



Council of the
European Union

Brussels, 25 November 2016
(OR. en)

14456/16

SOC 710
SPORT 81

NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Delegations
Subject: Special Olympics World Winter Games 2017
- Information note from the Austrian delegation

Delegations will find attached an information note from the Austrian delegation on the above subject, in preparation for the EPSCO Council on 8 December 2016 (AOB item).

Special Olympics World Winter Games 2017
14 to 25 March 2017 in Graz, Schladming and Ramsau, Austria

Context

As the biggest international sports movement for people with intellectual disabilities, Special Olympics offers worldwide, year-round training and competition opportunities in 32 different Olympic disciplines for more than 4.2 million athletes in 170 countries. This gives them continuing opportunities to develop their physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy and share their gifts, skills and friendship with their families, other Special Olympics athletes and the wider community. Special Olympics International was founded in 1968 by Eunice Kennedy Shriver and is chaired by Dr Timothy P. Shriver.

Special Olympics World Winter Games 2017

- Under the slogan '**Heartbeat for the World**', the Special Olympics World Winter Games will take place from **14 to 25 March 2017** in **Graz, Schladming and Ramsau** in **Austria**.
- 3 000 athletes from 110 nations, 1 100 coaches, 3 000 volunteers and 5 000 family members and friends will be taking part in the Special Olympics World Winter Games 2017. The athletes will compete in nine disciplines: figure skating, speed skating, floor hockey/floorball, snowshoeing, Alpine skiing, Nordic skiing, snowboarding and stick shooting.
- The **opening ceremony** will be held on **18 March 2017** in Schladming, and the **closing ceremony** on **24 March 2017** in Graz.
- The Austrian Minister for Social Affairs, Mr Alois Stöger, and the Minister for Sports, Mr Hans Peter Doskozil, look forward to meeting their colleagues participating in the official opening on 18 March for lunch at 12.00 in Graz. Invitations will be sent to the capitals.

Further information

<http://www.austria2017.org>
