

**Note:** The Foundation Board meeting minutes are published on WADA's website once they have been approved by the Foundation Board, generally at its subsequent meeting. The minutes are intelligent third-person verbatim transcriptions, i.e. slightly edited for readability.

## **Minutes of the WADA Foundation Board Meeting 5 December 2024, Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia**

The meeting began at 9.00 a.m. GMT +3.

### **1. Welcome, roll call and observers**

THE CHAIRMAN greeted the members of the Foundation Board and was pleased to see everybody in very good shape because it was going to be a long meeting. He hoped that the members were ready for that challenge. Before commencing the agenda for that day, he wished to give the floor to the distinguished host, His Royal Highness Prince Abdulaziz bin Turki Al Saud, Saudi Minister of Sport, for his welcome remarks.

HRH PRINCE ABDULAZIZ BIN TURKI AL SAUD greeted the Foundation Board members and said that he would give his speech in Arabic. He welcomed all those present to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, which was hosting that significant event. It was a special day in the journey to advancing sport and reflected the profound desire of his country to strengthen its relationship with the World Anti-Doping Agency. The gathering that day embodied Saudi Arabia's commitment to being an example of fair play in sport, not only in the Middle East and Asia, but also in the world. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia remained committed to fostering a culture of fair competition driven by the unwavering support of its leadership, which had guided the country through an extraordinary and transformative journey in sport. Under the guidance of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud and the pioneering vision of His Royal Highness the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, Mohammed bin Salman Al Saud, the nation had succeeded in hosting numerous global sporting events. The percentage of sport activities in Saudi society had also increased to 58.5% in 2024, a significant milestone that highlighted the community's growing awareness of an active lifestyle. At the same time, anti-doping measures in the kingdom had seen significant advancement, ensuring its commitment to fair competition as a fundamental principle on its journey. Various awareness programmes had been implemented on the consequences of doping, as well as numerous tests conducted under the supervision of the Saudi Anti-Doping Committee. In that context, it was his pleasure to reaffirm his strong and continuous collaboration with the World Anti-Doping Agency. Together, they would continue to promote joint initiatives and awareness campaigns that upheld fairness in sport. In conclusion, the stance of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on anti-doping reflected that of the international sporting community. It certainly exemplified the country's values and commitment to promoting ethics and integrity in sport.

THE CHAIRMAN thanked His Royal Highness for his welcome speech and the exceptional hospitality extended to the Executive Committee and Foundation Board members in his beautiful country.

With regard to that day's meeting, there were 34 members present in the room, which was extremely pleasing. There were also eight members or their deputies attending virtually who had been unable to attend in person that day. The meeting would be conducted with the support of Mr Pisani, WADA's Events Manager, who would manage the members and speakers participating virtually. He circulated the physical roll call around the table and asked that the members sign it and pass it on. Note would be taken for the record of those attending virtually. There were eight deputies in attendance that day who were noted in the roll call. It was also the first meeting for a number of new members. There were six new members that year. They

were the host that day, Prince Abdulaziz bin Turki Al Saud; Minister Tumiso MacDonald Rakgare from Botswana, deputised at that meeting; Minister Sławomir Nitras from Poland; Minister Arata Takebe from Japan; Minister Arnaldo Sánchez from Venezuela, and Mr Benedict Tan, representing ANOC, who was attending remotely that day. He welcomed them all.

With regard to the agenda, the meeting that day was expected to last for around seven hours. He would largely follow the order of items on the agenda but might move some items to ensure fluid timing around the break.

