**OPEN LETTER**

June 15

President

International Olympic Committee

Thomas Bach

Dear President Bach

The Athletes’ Commission of the Russian Olympic Committee is writing to you on behalf of those Russian athletes whose careers have been built on respect for the principles of the Olympic Charter and the spirit of fair competition, without the use of illegal drugs and any other fraudulent methods to achieve results.

Through hard work, constant training, constant self-improvement, the majority of athletes in Russia work on a year by year basis towards their most important, most cherished goal - to participate in the Olympic Games. As an Olympic champion yourself, you know exactly what monumental effort it takes to achieve an Olympic medal, and that much sweat, blood and tears are shed for the sake being on the top of the podium and hearing the national anthem of your country being played. For many athletes, the chance to perform at the Olympic Games comes only once and is therefore quite literally the chance of a lifetime. We sacrifice a normal lifestyle, overcoming hardships, injuries, and adverse circumstances, and yet this sacrifice may be pointless.

We have always fully and unconditionally supported the International Olympic Committee’s zero tolerance approach to the fight against doping. We wholeheartedly support punishment for those who are trying to succeed fraudulently using banned drugs. They must be responsible individually, because the fraud of dishonest people should not jeopardise the career of the other innocent fellow athletes and throw a stain on our country's reputation.

We support the All-Russian Athletics Federation’s difficult decision to amend the criteria for Olympic selection, which exclude all those who have ever had problems with doping from going to the Olympic Games. In this situation it would be unfair if clean Russian athletes will be banned from the Olympic Games, at the same time allowing certain athletes from other countries who have a proven history of doping to perform without restriction.

The right of any athlete who has never violated any of the existing rules, to perform at the Olympic Games is unviolable. And we wholeheartedly ask for your support in compliance of this right.

Information on doping cases by individual athletes has hit the reputation of the entire Russian sport very hard. We are aware that it is necessary to take a number of steps to restore confidence. As you know, this is already being done: all Russian athletes who aspire to participate in the Games in Rio will undergo at least three additional independent anti-doping tests, the team is under constant supervision of the international anti-doping authorities, and no-one with a history of doping will be selected for the Olympics. Please let us know what else we need to do to assure the Olympic community in our commitment to the fight against doping.

We, the Russian athletes, hope that the great history and contribution of our country to the Olympic Games and the Olympic movement will not be threatened.

Best regards,

Athletes’ Commission of the Russian Olympic Committee:

Olga Brusnikina - Three-time Olympic champion, Synchronized Swimming

Elena Zamolodchikova - Two-time Olympic champion, Gymnastics

Ekaterina Bobrova - Olympic champion, Figure Skating

Tatiana Borodulina - European champion, Short Track Speed Skating World Cup winner

Gleb Galperin - Olympic medalist, Diving

Albert Demchenko - Olympic medalist, Luge

Alexander Zubkov - Two-time Olympic champion, Bobsleigh

Eugenia Kanayeva - Two-time Olympic champion, Gymnastics

Tatyana Lebedeva - Olympic champion, Athletics

Anastasia Myskina - ITF World Champion, two-time Fed Cup winner

Alexander Popov - Four-time Olympic champion, Swimming

Andrey Strokin - Five-time Paralympic champion

Tagir Khaibulaev - Olympic champion, Judo