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By e-mail only

Dear All,

The IOC and the Olympic Movement have recently taken a number of actions and initiatives to protect the clean athletes and contribute to the reform of the anti-doping system. Given the sometimes confusing public discussion, I would like to provide you with an update of the current situation.

Firstly, firm actions are being taken with regard to the findings of the McLaren Report on doping and manipulation in Russia, which have caused damage to the credibility and integrity of sport. In this respect, the IOC established two Commissions in July 2016: one under the chairmanship of IOC Member Denis Oswald; and another under the chairmanship of the former President of the Swiss Confederation, Samuel Schmid. These two Commissions started work last year, even before the publication of the full and final report by Professor Richard McLaren in December last year.

The Oswald Commission is examining the evidence against individual Russian athletes and their entourage who may have committed an Anti-Doping Rule Violation (ADRV) at the Olympic Winter Games Sochi 2014. In a preventive perspective the IOC has already initiated disciplinary procedures against 28 Russian Olympic athletes. All the other athletes mentioned in the McLaren Report who did not take part in the Olympic Winter Games are of course under the exclusive authority of the International Federations. The IOC greatly appreciates the work of the IFs with regard to these cases, for which we have neither the information nor any kind of authority to prosecute.

The work of the Oswald Commission and of the IFs is not easy because as the McLaren Report clearly states: "The IP is not a Results Management Authority under the World Anti-

Doping Code (WADC 2015 version). The mandate of the IP did not involve any authority to bring Anti-Doping Rule Violation (“ADRV”) cases against individual athletes.”

It is now the more comprehensive task of the Oswald Commission to establish all appropriate evidence. Therefore, the Commission must go beyond the mandate of Professor McLaren. The Commission will:

- consider the samples of ALL Russian participants at the Olympic Winter Games Sochi 2014;
- re-analyse all samples for adverse findings. The IOC has already initiated the forensic analysis of the samples of 28 Russian athletes who competed in Sochi in 2014 and where the McLaren Report indicated there was evidence of manipulation;
- investigate all Russian samples from the 2008, 2010 and 2012 Olympic Games. The re-analysis programme of stored samples has so far resulted in sanctions against 18 Russian athletes from Beijing 2008 and 20 from London 2012. In many cases, medals were withdrawn.

The Schmid Commission, which has to address the substantial allegations about the potential systematic manipulation of the anti-doping samples, is also continuing its work. The complexity of the Schmid Commission’s work is considerable since for instance, in his first interim report, Professor McLaren describes a “state sponsored system” whilst in the final full report in December he described an “institutional conspiracy.”

- The Commission will now have to consider what this change means and which individuals, organisations or government authorities may have been involved.
- The Commission has already met several times and will offer hearings to all those involved in due course.

The two Commissions will continue to closely cooperate with Professor McLaren, the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) and the International Federations. The establishment of acceptable evidence is a significant challenge, as some IFs have already experienced; where in some cases they have had to lift provisional suspensions or were not able – at least at this stage – to begin disciplinary procedures due to a lack of consistent evidence.

In this context, WADA has written to all the Olympic Winter IFs in order to “inform [them] of some of the discrepancies or issues that have been identified since the publication of the Report.” (WADA letter, 19 January 2017).

At the recent meeting (21 February) held by WADA in Lausanne to “provide assistance to IFs regarding how to analyse and interpret the evidence”, it was admitted by WADA that in many cases the evidence provided may not be sufficient to bring successful cases. IFs were told by WADA to make direct contact with the IP team to try to obtain further information. WADA also explained that the translations used by the IP team were not adequate and was obtaining official translations of some of the texts.

For all these reasons, this process will clearly take some time, but I can assure you that we are still determined to conclude these cases as swiftly as possible. We want to protect the clean athletes and ensure a level playing field. It is already evident from the appeals filed against some International Federations provisional suspension decisions that the IOC decision will have to stand up to a strong legal challenge.

In the meantime, the IOC is encouraging WADA and Russia to re-establish state-of-the-art anti-doping institutions in Russia. We have asked that, in the period leading up to the Olympic Winter Games PyeongChang 2018, every eligible Russian athlete undergo anti-doping tests with higher benchmarks than for athletes from other countries. The IOC is also working with WADA to ensure that pre-Games testing on all athletes is done efficiently with the relevant intelligence through the WADA pre-Games “task force” funded by the IOC.

The IOC is also pursuing the reform of the WADA system, as supported by the IOC Session, the IOC Executive Board and the Olympic Summit.

We are driving forward to establish an independent testing authority – independent from sports organisations and from national interests. The importance of this body being independent from national interests is demonstrated by recent decisions by national anti-doping organisations concerning athletes of the same nation. This is another reason why sanctioning should be delegated to the CAS as the IOC successfully did at the Olympic Games Rio 2016.

The IOC is also participating in WADA’s good governance working group. Here the IOC has made proposals for more accountability, transparency and diversity. Our representatives will be guided by the proposals adopted by the IOC Executive Board and the Olympic Summit.

We will continue to keep you informed, and I would like to thank you for your continued support. As always, I look forward to our next meeting. Until then, I remain,

Yours sincerely,



Christophe De Kepper
Director General