

Oct. 04, 2009

To all International Board Members of IPhO

Dear Friends:

You may have read the message received on Oct. 3. 2009 as shown in next page. We would like to emphasize that the IPhO is a purely global educational event which aims to promote quality of physics education and to encourage friendship and collaboration among our young generations. Therefore we have to do our every effort to make it cross over any racial, cultural, and political barrier. This idea has been clearly written in the Item #2 of IPhO Statutes, quoted in the following:

“No country may have its team excluded from participation on any political reasons resulting from political tensions, lack of diplomatic relations, lack of recognition of some country by the government of the organising country, imposed embargoes and similar reasons. When difficulties preclude formal invitation of the team representing a country, students from such a country should be invited to participate as individuals.

The competition is conducted in the friendly atmosphere designed to promote future collaborations and to encourage the formation of friendship in the scientific community. Therefore all possible political tensions between the participants should not be reflected in any activity during the competition. Any political activity directed against any individuals or countries is strictly prohibited.”

We think the above has explicitly expressed our stand and response to the concerned message.

Best wishes,



Hans Jordens
President of IPhOs



Ming-Juey Lin
Secretary of IPhOs

3 October 2009

To :Dr. Hans Jordens, IPhO President
Prof. Ming-Juey Lin -IPHO Secretary

Dear Dr. Hans and Prof. Lin,

The 41st International Physics Olympiad is going to take place in Zagreb, Croatia.
One of the country participants in the Olympiad is the state of Israel.

As you probably aware the UN Human Rights Council has tapped a lion of international law, Judge Richard Goldstone, to head an investigation into alleged war crimes in Gaza during the December-January war.

Last week in Geneva, Switzerland Judge Goldstone reported his findings to the General Assembly of the Human Rights Council. Judge Goldstone's findings were conclusive and supported by hard evidence that the Israelis committed war crimes against the Palestinians during that war. According to the Goldstone's report the Israelis bombed schools (where physics lessons might have been taken place), hospitals and UN compounds where thousands of people and children found their deaths under the wreckage.

As we all know the International Physics Olympiad is a place where high school students competing among each other NOT as individuals but rather representing their home countries. With all due respect, I do not think that a country which was accused in crimes against humanity should be allowed and be invited to international competition whatsoever and Israel should be banned from taking place in the 41st International Physics Olympiad until a further notice. Allowing the Israelis to compete at the Physics Olympiad will be mocking the poor and a disgrace to the IPhO organization.

Thus, I call in the name of all people that condemn such aggressive behavior and belong to the peaceful and law-abiding countries and to all members of the IPhO and its governing body to ban the state of Israel from taking place at the 41st International Physics Olympiad.

By showing that attitude you will support the international community who condemn war crimes and help to bring justice to the people who were accused by committing such horrible crimes.

I know that some of you might think that such a resolution would bring politics and international affairs into the IPhO but let me assure you that if such was true I was the first to reject it; on the contrary since the report was made by international distinguished Judge whose record is beyond reproach we can rest assured that the serious allegations are valid and stand still.

Judge Goldstone's report shown clearly and without hesitation that Israel should not be part of the enlightened international community at this stage.

Sincerely yours,
Lord Ian Cavendish
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