The following members attended the meeting, either in person or virtually: Mr Witold Bařka, President and Chairman of WADA; Ms Yang Yang, Vice-President of WADA; Ms Miki Matheson, Member, IPC Governing Board; Mr Olle Dahlin, President, IBU; Ms Dagmawit Girmay Berhane, IOC Member, Board Member, Ethiopian National Olympic Committee; Ms Filomena Fortes, IOC Member, President, Cabo Verde National Olympic Committee; Ms Heike Groesswang, Secretary General, IBSF; Ms Lydia Nsekera, IOC Member, President, Burundi National Olympic Committee; Ms Baklai Temengil, IOC Member, Vice President, Oceania National Olympic Committees; Mr Vesper, representing Mr Andrzej Krasnicki, President, Polish National Olympic Committee; Mr Santiago Lange, Athletes' Commission Member, Argentina National Olympic Committee; Mr Zlatko Matesa, President, Croatian National Olympic Committee; Mr Benedict Tan, Vice-President, Singapore National Olympic Council; Mr David Lappartient, UCI President, IOC Member; Mr Jean-Christophe Rolland, World Rowing President, IOC Member; Ms Petra Sörling, President, ITTF, IOC Member; Mr Abhinav Bindra, IOC Athletes' Commission Member; Ms Włoszczowska, representing Ms Emma Terho, IOC Athletes' Commission Chair, IOC Member; Ms Astrid Uhrenholdt Jacobsen, IOC Athletes' Commission Member, IOC Member; Ms Hong Zhang, IOC Athletes' Commission Member, IOC Member; Mr Patrick O'Leary, WADA Athlete Council Member, Ireland; Mr Yuhan Tan, WADA Athlete Council Member, Belgium; Mr Reinhardt, representing Dr Ádám Schmidt, Minister of State for Sport, Hungary; Mr Bjørn Berge, Deputy Secretary General, Council of Europe; Mr Mehmet Kasapoğlu, Member of Parliament, Republic of Türkiye; Ms Sandra Bergqvist, Minister of Youth, Sport and Physical Activity, Finland; Mr Sławomir Nitras, Minister of Sport and Tourism, Republic of Poland; Mr Morule, representing Mr Tumiso MacDonald Rakgare, Minister of Youth, Gender, Sport and Culture, Botswana; Mr Ashraf Sobhy, Minister of Youth and Sports, Egypt; Mr Kartey, representing Mr Mustapha Ussif, Minister for Youth and Sports, Ghana; Ms Olivia Grange, Minister of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sports, Jamaica; Mr Jaime Pizarro Herrera, President, CONSUDE, Chile; Ms Carla Qualtrough, Minister of Sport and Physical Activity, Canada; Mr Arnaldo Sánchez, President, CONCECADE, Venezuela; Mr Kim, representing Ms Mi-ran Jang, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-Minister of Culture, Sports and Tourism, Republic of Korea; Mr Yingchuan Li, former Vice-Minister of the General Administration of Sport, China; Mr Arata Takebe, State Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, Japan; Prince Abdulaziz bin Turki Al Saud, Minister of Sports, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia; Mr Laumatiamanu Ringo Purcell, Minister of Sports and Recreation, Samoa; Mr McCann, representing Ms Anika Wells, Minister for Sports, Australia; Mr Michael Cepic, Austria, WADA National Anti-Doping Organization (NADO) Expert Advisory Group Member; and Ms Hirai, representing Mr Kum-pyoung Kim, Republic of Korea, WADA NADO Expert Advisory Group Member.

The following permanent special committee and standing committee chairs attended the meeting, either in person or virtually: Mr Ryan Pini, Chairman of the WADA Athlete Council; Mr Henry Gourdji, Chairman of the WADA Compliance Review Committee; Ms Kady Kanouté Tounkara, Chairwoman of the WADA Education Committee; Professor Lars Engebretsen, Chairman of the WADA Health, Medical and Research Committee; Professor Mette Hartlev, Chairwoman of the WADA Independent Ethics Board; and Professor Zalaznik, representing Ms Diane Smith-Gander, Chairwoman of the WADA Nominations Committee.

The following WADA management representatives attended the meeting, either in person or virtually: Mr Olivier Niggli, Director General; Ms Aisha Ayinde, Human Resources Manager; Mr René Bouchard, Government Relations Director; Ms Dao Chung, Chief Financial Officer; Mr Kevin Haynes, Compliance, Rules and Standards Director; Ms Karine Henrie, Head of Athlete Engagement; Ms Amanda Hudson, Education Director; Ms Angela Iannantuono, Corporate Services and Sustainability Director; Mr Stuart Kemp, Chief Operating Officer; Ms Florence Lefebvre-Rangeon, Deputy Chief Operating Officer; Mr Francisco León, Director of the WADA Latin America and Caribbean Office; Ms Catherine MacLean, Communications Director; Mr Marc-André Matton, Chief Technology Officer; Mr Tom May, Engagement and

Development Director; Ms Chaya Ndiaye, Head of Digital Insights; Mr Rafal Piechota, Director, Office of the President; Professor Olivier Rabin, Science and Medicine Director; Mr Tim Ricketts, Testing Director; Mr Julien Sieveking, Legal Affairs Director; Mr Rodney Swigelaar, Director of the WADA Africa Office; Ms Audrey Taillefer, Head of the Strategic Management Office; Mr Ross Wenzel, General Counsel; Ms Shannan Withers, Chief of Staff; Ms Mayumi Yaya Yamamoto, Director of the WADA Asia/Oceania Office; and Mr Gunter Younger, Intelligence and Investigations Director.

