



IOC Gets First Woman President

Why in News?

On 23rd June 2025, **Kirsty Coventry** became the **first female and first African president** of the **International Olympic Committee (IOC)**, coinciding with the IOC's 131st anniversary.

- **Thomas Bach**, the outgoing president who completed his 12-year term starting in 2013, now assumes the **honorary title of IOC President**.

Key Points

About Kirsty Coventry

- **Olympic Success:** She is **Zimbabwe's most successful Olympian**, having won seven of the country's eight Olympic medals to date.
 - No African athlete has won more Olympic medals than Coventry, who specialized in backstroke and medley swimming.
- **Olympic Medals:** At the Athens 2004 Olympics, she won three medals: a gold in the 200m backstroke, a silver in the 100m backstroke, and a bronze in the 200m medley.
 - She defended her 200m backstroke title at Beijing 2008 and added three silver medals.
- **World Titles and Retirement:** Coventry won three long-course world titles in 2005 and 2009, along with four short-course gold medals in 2008.
 - She retired from competitive swimming after the **Rio 2016 Olympics**, marking her fifth Olympic appearance.
- **Government Role:** In September 2018, she was appointed as Zimbabwe's Minister of Youth, Sport, Arts, and Recreation.
- **IOC Involvement:** Elected to the IOC in 2013 as a **member of the Athletes' Commission**, she was re-elected as an individual IOC member in 2021.
- **Role as IOC President:**
 - She will oversee the Olympic Winter Games Milano Cortina 2026 as her first Olympic Games.
 - She will also be overseeing the selection of the 2028 Summer Games host city.
 - Potential bids from Qatar and Saudi Arabia are under consideration, with the IOC's new process allowing fast-tracking of a preferred candidate.
 - She will hold a closed-door session with around 100 IOC members, including current and former heads of state, business leaders, athletes, and Olympic sports leaders.
 - She emphasized her role as a "guardian" of the Olympic platform, dedicated to inspiring, changing lives, and bringing hope worldwide, while leading the International Olympic Committee for the next eight years.



International Olympic Committee (IOC)

- The IOC is a **non-governmental international organisation** based in Lausanne, Switzerland, that came into existence in 1894.
- The **IOC decides the rules and regulations** of the Olympic Games and when and where the next Olympic event will be held.
- The IOC is a **permanent organisation that elects its own members**, with each member **speaking French or English** and being a citizen of or residing in a country with a National Olympic Committee.
 - The IOC is the final authority on all questions concerning the Olympic Games and the Olympic movement.
- The IOC aims to ensure the **regular holding of the Olympic Games** and foster Olympism and the Olympic movement.
 - **Olympism is a philosophy that blends sport, culture, education, and international cooperation**, emphasizing the joy of effort, the educational value of good examples, social responsibility, and respect for universal ethical principles.
 - The goal of the Olympic Movement is to **contribute to building a peaceful and better world** by educating youth through sports practised in accordance with Olympism and its values.
 - The three main constituents of the Olympic Movement are the **IOC, the International Sports Federations ("IFs"), and the National Olympic Committees ("NOCs")**.