



**Speech by:
Sir Philip Craven MBE
President, International Paralympic Committee**

One Year to Go, NPC Iran

On behalf of the International Paralympic Committee, I would like to wish NPC Iran the very best of luck with the activities they have planned to mark International Paralympic Day and One Year to Go until the London 2012 Paralympic Games.

We are now 12 months out from London 2012 and the excitement is building by the day. As we get closer, I truly believe that London 2012 is shaping up to be just as good as, if not better than what Beijing was in 2008.

So why will London be so great?

Well, the Games are heading back to their spiritual home and, with 4,200 athletes from 150 countries, London 2012 will be the biggest ever in terms of participants.

London also has the unique opportunity to be a truly global event - not just in terms of athletes and countries taking part - but spectators and TV viewers.

The city is a short journey from many European cities and also home to many large international communities.

Therefore, next year I don't think it will just be the British athletes who will enjoy the passionate vocal support that a home crowd brings.

For those who cannot attend in person, then I am sure they will not miss a minute in the media.

The Games will enjoy more airtime and more attending media than ever before and will be broadcast in more territories than previous years.

One of the most pleasing aspects about London 2012 is the enthusiasm for them, and in particular the two million tickets which go on-sale on 9 September.

More than one million people have registered their interest in buying tickets for the Games and we've also seen unprecedented demand from our international partners.

I'm also delighted that London 2012 tickets are very affordable and three quarters of them are £20 or less.

On 8 September, the day before tickets go on-sale, LOCOG is staging International Paralympic Day in Trafalgar Square, an IPC event that will feature demonstrations in 10 out of the 20 Paralympic sports. It will give the public a taster of what they can expect to see next year.



Nearly 100 athletes will be in attendance including the likes of Eleanor Simmonds, Oscar Pistorius and Jerome Singleton, the American sprinter who became the first person to beat Oscar in seven years when he claimed the 100m world title earlier this year.

Various countries around the world, including Iran are also hosting their own event to coincide with International Paralympic Day.

All of these activities that will take place between now and next year's Closing Ceremony will raise interest levels in the Paralympic Movement to a new high and deliver many legacies.

One of which I hope is a greater understanding of the Agitos, the symbol of the Paralympic Movement, and what it stands for.

I want more people to understand the IPC's objectives for organizing one of the biggest multi-sport events in the world. Our symbol represents our role in bringing athletes from all around the world together through the Movement, whether that be through grassroots sport or the elite level.

The London 2012 Paralympic Games will quite simply be 'Sport Like Never Before'. Our elite athletes will captivate billions around the world, will inspire millions, and ultimately lead societal change and help alter perceptions of what can be achieved by a person with an impairment.

There is no greater showcase to do that than in front of million of spectators and billions of TV viewers at London 2012.

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