The following observers attended the meeting, either in person or virtually: Gabriella Battaini-Dragoni, Patricia Sangenis, Venetia Bennett, Humphrey Emonyi, Roxana Maracineanu, Richard Young, Valerie Fournayron, Benjamin Cohen, Anders Solheim, Matar Bâ, Marcellin Dally, Gaby Ahrens, Ivan Čosić, Jennifer Harss, Dora Hegyi, Kristen Kit, Iñaki Gómez, Adriana Escobar, Hannah Grossenbacher, Richard Budgett, Andrew Ryan, James Carr, Amina Lanaya, Richard Baum, Debbie Seguin, Travis Tygart, Anthony Jones, Andrea Navea Valenzuela, Qingping Yan, Zhiyue Chen, Yuenan Luo, Yuji Kakizawa, Yumiko Nakajima, Shin Asakawa, Ken Hashiba, Yuka Morokoshi, Yumiko Takasugi, Tatsushi Omoso, Hungwon Kim, Jeong Ah Kwon, Gawon Kim, Luatua Semiperive Epati, Peter Miskimmin, Darren Mullaly, Eslam El Derby, Hazem Khamis, Mohamed Bayoumy, Prince Azanu, Robert Auguste, Ilyas Ileri, Melahat Bildiren Çucu, Mustafa Öztürk, Ágnes Tiszeker, Kitti Varga, Gergely Balázs Szabo, Joanna Zukowska-Easton, Mateusz Strojny, Marcelina Zapala, Irene Kitsou-Milonas, Jamie Brown, Saerom Lee, Ohsoon Lee, Sungho Ma, Hyunsoo Park, Vincent Egbers, Ali Bokhari, Martin Holmlund Lauesen, Allison Wagner, Satu Heikkinen, Silja Borgarsdottir Sandelin, Hubert Dziudzik, Takao Akama, Yoshinari Ayabe, Hidenori Suzuki, Ichiro Kono, Kenji Takahashi, Takuya Kamoshita, Eric Gustavson, Jaimie Earley, Dante Cacciato, Jocelyn East, Khalid Galant, Denzil Thorpe, Suzzette Ison, Florette Blackwood, Kerry Knowler, Cameron Boland, Chris Solly and Lin Zhang.

### **1.1 Disclosures of conflicts of interest**

THE CHAIRMAN asked if any members wished to disclose any conflicts of interest. He saw no requests for the floor.

## **2. Minutes and summary reports from previous meetings**

THE CHAIRMAN noted that the minutes from the previous Foundation Board meeting had been approved via circulatory vote in April and May 2024. In the papers, members had been provided with links to the Executive Committee meeting summaries from March, April, July and September 2024. There were no requests for the floor on that agenda item.

### DECISION

Minutes and summary reports from previous meetings noted.

## **3. Director General's report**

THE DIRECTOR GENERAL greeted those present in the room and those following online. He started by thanking His Royal Highness and the Saudi Government for their very warm hospitality. He thanked everybody for all the work and organization of that meeting. The members had been provided with his report in addition to all of the reports that had been provided to the WADA Executive Committee. He apologized for the extensive amount of reading but thought that it comprised all of the information that had been shared over the previous months. He would address a few matters in a bit more detail and made a few additional remarks.

Firstly, he would briefly summarize the discussion of the previous day at the WADA Executive Committee and give an update on what had been adopted. First of all, the Executive Committee had adopted an important report, which was a roadmap, following the Cottier and World Aquatics reports. That was the result of the work of a working group. The chairwoman of that working group would provide a full update under agenda item four, so he would merely state that the report had been adopted and made public, and that the roadmap would be followed in the future.

The Executive Committee had then approved the composition of all of the standing committees for the following year. The detailed information was contained in the binders, so he would merely flag the overall composition of the standing and permanent special committees. He was pleased to say that there was a majority of women on the committees from all continents, there were 26 athlete committee members, 10 NADO committee members, and 15 independent members, and there was a good balance between the sport movement, public authorities and independent members. He thought that the composition of all the committees was fairly balanced. Two new members had been appointed to the Compliance Review Committee, which played an important role in WADA's work. There was one new independent member, Mr Nicholas Griffins, and one new representative of the sport movement, Mr Andrew Ryan.

The Executive Committee had then dealt with compliance matters and agreed that the Spanish National Anti-Doping Agency be put on the watchlist for four months. It had then discussed requests received from two fee-paying signatories, the World Dodgeball Association and the International Table Soccer Federation, which sought to obtain a reduction in their annual compliance monitoring fee. That had not been accepted by the Executive Committee as per WADA Management's recommendation.

Finally, the scientific research second cycle of the year had been approved and the laboratory from New Delhi had also been approved as an Athlete Passport Managements Unit (APMU) so it could henceforth manage athlete biological passport programs.

A matter that concerned the Foundation Board directly was a recommendation from the Executive Committee for the Foundation Board to adopt the strategic plan that would be proposed under the relevant agenda item, as well as to adopt the 2025 budget with two scenarios: one that included the Russian contribution and another one without that contribution.

