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China anger at Spielberg Olympics snub

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Contents

The Article	2
Warm-ups	3
Before Reading / Listening	4
While Reading / Listening	5
Listening Gap Fill	6
After Reading / Listening	7
Student Survey	8
Discussion	9
Language Work	10
Writing	11
Homework	12
Answers	13

15th February, 2008

THE ARTICLE

China has expressed regret over the decision of US film-maker Steven Spielberg to cut his ties with the 2008 Olympic Games. The Hollywood producer decided to quit his post as the Games' artistic director because of the genocide in Darfur, and his view that China could do more to stop it. He told reporters: "Sudan's government bears the bulk of the responsibility for these ongoing crimes but the international community, and particularly China, should be doing more to end the continuing human suffering." China hit back at the negative press by saying it had worked tirelessly for years to bring about peace in Sudan. "The Chinese government has made [continual] efforts to resolve the Darfur conflict," said Zhu Jing, a spokeswoman from the Olympic organizing committee. She added that China's endeavor to bring regional peace was "an obvious fact to the international community".

Spielberg's withdrawal coincides with Nobel Prize winners, Olympic athletes, writers, actors and politicians from around the world signing a letter criticizing China over Darfur. Signatories include South Africa's Archbishop Desmond Tutu. Ms Jing said that Darfur should not be linked to the Beijing Games because it would not help to resolve the issue and was "not in line with the Olympic spirit that separates sports from politics." China's 'Global Times' newspaper expressed outrage at what it called Western exploitation of the Olympics. It's editorial ran: "The vast majority of Chinese people have expressed...outrage at the Western pressure. In their view, it's absolutely absurd to place the Darfur issue...on the head of China." China is one of Sudan's closest allies and buys most of its oil exports. China is also a major supplier of weapons to Sudan.

WARM-UPS

1. BEIJING OLYMPICS: Walk around the class and talk to other students about the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing. Change partners often. After you finish, sit with your original partner(s) and share what you found out.

2. CHAT: In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words from the article are most interesting and which are most boring.

regret / cutting ties / genocide / bearing responsibility / suffering / endeavor / coincidences / resolving issues / the Olympic spirit / outrage / weapons supplier

Have a chat about the topics you liked. Change topics and partners frequently.

3. PREDICTION: With your partner(s), use all of the above words and make your own story based on the headline. Change partners and share your stories.

4. REGRETS: Complete the table below. Talk with your partner(s) about what you wrote. Change partners and share what you heard with others.

Things I really my country doing	Things I regret my country not doing	Things I have no regrets about my country doing

5. DARFUR OLYMPICS: With your partner, talk about which of the these possibilities you agree with. Rank them in order of your favourite. Change partners and share your ideas and findings

- _____ Boycott the Olympics unless China acts
- _____ Hold the Olympic Games in Darfur
- _____ Ban Sudan from competing in the Olympics
- _____ Rename the Games "Olympics for Darfur"
- _____ Allow a Team Darfur to compete in the Beijing Games
- _____ Show the numbers of dead in the genocide next to the medals tables

6. REGRET: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word 'regret'. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

7. QUICK ROLE PLAY: Student A **strongly** believes that China should put strong pressure on Sudan over Darfur; Student B **strongly** believes that sport and politics shouldn't mix. Change partners again and talk about your roles and conversations.

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

1. TRUE / FALSE: Look at the article's headline and guess whether these sentences are true (T) or false (F):

- | | |
|---|-------|
| a. Steven Spielberg has refused free Olympics tickets from China. | T / F |
| b. Spielberg quit his Olympics job because of the Darfur genocide. | T / F |
| c. China said it has worked for many years to bring peace to Sudan. | T / F |
| d. An Olympics spokeswoman said China's peace efforts aren't clear. | T / F |
| e. Archbishop Desmond Tutu wrote to China to request tickets. | T / F |
| f. The Olympics spokeswoman said sport and politics shouldn't mix. | T / F |
| g. A Chinese paper said the West was taking advantage of the Games. | T / F |
| h. China and Sudan supply each other with weapons and oil. | T / F |

