

**SPEECH TO THE 2020 INTERNATIONAL ANTI-DOPING SEMINAR IN ASIA AND OCEANIA,
ORGANIZED BY THE JAPAN ANTI-DOPING AGENCY**

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Dear colleagues, greetings from Warsaw.

First of all, I wish to thank Mr. Tanose Taido, State Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology – and WADA Executive Committee and Foundation Board member – for his warm words of welcome.

As President of WADA, it is my pleasure to have the opportunity to address you today. Of course, I would have much preferred to be able to do it in person but unfortunately, with COVID-19, this is the world we live in. I am, however, really looking forward to seeing some of you in Tokyo at the Olympic and Paralympic Games next year.

I am very grateful to the hosts, JADA, for arranging this symposium virtually. It is not an easy task to bring everything together like this so congratulations. For many years, Japan has been contributing to the development of anti-doping, as a leader in the Asia and Oceania regions. Hosting workshops, seminars and conferences such as this really helps. I am particularly impressed with the JADA initiative, entitled 'Play True 2020 – Sport for Tomorrow', which includes a huge amount of educational resources for athletes and others. And then there is the ongoing generous assistance that the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology gives to nearby National and Regional Anti-Doping Organizations. It is all greatly appreciated.

Of course, the world is a different place compared to when we last met in September 2019. The COVID-19 pandemic has changed all our lives dramatically and has had impacts on the global anti-doping system, which Olivier Niggli will cover next in some detail.

I am proud to say that, despite the restrictions that have been in place, a lot has been achieved by WADA and our partners in clean sport.

Code and Standards

For sure, the implementation of the 2021 Code and Standards is a major challenge facing all anti-doping organizations in the coming weeks and months. Perhaps the most pressing issue now in the entire region is the need to have your rules brought into line with the revised Code no later than 31 December 2020. Those who do not will, unfortunately, receive a Corrective Action Report in January. In Asia, there are many countries who are still “in progress” and they are running out of time. Are you ready? If not, help is on hand. The 2021 Model Rules for Code Signatories is guiding Signatories through this process. And to further assist, in May of this year, WADA launched its Code Implementation Support Program. There are many important ways you can make sure you are ready to hit the ground running in January. Olivier, Rich Young, Julien Sieveking and others will go into more detail during their presentations.

Strategic Plan

In early July, we published WADA’s Five-Year Strategic Plan, which lays the foundation for WADA’s strategic activity for 2020-2024 as the Agency is ‘Leading Anti-Doping in a New Era’. WADA is a completely different place to what it was a few years ago. This is thanks mainly to the governance reform that the Agency has undergone (which is still ongoing) and to the strengthening of its investigations and compliance monitoring activities. While stakeholders recognize these achievements, there is consensus that WADA must go further to build bridges and unite efforts to protect athletes and the integrity of sports globally. The plan, which is defined with athletes at the center, also made it clear that the Agency’s resources are not reflecting the magnitude of the challenges we face as the world leader in anti-doping.

Additional Funding

For WADA, in order to lead effectively additional resources are needed. I made a promise to this conference last year that I would pursue all avenues to secure additional funding for WADA and

the global anti-doping program. In delivery on my promise, I am continuing my pursuit of private funding to supplement what we receive from the Sports Movement and Governments of the world. I am doing this through my Anti-Doping Solidarity Fund, financed mostly by private sponsors. The Fund has been created to support solidarity projects as part of WADA's mission. The resources collected through this Fund will be invested to help further strengthen Clean Sport. It will fulfil a critical need because, despite considerable efforts by WADA, there is still a lack of resources in all regions of the world, including Asia and Oceania. Many NADOs and International Federations do not have sufficient funds to conduct adequate anti-doping activities. In addition, there are still a number of National Olympic Committees that are acting as NADOs by default under the World Anti-Doping Code due to a lack of resources within those countries to create independent NADOs.

It is still my view that many responsible private companies have an interest in boosting their image by investing in the integrity of sport. We must take advantage of this type of opportunity and I have acted quickly to bring this to fruition. That work is progressing well and I hope to be able to announce something in the near future.

