

## Should Oppressors Host the Olympics?

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China is scheduled to host the Winter Olympics in 2022. Should it be allowed to? If allowed, should anybody go?

Cato scholar Ilya Somin argues, at *Reason*, for at least boycotting the event.

Why? To respond to the Chinese government's "many egregious atrocities, including its detention of hundreds of thousands of Uighurs in concentration camps, brutal repression in Hong Kong, and much else."

**Somin goes further, however. He argues that the International Olympic Committee should permanently prohibit oppressive governments from hosting the Olympics.**

China is one of the worst violators of human rights in the world. So why let the Olympics serve as a "propaganda showcase" for the regime?

The ideal of an Olympic Games unencumbered by politics is untenable. You can't keep the games free of politics when tyrant-hosts routinely exploit the



event for political purposes while appeasers turn a blind eye.

A globally publicized boycott would make the work of the appeasers much harder.

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If this policy were enacted, there would be heated debates about whether Country Y or Country Z belong to the same ban-worthy category as China, Russia, Iran, Cuba, North Korea, and Zimbabwe.

Maybe we could use Cato's Human Freedom Index as a guide to oppression.

How brutal is too brutal? Let's talk, because without open argument, any decision or policy will be arbitrary and useless.

And I welcome those debates about borderline cases, just as long as the most blatantly brutal regimes can never again host the Olympics and exploit them to advance their vicious agendas.

Until then: Boycott the 2022 games in China.

This is Common Sense. I'm Paul Jacob.