

SPEECH BY ARIANNA FONTANA

Dear Olympic Family,

for those who do not know me, my name is Arianna Fontana, Olympic Champion in PyeongChang in 500mt Short Track Speed Skating.

I've participated in 4 editions of the Games and that experience has given me a unique perspective. My medal count now stands at 8 but I am more proud of being the first woman to reach such a tally.

I'm also very proud to have been the Italian flagbearer at the opening Ceremony of the 2018 Winter Olympic Games back in February.

BUT, today, I'm more proud to be part of the team that will bring the Olympic Games back to Italy.

I'm here to represent the Olympic and Paralympic athletes that support the bid of Milano – Cortina to host the 2026 Winter Olympic Games.

As just stated, the candidature of Milano-Cortina combines two beautiful areas that are in complete support of the Olympic movement. I'm from Lombardia, born in Sondrio, a small town in the centre of Valtellina, a most beautiful Alpine Region.

I can't unveil the masterplan just yet but I can surely affirm that Valtellina, together with Milano and Cortina will play an important role in this bid.

We the athletes know the strength of this bid and support it fully. The combination of two large regions such as Lombardia and Veneto will enhance an innovative project that implements Agenda 2020.

Athletes will be the focus of attention and will be able to compete in excellent venues in a uniquely beautiful environment.

Milano – Cortina is ready! We, the Italian Athletes, Olympic and Paralympic, are here to confirm our support!

Thank you for your attention. Enjoy the rest of the assembly!