In addition to the Fund, we are building partnerships with businesses to carry out joint projects of mutual interest, especially in the areas of education, research and program development. We also plan to identify and work with a limited number of strategic partners.

With some innovation and imagination, we can boost the resources that are available to the global anti-doping program for the good of athletes and clean sport everywhere.

Athletes

Another pledge I made when I addressed this conference last year was that my presidency would be hallmarked by being focused on the athletes. Since then, I have been delivering on that promise. As a former elite athlete myself, I understand the importance of listening to the views of athletes worldwide. WADA will be looking for every opportunity to engage with them. So far, I have met with many of the athletes that sit on the WADA Board, ExCo, Athlete Committee and expert committees as well as various other groups that speak on behalf of

athletes, such as: every Continental Athlete Commission, the International Paralympic Committee Athlete Council; the chairs of IF Athlete Commissions; and, in September, I held a virtual athlete round table with representatives from almost 20 Athlete Groups.

This engagement will continue throughout my presidency. I want to hear a broad range of opinions and perspectives from different sports and regions of the world. I want people to know that I keep my promises but this is also part of WADA's overall commitment to being more athlete-centered, as outlined in the Strategic Plan. My door is always open to athletes.

In addition to listening to and engaging with athletes, we are in the process of increasing their influence and representation within the Agency. As you know, WADA is undergoing significant governance reforms at the moment. As part of that we have ensured that at least one athlete sits on each of our Standing Committees. One-third of our Executive Committee and one-third of the Foundation Board are made up of elite level current or former athletes. In addition, members of the WADA Athlete Committee are working on transforming the Committee from being an advisory group to a fully representative body, with the view to a representative of the Committee being added as another athlete member of WADA's ExCo.

As I said, I am engaging with athletes all the time, including on social media. I am doing this because I strongly believe that WADA exists for athletes and that ultimately, we are accountable to them as we carry out our mission.

Bilateral meetings

In parallel, beyond athletes, I am virtually meeting with many stakeholders within the anti-doping ecosystem, such as public authorities, the sports movement, NADOs and others to increase support, unity and coherence in everyone's efforts. This year, I have held about 70 such virtual meetings, which I look forward to taking on the road next year.

Tokyo 2020

There is so much going on in this region right now. Whether it was last year's very successful Rugby World Cup in Japan, the 2022 Beijing winter Olympics and Paralympics, the 2022 FIFA World Cup in Qatar, or of course next year's summer Olympic and Paralympic Games in Tokyo, it is fair to say that Asia is the center of the sporting world at the moment.

I wish everyone involved in organizing and protecting next year's Olympic Games well. 2021 is going to be a huge year for Japan and WADA is playing its part to make sure the Games are a resounding success. We are leaving no stone unturned to make sure everyone is ready. A comprehensive pre-Games testing program is in place and is being led by the International Testing Agency on behalf of the IOC. It will minimize the risk of an athlete who might compete in the Olympic Games from slipping through the cracks and not being subject to advance doping control.

Also, at this time, the importance of education for athletes and athlete support personnel cannot be overstated. WADA's Anti-Doping eLearning platform, known as ADeL, is offering an interactive education course aimed at athletes and coaches who are intending to attend Tokyo 2020. It is designed in conjunction with the IOC and the ITA. It shows our commitment to supporting athletes and their entourage in the build-up to the Games – I encourage you all to promote that with athletes in Japan and throughout the region.

And of course, as always, WADA will be sending Independent Observer and Athlete Outreach missions to the Games themselves as we do all we can to ensure the integrity of the event and to ensure that athletes have the opportunity to engage with our Clean Sport ambassadors.

2021 will see many of us working together to ensure that the Tokyo 2020 Olympics and Paralympics are truly Games to remember and cherish. We owe it to sport to provide the world's best athletes with the opportunity to gather on a level playing field and to entertain and amaze us with their athletic prowess and sense of fair play.

Just like sport, there will be challenges along the way. We will from time to time be stretched in our resources and our resilience but I am full of optimism that we will succeed in further strengthening the global anti-doping system together!

Thank you all for your efforts and commitment to clean sport and enjoy your seminar!