

## **Candidates to pay \$600,000 US for right to bid on 2010 Olympics**

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KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia (AP) - Cities hoping to stage the 2010 Winter Olympics will have to pay the IOC more than a half-million dollars US for the right to bid for the Games.

The International Olympic Committee decided Sunday that, for the first time, potential host cities will be required to pay a fee to cover the costs of the selection procedure. Coupled with new restrictions on promotional advertising by candidate cities, the move could discourage no-hope bids from cities only interested in getting international publicity.

"It's not the purpose, but it could weed out candidates," IOC sports director Gilbert Felli said. "If you are not really keen to bid, you have to think twice before you do."

Felli said eight cities are expected to meet the May 31 deadline for submitting preliminary applications for the 2010 games.

They are Vancouver; Andorra La Vella, Andorra; Berne, Switzerland; Harbin, China; Jaca, Spain; Pyongchang, South Korea; Salzburg, Austria; and Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Vancouver, Salzburg and Berne are considered the leading contenders.

Felli said the candidates will each have to pay \$100,000 to enter the first phase. In August, the IOC executive board will cut the field to a short list of official bid cities - and these will each have to pay an additional \$500,000.

The winning city will be selected at the IOC session in Prague, Czech Republic, in July 2003.

Felli said the fees will cover the IOC's technical costs, including sending experts to visit and evaluate the bids, providing transfer of knowledge material to the cities and organizing seminars for them.

Felli said the bid procedure for the 2008 Summer Olympics, which were awarded to Beijing, cost the IOC \$2 million.