

August 26, 2008
AN OPEN LETTER to the

President of the IOC, Mr. Jacques Rogge and president of the IAAF, Mr. Lamine Diack

International Olympic Committee
Château de Vidy
1007 Lausanne
SUISSE

17 Rue Princesse Florestine
Postal: BP 359
MC 98007 Monaco Cedex

We the undersigned global champions and record breakers would like to invite your two highly esteemed federations to consider the re-introduction of cross country running into the Olympic Games programme, either as a summer or a winter sport.

Cross country running is of course the most natural, indeed elemental of all sports. It is a fascinating discipline whose roots are lost in the earliest history of mankind.

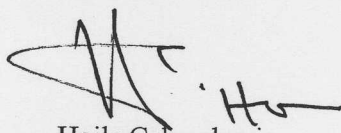
In the 1924 Olympic Games in Paris, cross country running was so far seen for the last time with the victory of one of the greatest ever Olympians, Finland's Paavo Nurmi.

The official report at the time noted that a combination of unseasonal hot weather and the effects of the heat of a near-by industrial chimney – yes we had global warming in those days too! – meant that the air temperature on the course was as high as 36 degrees Centigrade (96.8 Fahrenheit). As such, of the 38 starters, 23 failed to finish. The problems of 1924 were certainly unique.

So we humbly and respectfully ask, what is your opinion about returning cross country running to a future Olympic Games, either on the programme of a summer or winter celebration?

We think it would be wonderful to give the world's best cross country runners the chance to compete in the greatest of all sporting festivals, and are hopeful of a positive response.

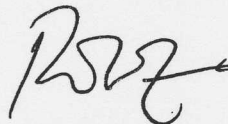
Yours in sport,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Haile Gebrselassie', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Haile Gebrselassie

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kenenisa Bekele', with a large, circular flourish at the beginning.

Kenenisa Bekele

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Paul Tergat', with a long, horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Paul Tergat