

IOC Has 'No Doubt' About Russian Security for 2014

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The  **Moscow Times**

The International Olympic Committee has "no doubt" that Russia will deliver a safe Winter Games in Sochi in 2014 despite new security worries raised by the suicide bombing attack at Moscow's main airport.

"Unfortunately, terrorism is a global phenomenon and no region is exempt, which is why security at the games is a top priority for the IOC," the Olympic body told The Associated Press in a statement Tuesday.

"At the Olympics, security is the responsibility of the local authorities, and we have no doubt that the Russian authorities will be up to the task."

Monday's bombing at Domodedovo Airport killed 35 people and left 180 people injured.

No claims of responsibility were made, but suspicion is likely to fall on Islamist separatist insurgents from Chechnya or elsewhere in Russia's restive Caucasus region.

The Black Sea resort of Sochi is relatively close to the North Caucasus region.

Chechen insurgents have claimed responsibility for an array of attacks in Moscow and elsewhere in Russia, including a double suicide bombing on the capital's subway system in March 2010 that killed 40 people.

Sochi is also close to Abkhazia, a separatist region of Georgia that Russia has recognized as independent. The two sides fought a brief war over the territory in 2008.

"The games are a celebration of peace," the IOC said. "We look forward to that spirit being respected in 2014."

Many athletes, officials and foreign spectators traveling to Sochi in 2014 will need to take connecting flights in Moscow.

The first test events for the games will be held next month, with lower-tier Europa Cup Alpine ski races scheduled from Feb. 15-18 and Feb. 22-26 in the Krasnaya Polyana mountains outside Sochi.

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