

**STATEMENT FROM STEVEN SPIELBERG  
REGARDING BEIJING OLYMPIC GAMES AND DARFUR**

**FEBRUARY 12, 2008**

After careful consideration, I have decided to formally announce the end of my involvement as one of the overseas artistic advisors to the opening and closing ceremonies of the Beijing Olympic Games.

In anticipation that this day might one day come, I left unsigned the Beijing Organizing Committee for the Olympic Games contract presented to me nearly a year ago. Since that time, I have made repeated efforts to encourage the Chinese government to use its unique influence to bring safety and stability to the Darfur region of Sudan. Although some progress has been made along the way, most notably, the passage of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1769, the situation in Darfur continues to worsen and the violence continues to accelerate.

With this in mind, I find that my conscience will not allow me to continue with business as usual. At this point, my time and energy must be spent not on Olympic ceremonies, but on doing all I can to help bring an end to the unspeakable crimes against humanity that continue to be committed in Darfur. Sudan's government bears the bulk of the responsibility for these on-going crimes but the international community, and particularly China, should be doing more to end the continuing human suffering there. China's economic, military and diplomatic ties to the government of Sudan continue to provide it with the opportunity and obligation to press for change. The situation has never been more precarious – and while China's representatives have conveyed to me that they are working to end the terrible tragedy in Darfur, the grim realities of the suffering continue unabated.

This has been a very difficult decision for me, as I have cherished the relationships with my Chinese counterparts, in particular, the noted director Zhang Yimou, who is a close personal friend. I have learned a great deal from working with him and all the other creative artists along the way. There is little that is more rewarding than to collaborate with those who bring vision and imagination to a challenging artistic task. And I greatly appreciated the spirit in which we worked together - a spirit that embodied genuine friendship and respect.

For me, the Olympic Games represent an ideal of brotherhood designed to bridge cultural and political divides. I am committed to building bridges between peoples and I saw, and continue to see, the Beijing Games as an opportunity to help ease some of the tensions in the world.

China has much to offer the world and I have no doubt that its international contributions will grow in the years ahead. With growing influence, however, also comes growing responsibilities. As China welcomes the world to Beijing for the 2008 Olympic Games, I hope to be among those in attendance; and it is also my great hope that, with renewed and intensified efforts from China, there will be peace and security in Darfur at last.

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