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The 2020 Olympic Games will be postponed by one year because of coronavirus, says International Olympic Committee member Dick Pound.

It comes after the chairman of the British Olympic Association said Great Britain would be unlikely to send a team to Tokyo this summer.

Australia and Canada have already said they will not compete in Japan.

"On the basis of the information the IOC has, postponement has been decided," [Pound told USA today](#).

"The parameters going forward have not been determined, but the Games are not going to start on 24 July, that much I know."

[The International Olympic Committee has given itself four weeks](#) to decide on the future of this summer's Games, but veteran IOC member Pound says a decision will be announced soon.

"It will come in stages," he said.

"We will postpone this and begin to deal with all the ramifications of moving this, which are immense."

### **'We will be joining Canada and Australia'**

Canada and Australia had already announced their decision to withdraw from this summer's Games when the chairman of the British Olympic Association, Hugh Robertson, said he expected Britain to be "joining shortly".

"We can't see any way that this can go ahead as things are constituted," said Robertson. "I expect we will be joining Canada and Australia shortly."

As of Sunday, there had been 5,683 confirmed cases of coronavirus in the United Kingdom, with 281 deaths.

The UK government has urged the public to follow advice on social distancing, with MPs debating [stricter measures to ensure people comply](#).

- [The latest news on the coronavirus crisis](#)

"I think it is very simple. If the virus continues as predicted by the government, I don't think there is any way we can send a team," Robertson told Sky Sports News.

"First, I don't see any way that the athletes and Team GB could be ready by then. Elite training facilities are perfectly understandably and quite correctly closed around the country, so there is no way they could undertake the preparation they need to get ready for a Games.

"Secondly, there is the appropriateness of holding an Olympic Games at a time like this. We are actually in a process where we are talking to all our sports. We will complete that over the next couple of days.

"We have already said to the IOC (International Olympic Committee) that we think their four-week pause is absolutely the right thing to do."

On Sunday, [Canada became the first major country to withdraw](#) from this summer's Olympics and Paralympics.

The Canadian Olympic and Paralympic committee said it had taken "the difficult decision" to pull out after consulting athletes, sports groups, and the government.

It then "urgently called" on the IOC, the International Paralympic Committee and the World Health Organization to postpone the Games for a year.

"It's clear the Games can't be held in July," Australia chef de mission Ian Chesterman said on

Monday.

"Our athletes have been magnificent in their positive attitude to training and preparing, but the stress and uncertainty has been extremely challenging for them."

The IOC has said postponement is in its "scenario planning". The cancellation of the Tokyo 2020, due to run from 24 July to 9 August, is "not on the agenda", but a "scaled-down" Games is also being considered.

Japanese prime minister Shinzo Abe told his country's parliament on Monday that a postponement would be unavoidable if the event cannot be held in a complete way.

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