2. SYNONYM MATCH: Match the following synonyms from the article:

- | | |
|-----------------|-----------------------|
| 1. expressed | a. happens together |
| 2. ties | b. lion's share |
| 3. bulk | c. ridiculous |
| 4. tirelessly | d. making the most of |
| 5. endeavor | e. doggedly |
| 6. coincides | f. relations |
| 7. resolve | g. great |
| 8. exploitation | h. indicated |
| 9. vast | i. settle |
| 10. absurd | j. effort |

3. PHRASE MATCH: Match the following phrases from the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

- | | |
|--|----------------------------|
| 1. expressed regret | a. of the responsibility |
| 2. Sudan's government bears the bulk | b. on the head of China |
| 3. end the continuing human | c. over the decision |
| 4. it had worked | d. China over Darfur |
| 5. China's endeavor to bring | e. with the Olympic spirit |
| 6. signing a letter criticizing | f. regional peace |
| 7. not in line | g. of the Olympics |
| 8. Western exploitation | h. tirelessly for years |
| 9. absurd to place the Darfur issue... | i. weapons to Sudan |
| 10. China is also a major supplier of | j. suffering |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

GAP FILL: Put the words into the gaps in the text.

China has expressed _____ over the decision of US film-maker Steven Spielberg to _____ his ties with the 2008 Olympic Games. The Hollywood producer decided to quit his _____ as the Games' artistic director because of the genocide in Darfur, and his view that China could do more to stop it. He told reporters: "Sudan's government _____ the bulk of the responsibility for these ongoing crimes but the international community, and particularly China, should be doing more to end the continuing human suffering." China _____ back at the negative press by saying it had worked _____ for years to bring about peace in Sudan. "The Chinese government has made [continual] efforts to _____ the Darfur conflict," said Zhu Jing, a spokeswoman from the Olympic organizing committee. She added that China's endeavor to bring regional peace was "an _____ fact to the international community".

Spielberg's withdrawal _____ with Nobel Prize winners, Olympic athletes, writers, actors and politicians from around the world signing a letter criticizing China over Darfur. _____ include South Africa's Archbishop Desmond Tutu. Ms Jing said that Darfur should not be _____ to the Beijing Games because it would not help to resolve the issue and was "not in _____ with the Olympic spirit that separates sports from politics." China's 'Global Times' newspaper expressed outrage at what it called Western exploitation of the Olympics. It's _____ ran: "The vast majority of Chinese people have expressed...outrage at the Western pressure. In their _____, it's absolutely _____ to place the Darfur issue...on the head of China." China is one of Sudan's closest _____ and buys most of its oil exports. China is also a major supplier of weapons to Sudan.

post
tirelessly
cut
resolve
regret
hit
obvious
bears

signatories
view
linked
allies
coincides
editorial
line
absurd

LISTENING: Listen and fill in the spaces.

China has expressed regret _____ US film-maker Steven Spielberg _____ the 2008 Olympic Games. The Hollywood producer decided _____ the Games' artistic director because of the genocide in Darfur, and his view that China could do more to stop it. He told reporters: "Sudan's government _____ responsibility for these ongoing crimes but the international community, and particularly China, should be doing more to end the continuing human suffering." China _____ negative press by saying it had worked tirelessly _____ peace in Sudan. "The Chinese government has made [continual] efforts to resolve the Darfur conflict," said Zhu Jing, a spokeswoman from the Olympic organizing committee. She added that China's endeavor to bring regional peace was _____ international community".

Spielberg's withdrawal _____ Nobel Prize winners, Olympic athletes, writers, actors and politicians from around the world signing a letter criticizing China over Darfur. _____ South Africa's Archbishop Desmond Tutu. Ms Jing said that Darfur should _____ Beijing Games because it would not help to resolve the issue and was "_____ the Olympic spirit that separates sports from politics." China's 'Global Times' newspaper _____ at what it called Western exploitation of the Olympics. It's editorial ran: "The vast majority of Chinese people have expressed...outrage at the Western pressure. In their view, it's _____ place the Darfur issue...on the head of China." China is one of Sudan's closest allies and buys most of its oil exports. China _____ of weapons to Sudan.

