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OLYMPIC PREPARATIONS UNDER WAY IN SEOUL

On September 30, 1981, at a meeting of the International Olympic Committee held in Baden-Baden, Seoul, the capital city of the Republic of Korea, was chosen to host the 24th Olympiad in 1988.

Back in Korea, preparations began for holding the Olympics with a maximum use of existing facilities, and plans for re-use of newly built facilities after the Games are over.

The Seoul Olympic Organizing Committee was set up on November 2, and officially registered as a legal foundation on November 26. The ceremonial unveiling of the Committee's nameplate on December 21 was attended by the Prime Minister and other dignitaries.

The first phase of the Committee's work was undertaken with 83 full-time employees.

The executive committee of SLOOC meets monthly. The first important goal of SLOOC is to prepare a complete, detailed master plan for all phases of Olympic activity by the end of July.

SLOOC at present has a group of 50 outside specialist consultants, and will set up 10 subcommittees of experts and a nationwide advisory council of 500 civic leaders. The National Assembly has set up an Olympic supportive committee of 30 members, and the central government has established a liaison group drawn from appropriate ministries and chaired by the prime minister. Seoul City government, of course, has an Olympic commission working closely with all the abovementioned groups.

1981 saw basic steps such as the signing of the Olympic contract with IOC, establishment of SLOOC, and the drafting of initial construction plans. The second stage, being implemented

this year, calls not only for completion of the master plan but basic research and compilation of data, such as was carried out by the Committee's delegation which visited Lausanne and sites of past and future Olympics in February; training of specialists; invitation of foreign experts; and initial fund raising.

The third stage will extend from 1983 through 1985, including observation of the Los Angeles Olympics, intensification of investment promotion, dedication of the new SLOOC building at the Games site, and further staff training.

The fourth stage, encompassing 1986 and 1987, will feature the completion of housing for athletes and press representatives, overall checking and supplementing if needed of all facilities, including the electronic communication system, and "dress rehearsal" of formal ceremonial events.

The final stage, of course, will consist of necessary last-minute preparations, and the holding of the Games.

Throughout this six-year period, emphasis will be placed on the obtaining of advice from ISF members, the thorough training of necessary staff members, and arrangement of facilities with maximum convenience and minimum expense.

SLOOC plans to marshall a staff of 7,000 persons, including the 1,700 requested by the ISF and 5,300 serving as assistants at the Games in various capacities and at all levels.

Priorities among the various activities have been set up to insure timely and effective scheduling. First emphasis will be placed on preparation and renovation of needed sports facilities, and inducement of private investment for this purpose.

Second priority goes to personnel training, especially juries and referees, who will be sent to the Los Angeles Olympics and international championship matches to broaden their experience, under the Solidarity assistance program funded by the I.O.C.

Third priority includes business arrangements, such as a fund-raising lottery, and the licensing or franchising of associated service enterprises.

The National Assembly has already passed an Olympic Support Law, and designated tax-free status for donations to the Committee. It has also created a new Ministry of Sports to encourage and assist athletic participation among the people.

For the ongoing funding of preparation activities, a supporting foundation has been established in conjunction with the SLOOC which will function as an umbrella group, channeling tax-exempt contributions and investments from the private sector where they are needed.

The planned Olympic period is from September 20 to October 5, taking advantage of Korea's brisk, comfortable autumn climate, with average temperatures of 20.9 C (69.1 F.). Venues have been chosen mostly in Seoul and its suburbs. A few events are scheduled for the port cities of Inchon and Pusan, well within one day's round trip travel time of the capital. The goal has been set of attracting the participation of all 149 NOC's in 23 events involving more than 10,000 athletes.