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# Quincy Jones speaks out about China and human rights

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"I don't pretend to be a politician," Quincy Jones said. "I'm just a musician who cares."

By Sandy Cohen, Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — It's been more than a year since Quincy Jones was tapped to serve as a culture and art consultant for the 2008 summer Olympic games in Beijing. But instead of artistic planning, he's been focused on human rights.

"I don't pretend to be a politician," the music impresario and longtime humanitarian told The Associated Press. "I'm just a musician who cares."

Jones, 75, has met with the Chinese ambassador to the United Nations and was scheduled to address a group of Chinese-American business and cultural leaders in Los Angeles Saturday to discuss his position on China's role in the Darfur crisis.

China has faced protests from various human-rights groups for its mistreatment of Tibetans and for providing weapons and economic support to Sudan's war-torn Darfur region. Steven Spielberg, who was also named as an Olympic culture and art consultant, abandoned the role in February in protest of China's role in the Darfur conflict. World leaders have also threatened to boycott the Olympics' opening ceremonies because of China's human-rights violations.

But Jones remains committed.

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"It's not my intention to withdraw from the Olympics," he was to say in his speech. "I care too much about Darfur and China and if I can stay in the game with others like us, I feel we can make a difference."

Jones hopes to have a role in assembling an ad-hoc committee to "go to Khartoum to sit down and try to get something done," he said. "The whole world has got to start taking responsibility for each other. With communication, you can no longer afford the luxury of thinking of national kinds of issues. Everything that's done anywhere is a world issue, and together there's lots of things we can do that nobody can do alone."

China can become "a hero in the eyes of the world" by sending United Nations African peace enforcers to the Darfur region, stopping arms imports to the area and calling on Khartoum to force the Janajaweed militia to cease its attacks on civilians, Jones said.

But the problems in the area aren't solely China's responsibility.

"Not one country is perfect enough to throw stones at anybody," he said. "None. Especially not us."

Jones said he is less focused on China's role in Tibetan violence because it "is a difficult one to solve in three months. There's so much history behind it. But Sudan is happening every day. We're talking about babies dying in Darfur, so that one has got me personally."

He expects to see a tangible change before the Aug. 8 opening ceremonies.

"What I hope will happen is that we can at least alleviate some of the complexities involved in one of the two big dilemmas," he said.

Jones has no hard feelings against Spielberg for dropping out of his Olympic role, he said: "That's his God-given right," Jones said.

China is bold for inserting itself into the public eye, Jones said.

"China's leadership took on the challenge of the Beijing Olympics knowing that the spotlight and focus would be on them, warts and all," he said. "Because the spotlight is on them, they now have the chance to show leadership and wisdom to change the world for the better."

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Apart from Jones' humanitarian efforts and his work on the Olympics opening and closing ceremonies, he is preparing to score nine films and produce three albums, including those by Snoop Dogg, Stevie Wonder and Joe Pesci. And he shows no signs of slowing down.

"This part is the most rewarding part of my life now," he said. "Just being involved in different ways to help kids and help people get out of whatever it is, because I come from that."

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