AFTER READING / LISTENING

1. WORD SEARCH: Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words '**express**' and '**regret**'.

express	regret

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS: Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

3. GAP FILL: In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the activity. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

4. VOCABULARY: Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

5. TEST EACH OTHER: Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall exactly how these were used in the text:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• cut• post• bears• end• press• endeavor	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• coincides• linked• resolve• Western• vast• closest
---	---

STUDENT DARFUR SURVEY

Write five GOOD questions about Darfur in the table. Do this in pairs. Each student must write the questions on his / her own paper.

When you have finished, interview other students. Write down their answers.

	STUDENT 1	STUDENT 2	STUDENT 3
	_____	_____	_____
Q.1.			
Q.2.			
Q.3.			
Q.4.			
Q.5.			

- Now return to your original partner and share and talk about what you found out. Change partners often.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

DISCUSSION

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a) What did you think when you read the headline?
 - b) What springs to mind when you hear the word 'Olympics'?
 - c) What are your feelings toward what is happening in Darfur?
 - d) What do you think of Steven Spielberg's decision to quit his Olympic post and cut his ties with Beijing?
 - e) How worried do you think China is about negative press and bad publicity affecting the Beijing Olympic Games?
 - f) George W. Bush recently said what was happening in Darfur was genocide. Do you agree with him?
 - g) What responsibility does China have towards trying to end the human suffering in Darfur?
 - h) If the US thinks genocide is happening in Darfur, why do you think it isn't acting to stop it?
 - i) Is China's endeavor to bring regional peace in Sudan an "obvious fact" to you?
-

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a) Did you like reading this article?
- b) Why do you think it's mainly athletes and artists who are pressuring China over Darfur?
- c) Do you agree with Olympic spokeswoman Zhu Jing when she said Darfur should not be linked to the Olympics Games?
- d) Can politics and sport ever be kept separate, especially with the Olympics?
- e) Do you agree the West is exploiting the Olympics over Darfur?
- f) Do you think countries with poor human rights records should be banned from holding the Olympic Games?
- g) Would you like to go to the Beijing Games?
- h) What questions would you like to ask Steven Spielberg?
- i) Did you like this discussion? Why (not)?

LANGUAGE

CORRECT WORD: Put the correct words from a–d below in the article.

China has expressed regret (1) _____ the decision of US film-maker Steven Spielberg to cut his (2) _____ with the 2008 Olympic Games. The Hollywood producer decided to quit his post as the Games' artistic director because of the genocide in Darfur, and his (3) _____ that China could do more to stop it. He told reporters: "Sudan's government (4) _____ the bulk of the responsibility for these ongoing crimes but the international community, and particularly China, should be doing more to end the continuing human suffering." China hit back at the negative press by saying it had worked (5) _____ for years to bring about peace in Sudan. "The Chinese government has made [continual] efforts to resolve the Darfur conflict," said Zhu Jing, a spokeswoman from the Olympic organizing committee. She added that China's endeavor to bring regional peace was "an (6) _____ fact to the international community".

Spielberg's withdrawal (7) _____ with Nobel Prize winners, Olympic athletes, writers, actors and politicians from around the world signing a letter criticizing China over Darfur. (8) _____ include South Africa's Archbishop Desmond Tutu. Ms Jing said that Darfur should not be linked to the Beijing Games because it would not help to resolve the issue and was "not (9) _____ line with the Olympic spirit that separates sports from politics." China's 'Global Times' newspaper expressed outrage at what it called Western exploitation of the Olympics. It's editorial (10) _____: "The vast majority of Chinese people have expressed...outrage at the Western pressure. In their view, it's (11) _____ absurd to place the Darfur issue...on the head of China." China is one of Sudan's closest (12) _____ and buys most of its oil exports. China is also a major supplier of weapons to Sudan.

- | | | | | |
|-----|------------------|----------------|-----------------|------------------|
| 1. | (a) under | (b) on | (c) in | (d) over |
| 2. | (a) ties | (b) neckties | (c) bow ties | (d) tie-dye |
| 3. | (a) viewing | (b) view | (c) viewer | (d) viewed |
| 4. | (a) outfoxes | (b) dogs | (c) bears | (d) apes |
| 5. | (a) tires | (b) tire | (c) tirelessly | (d) tireless |
| 6. | (a) obviously | (b) obvious | (c) oblivious | (d) obliviously |
| 7. | (a) coincidences | (b) coinciding | (c) coincidence | (d) coincides |
| 8. | (a) Signatories | (b) Signs | (c) Signature | (d) Autographs |
| 9. | (a) on | (b) in | (c) parallel | (d) out of |
| 10. | (a) sprinted | (b) jogged | (c) dashed | (d) ran |
| 11. | (a) absolutist | (b) absolute | (c) absolutely | (d) absoluteness |
| 12. | (a) allies | (b) ally | (c) alliance | (d) alied |

WRITING:

Write about *the Olympics* for 10 minutes. Correct your partner's paper.

