-ending, says Ali.

"We need to keep approaching people, learning from other experiences, how they develop themselves, bidding once, twice, three times. How they went through the process and how they succeeded," he says.

For past hosts of the Olympics, Swiss landscape architect Michael Jakob offered a cautionary tale in his study of Barcelona and the way the city has let its Olympic image slide from public view. With his team, Jakob poured through Barcelona looking for tangible memorials of the 1992 Olympics.

While recognizing that Barcelona used the Olympics to transform the city, Jakob found that the city today contains few obvious signs of its Olympic heritage. And even with important symbols such as the Olympic Stadium, Jakob showed delegates slides of rust and decay at the arena. Speaking afterwards to ATR, Jakob says Athens may be facing even greater challenges with its venues than Barcelona.



Christian Persicot of Anney 2018 and Tariq S. Al-Ali, Qatar Olympic Committee.  
(ATR/Panasonic:Lumix)



Sochi Mayor Anatoly Pakhomov with Lausanne Mayor Daniel Brelaz.  
(ATR/Panasonic:Lumix)

Dates for the 2010 meeting in Beijing are not set. The October-November period planned is a busy one on the Olympic calendar, including the Asian Games next November in Guangzhou.

Along with the change of venue to Beijing next year, in non-Olympic years such as 2011, the schedule of the WUOC will include assemblies in spring and fall. Lausanne will host the spring 2011 meeting; the fall session is to be determined.

Funded nearly entirely by the Lausanne city government, organizers say they want this event to grow in size.

"We would like to be bigger," says Denis Decosterd of the city government.

"We think we could interest between 60 and 80 cities, with between two- and three-hundred people. This would be in two or three years."

For a photo gallery of the Lausanne Summit, [click here](#).

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