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Baku, Azerbaijan



Baku 2015 European Games hosts Chefs de Mission Seminar

Chefs de Mission from across Europe will visit Baku this week for a crucial seminar ahead of the inaugural European Games next year.

Officials from the National Olympic Committees (NOCs) of Europe are meeting in the host city to learn more about preparations and progress for the Games, take part in extensive venue tours and enjoy the hospitality Azerbaijan is renowned for.

On June 10 the Chefs will inspect competition venues for next summer's European Games and enjoy Baku's One Year To Go celebrations the following evening on the Baku Boulevard.

Mr Azad Rahimov, Azerbaijan's Minister of Youth and Sports and Chief Executive of Baku 2015, said: "The first ever European Games will be a historic celebration of sport that will unite the whole continent so I am delighted to welcome all of the European National Olympic Committee Chefs de Mission to Baku.

"As an organisation and a team we are at a very important milestone as we continue to host a number of test events in preparation for next summer.

"The recent praise we received from European Athletics for the success of our first test event was incredibly pleasing and we will build on this to ensure we deliver a truly memorable European Games."

EOC President Patrick Hickey, who is also an IOC Executive Board member, said: "This is an important milestone for BEGOC and for the European Games product: the first ever Chefs de Mission seminar, and our greatest opportunity yet to connect with the NOCs of Europe.

"We are starting from a blank canvas with Baku 2015. We have the chance to be creative and innovative, and to deliver a brand new experience for the NOCs and their teams. I am confident these meetings will strengthen the bond between the NOCs of Europe and the European Games."

The Chefs de Mission will have the opportunity to discuss the level of services being prepared by the Baku European Games Operation Committee (BEGOC) for their athletes, tour the competition venues and visit the Athletes Village that will be in full operations mode as it is hosting the athletes attending the European Rhythmic Gymnastics Championships.

The Chefs de Mission will also have individual meetings with the Baku 2015 NOC Services Team to ensure any particular concerns they may have are acknowledged and addressed.

Mr Simon Clegg, Chief Operating Officer of Baku 2015, said: “We are very proud to be hosting the Chefs de Mission from all over Europe as we continue the countdown to the Games.

“We have made great progress in recent months and are keen to assist the Chefs as they prepare their teams and their athletes as best as possible for the Games next summer.

“It has always been of one of our missions to ensure that the Games are fully focused on athletes’ needs and so it is vital for us to be able to demonstrate to the Chefs de Mission our level of commitment and understand how we can help them further in their preparation.”

Chair of the European Olympic Committees (EOC) Coordination Commission for the European Games, Spyros Capralos, who is also the President of the Hellenic Olympic Committee, said: “We are delighted to be back in the beautiful city of Baku with some of the European Games most important stakeholders: the NOCs of Europe.

“We want these sessions to be interactive discussions, because we have a huge amount of knowledge and experience here with us this week. We encourage the delegates to ask questions, offer insights and challenge BEGOC to deliver the best possible service to the NOCs. The EOC is looking forward to a highly productive series of meetings.”

In addition to a significant number of team volunteers at Games time, each National Olympic Committee will be assigned a dedicated co-ordinator from the Baku 2015 European Games Operation Committee (BEGOC) called a Regional Specialist to help smooth their preparations and attend to their every need.

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NOTES TO EDITORS

Baku 2015 will be the first ever European Games, an exciting and innovative new multi-sport event for the continent that will take place from June 12 until June 28 2015.

There will be a total of 19 sports at Baku 2015: 16 Olympic sports and three non-Olympic sports. More than 6,000 athletes are expected to represent their nations over the 17 days of competition.

Nine of the sports will offer qualification opportunities for the Rio de Janeiro Summer Olympics in 2016. Those sports include archery, athletics, beach volleyball, cycling, shooting, swimming, table tennis, taekwondo and triathlon.

Baku was awarded the Games by the European Olympic Committees (EOC) in December 2012. The Baku European Games Operation Committee (BEGOC) will organise and run the Games in co-operation with the EOC.