[illegible]

HOMEWORK

1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION: Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

2. INTERNET: Search the Internet and find out about politics and the Olympics. Share what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

3. OLYMPICS: Make a poster about your favourite Olympics events. Show your work to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all have similar things?

4. SNUB: Write a magazine article about Steven Spielberg's decision to snub China and the Beijing Olympics. Include imaginary interviews with Mr Spielberg and China's President Hu Jintao.

Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Write down new words and expressions.

5. LETTER: Write a letter to Steven Spielberg. Ask him three questions about his decision to snub China and the Beijing Olympics. Give him three suggestions on what he should do from now to help stop the human suffering in Darfur. Read your letter to your partner(s) in your next lesson. Your partner(s) will answer your questions.

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

a. F b. T c. T d. F e. F f. T g. T h. T

SYNONYM MATCH:

- | | |
|-----------------|-----------------------|
| 1. expressed | a. indicated |
| 2. ties | b. relations |
| 3. bulk | c. lion's share |
| 4. tirelessly | d. doggedly |
| 5. endeavor | e. effort |
| 6. coincides | f. happens together |
| 7. resolve | g. settle |
| 8. exploitation | h. making the most of |
| 9. vast | i. great |
| 10. absurd | j. ridiculous |

PHRASE MATCH:

- | | |
|--|----------------------------|
| 1. expressed regret | a. over the decision |
| 2. Sudan's government bears the bulk | b. of the responsibility |
| 3. end the continuing human | c. suffering |
| 4. it had worked | d. tirelessly for years |
| 5. China's endeavor to bring | e. regional peace |
| 6. signing a letter criticizing | f. China over Darfur |
| 7. not in line | g. with the Olympic spirit |
| 8. Western exploitation | h. of the Olympics |
| 9. absurd to place the Darfur issue... | i. on the head of China |
| 10. China is also a major supplier of | j. weapons to Sudan |

GAP FILL:

China anger at Spielberg Olympics snub

China has expressed **regret** over the decision of US film-maker Steven Spielberg to **cut** his ties with the 2008 Olympic Games. The Hollywood producer decided to quit his **post** as the Games' artistic director because of the genocide in Darfur, and his view that China could do more to stop it. He told reporters: "Sudan's government **bears** the bulk of the responsibility for these ongoing crimes but the international community, and particularly China, should be doing more to end the continuing human suffering." China **hit** back at the negative press by saying it had worked **tirelessly** for years to bring about peace in Sudan. "The Chinese government has made [continual] efforts to **resolve** the Darfur conflict," said Zhu Jing, a spokeswoman from the Olympic organizing committee. She added that China's endeavor to bring regional peace was "an **obvious** fact to the international community".

Spielberg's withdrawal **coincides** with Nobel Prize winners, Olympic athletes, writers, actors and politicians from around the world signing a letter criticizing China over Darfur. **Signatories** include South Africa's Archbishop Desmond Tutu. Ms Jing said that Darfur should not be **linked** to the Beijing Games because it would not help to resolve the issue and was "not in **line** with the Olympic spirit that separates sports from politics." China's 'Global Times' newspaper expressed outrage at what it called Western exploitation of the Olympics. It's **editorial** ran: "The vast majority of Chinese people have expressed...outrage at the Western pressure. In their **view**, it's absolutely **absurd** to place the Darfur issue...on the head of China." China is one of Sudan's closest **allies** and buys most of its oil exports. China is also a major supplier of weapons to Sudan.

LANGUAGE WORK

1 - d 2 - a 3 - b 4 - c 5 - c 6 - b 7 - d 8 - a 9 - b 10 - d 11 - c 12 - a