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Thomas Bach
IOC President

July 23, 2016

Dear President Bach, Dear Fellow Olympian,

The Olympic Movement stands at a crossroads, a pivotal moment when the balance can be tipped against those who seek to win by cheating, when the rights of clean athletes everywhere can be properly protected and when the disillusionment and distrust of the general public in the sanctity and fairness of sport can be dispelled.

We, as Olympians, as the voice of Olympians worldwide, understand what is at stake at this moment. We know that the IOC will do its utmost to sanction the cheats while seeking to protect the rights of clean athletes everywhere. That is not an easy balancing act. And we fully support the IOC in your endeavors to achieve that balance.

In your Executive Board discussions tomorrow we wish you all the best in trying to resolve these issues so that Olympians in Rio, and in the future, can compete knowing that there is a level playing field, that the drug cheats will not be able to take the field and that the rights of those who are clean are protected.

To that end, while sanctioning those who have been shown to be guilty with the full force at your disposal, we ask you to also find a way to ensure that those who can prove with certainty that they are clean, who have been properly and independently tested and are well documented to be negative, can compete in Rio and beyond.

Concerning the Russian case, we think that establishing a potential global responsibility can't be fairly done without at the same time examining all individual cases. And if any Russian athlete can prove individually that they are clean, then global responsibility should not apply. We kindly ask you to look at this with the most accurate objectivity and outside of any influence or pressure.

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In the longer term we would ask the IOC to consider a three-point plan to root out the cheats forever. The plan would consist of anti-doping testing that is fully independent of countries/sports/event organizers, a permanent mechanism to allow clean athletes to compete even if their country/sport is sanctioned and dramatically increased funding for research into improved anti-doping testing.

You can rest assured that you have the support of Olympians everywhere in your efforts to find the right balance between the most stringent penalties for those who besmirch the good name of the Olympics and sport by cheating, and the rights of individuals who have trained so hard over so many years to inspire themselves and others by their achievements and have done no wrong.

We remain, as the World Olympians Association and as individual Olympians, at your disposal.

Best Olympian regards

Joel Bouzou
WOA President