

# ZIKA VIRUS: BRAZIL INSISTS ON THE SAFETY OF RIO OLYMPICS



Brazil's Sports Minister, Leonardo Picciani, announced that Rio de Janeiro is prepared to host the Olympic Games, rejecting any concerns over the Zika virus outbreak in the country. He stated that every precaution has been taken to prevent the spread of the virus, adding that everyone who comes to enjoy the Rio Olympics 2016 will have a great experience.

Picciani explained that more than 2,000 health workers are engaged in activities to inform the city's population on how to fight the mosquito that transmits the Zika virus. The minister also noted that all the prevention and protection mechanisms are guaranteed, while stressing that **none of the nearly 7,000 athletes participating in 43 sports events trials between July 2015 and April this year has contracted the disease.**

"I would say to all athletes, to all visitors who plan to come to the Rio Olympics that they do not have to worry. Rio and Brazil are prepared for this moment," Picciani maintained.

The Emergency Committee of the World Health Organization (WHO) will hold a regular meeting on the Zika risk this week in order to review its recommendations, including those relating to the Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro.

**Independent experts reported that the risk of the global spread of the mosquito-borne virus "is not significantly higher" during the Games which start on August 5.**

The scientists will look at the evidence surrounding the Olympics and will most likely review the travel guidelines, according to the WHO spokesman, Christian Lindmeier. The date of the meeting will be announced shortly.

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