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# COUNTING DOWN

The year has scarcely begun and already we are in the midst of significant Olympic events. The invitations for the 1988 Olympic Games are ready to be sent to their addressees.

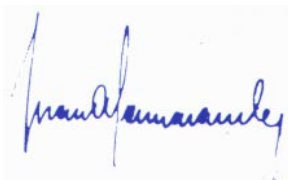
Today, it is Calgary's turn. In the presence of the Mayor of the City, Mr. Ralph Klein, and of the Chairman and President of OCO'88, Messrs. Frank King and Bill Pratt, the IOC Executive Board, in accordance with the directives of the "Olympic Charter", is making its date for the XVth Winter Games.

In one year's time, the slopes of Mount Allan, the pistes of Canmore Park, the oval of the MacMahon Stadium and the Saddledome will be opening up for Olympic competition. The guests are numerous and familiar: one hundred and sixty-four National Committees and all the world's youth, represented by the best athletes in winter sports. In September, the same appeal will be launched for the Games of the XXIVth Olympiad in Seoul, inviting each country's best athletes to join in the great fraternal contest.

The countdown is beginning. For almost a century now, Olympism has been used to it. One might even say that it has been moulded by it. Each of these periods of four years of preparation has been incessantly marked by obstacles to be circumvented or surmounted. From this point of view, the third year of an Olympiad is by no means the least significant.

Traditionally, it is at the stage when the sports and reception facilities are practically operational and the programmes finalised that the last difficulties make their appearance, problems of catering and organisation to be solved before the big day. That is why the Organising Committees should be aware that the international Olympic Committee and its Executive Board are more than ever at their side.

At the moment of dispatch of the first series of Invitations, our special thoughts go out, in particular, to the athletes. In the course of this last year of training, they are compelled to do their utmost to make the grade so as to be eligible for inclusion in their countries' delegations. We understand the great intensity of this final phase, marked by a mixture of anxiety and exaltation. On the strength of the experience we have acquired over preceding Olympiads, we express our firm support for and complete confidence in all those who are working this year throughout the world towards the preparation of the Games of 1988, those of 1992 and all future Games, towards a growth in sporting activities and thus towards the development of the Olympic spirit



Juan Antonio Samaranch

## INVITATION

The International Olympic Committee has the honour to invite you to participate in the XVth Winter Games, which will take place at Calgary from 13th to 28th February 1988.

*Each National Olympic Committee will therefore be receiving the IOC's invitation to the XVth Winter Olympic Games. The cards will be officially sent on 13th February 1987. The schedule from then on is as follows : the Committees will have until 13th June 1987 to let the IOC have their replies. The deadline for confirmation of participation in the various sports is 1st September. The last date for submission of the numbers of participants in each delegation is 15th September. Lists of entries by name have to be communicated to OCO'88 by 3rd February at the latest.*