



United Kingdom
Delegation to the
OSCE

PC.DEL/477/12

25 May 2012

ENGLISH only

**UK Statement on the Olympic Truce to the OSCE Permanent
Council on 24 May 2012**

Mr Chairperson

This summer, London will proudly host the Olympic and Paralympic Games. You may be aware that the Olympic Torch is currently making its way across the UK, and on its route to London will cross the border between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland in a demonstration of peace and reconciliation.

In ancient times, an Olympic Truce was established between states to allow athletes to travel to and from the Games free of conflict and violence. That tradition was revived by a UN Resolution ahead of the Lillehammer Winter Games of 1994 to remind nations that taking part in the Olympic and Paralympic Games is a way of bringing together people from different nations and diversities to enjoy competition through sport in a peaceful environment.

In October 2011 all 193 Member States of the United Nations co-sponsored a General Assembly resolution on the Olympic Truce, which reinforced the importance of respecting the Truce during the Games, and promoted the idea of using sport, culture, education and public engagement to promote conflict prevention and the importance of peaceful societies. We believe that ideal has a particular resonance for participating States of this organisation. It is an ideal worth celebrating and promoting.

Next month, during the Annual Security Review Conference, the UK will host an event in the Hofburg that will give participating States the opportunity to both re-affirm their support for the Olympic Truce resolution, and pledge to do one practical thing to help implement it.

British Diplomatic Missions across the world have been organising a broad range of activities to promote the Olympic ideals of conflict prevention and peace. These included funding sporting tournaments to build trust between people from different communities. I will write to all delegations shortly to provide more details, and to invite everyone to join us in promoting the ideals of the Olympic Truce in the OSCE region.