

Olympics Games 2016: Team of refugees set to compete in Rio

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A team made up exclusively of refugees is set to compete under the Olympic flag at this summer's Games in Rio de Janeiro. A shortlist of 43 sportsmen and women has been compiled, with the International Olympic Committee saying as many as 10 would get the go-ahead to take part at the Olympics.

Among those in contention is 17-year-old swimmer Yusra Mardini, who fled from Syria on an inflatable boat headed to the Greek Island of Lesbos from Turkey. When the boat started taking on water, Mardini and her sister Sarah got in the water and swam the vessel and the 20 people on board to safety.

Mardini, who now lives in Germany with her family, has since been one of a number of refugee athletes to receive funding from a £2 million International Olympic Committee scholarship fund specifically aimed at aiding refugees.

The team in Rio will be known as the Team of Refugee Olympic Athletes, International Olympic Committee president Thomas Bach announced this week, and will be the penultimate team into the Olympic Stadium before hosts Brazil.

"We have all been touched by the magnitude of this refugee crisis," Bach told reporters after a two-day International Olympic Committee executive board meeting in Lausanne. "By welcoming Refugee Olympic Athletes to the Olympic Games in Rio, we want to send a message of hope to all the refugees of the world. This team will be treated like all the other teams."

Bach stated "This team may end up between five and 10 people, we have no target, it depends very much on the sporting qualifications."

An Iranian refugee in Belgium is likely to be one of those on the Refugee Olympic Athletes team having qualified via a European tournament in January. Raheleh Asemani, who now works as a postwoman, explained: "Hope has carried me to the Olympics. Now I will give all I have to win."

Also in contention is Yolande Mabika, who escaped war in the Democratic Republic of Congo three years ago and sought asylum in Brazil. Of her hopes of competing under the International Olympic Committee flag, she said: "I cannot fight for my country. I will fight for the Olympics, I will fight for all the refugees in the world. Judo is my life. It helped me escape war, to take another path."

Mabika also said she hoped competing in Rio would enable her family to find her, she has had no contact with them for three years.

27. The Refugee Olympic Athletes is a team composed of ...

- a. exclusively refugees.
- b. a mix of refugees and Brazilians.
- c. 43 sportsmen and women.

28. A £2 million International Olympic Committee fund was created to ...

- a. advertise the refugee athletes.
- b. improve the Olympic stadium.
- c. aid the refugee athletes who are competing.

29. Thomas Bach said that he wants to ...

- a. solve the refugee crisis.
- b. give hope to refugees all around the world.
- c. make the Refugee Olympic Athletes the winning team of the Olympics.

30. Raheleh Asemani ...

- a. has a good chance of competing in the Olympics.
- b. has no chance of competing in the Olympics.
- c. will be a referee in the Olympics.

31. Why is Yolande Mabika competing in the Olympics?

- a. She wants to give hope to other refugees.
- b. She hopes that her family will find her.
- c. Both of the above.