With regard to specific points, he wished to start by talking about the situation with UNESCO, which was summarized in his report. WADA was regularly being told to collaborate more with UNESCO. Frankly, he agreed with that. The purpose of his intervention was certainly not to say that collaboration with UNESCO was not wanted. For many years, there had been discussion within UNESCO and some member states about the fact that legislation implementing the Code should be monitored only by UNESCO and not by WADA, as WADA was a private entity. To be clear, collaboration did not mean agreeing with everything that a working group was doing. He did not agree with that proposal because it was thought that it would weaken the way in which WADA dealt with the World Anti-Doping Code (Code). The WADA perspective was that there was a real disconnect between a theoretical or an academic approach to that issue and what truly happened in the field. The academic approach basically advocated that only UNESCO should be looking at national legislation, because UNESCO was an intergovernmental organization, and WADA should be looking at the legislation of NADOs because it was a private entity and should not be looking at what governments did. The legalistic approach, however, completely ignored (he thought) what the anti-doping system was. WADA was responsible for monitoring and implementing the Code. That was part of its duty and was what it was doing. It monitored the Code to ensure harmonization in its implementation around the world. That was the only way that the Code could be implemented consistently across all jurisdictions in the world to ensure it was the same for all athletes from wherever they came. WADA was simply doing its job. WADA was equipped to do that job and had been doing it for a number of years. It had the means to enforce its findings. It worked with the compliance standard, which was not the case for UNESCO, which was entrusted with the UNESCO convention, not with the Code. Hence, UNESCO had a responsibility to deal with the convention and the monitoring of the convention, as was its prerogative, but it certainly was not equipped to deal with the World Anti-Doping Code and should not be doing that. They were two different texts, two different instruments, and he thought it would be wrong and frankly dangerous for the system if it were done differently. On top of that, the monitoring of the Code had to be free from any political interference, which was very important. If WADA accepted the proposal currently being discussed by that working group, it would mean that, for the same jurisdiction, the same country, UNESCO would look at what was in the legislation independently, and WADA would look at what was in the NADO rules independently, but with what? The hope that those two would be coordinated, would work together, that there would be no loopholes, and that the same approach would be taken? That was not a theoretical discussion from WADA's perspective. It was very practical. There had been very concrete cases recently whereby, for example, NADOs had not been able to prosecute passport cases because the national legislation actually prevented

that. It was therefore very easy to create loopholes and to de-harmonize the system by doing that kind of thing. That discussion had been ongoing for years within the UNESCO forum and, frankly, there were many other things on which WADA and UNESCO could collaborate, and he did not fully understand why it kept doing that. UNESCO could certainly monitor its convention, but that was not the Code. He thought that there were many areas for collaboration, but he urged the representatives of the public authorities around the table that day who also attended the UNESCO conference of parties to speak up and to make sure that no hurdles were put in front of WADA in the implementation of the Code, in order to maintain a harmonized system and not derail something that worked rather well.

Another matter he wanted to raise briefly, which the members might have seen recently in the media and the note he had written in November 2024, was the notification received of an investigation by the Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada into some of WADA's activities. In that e-mail, he had stated that the investigation had been generated and initiated based on a third-party complaint and referred to one provision or one comment of the World Anti-Doping Code, which made clear that anti-doping organizations (ADOs) would not breach the Code if they used data from doping control samples for other purposes, such as health, medical or eligibility matters, including gender eligibility. The complaint alleged, on the basis of that, that the Code comment allowed for the use of anti-doping data for purposes other than anti-doping and therefore contravened the data privacy law. The reality was that the Code did not seek to give any legal authority to a signatory to use doping control data, but rather indicated that, if such signatory had that authority under its national legislation or whatever system, WADA would not consider it to be a breach of the Code if the signatory were to use that data. WADA was cooperating with the investigation and would clarify the matter with the Canadian authorities and hopefully come to a resolution. The Canadian authorities would likely make a public report on that at some point.

He had a couple more comments before handing over the floor for the presentation of the new strategic plan, which the Foundation Board would be asked to approve. Later in the agenda, there would be a report on the progress of the World Anti-Doping Code and the international standards, which were extremely important matters that would shape not only the future of WADA but also the future of anti-doping. He encouraged everybody to concentrate their efforts on delivering on those really important, forward-looking activities that would lead to a more effective and efficient fight against doping in the years to come and for the next generation of athletes. Clearly, too much time, energy and resources had been spent over the previous few months on the case of the Chinese swimmers, and the campaign organized around them had been quite damaging to WADA and the entire anti-doping system. The Foundation Board would also hear the outcome of the Cottier report, which had been endorsed by the Executive Committee. Mr Cottier had concluded that there was no bias towards China and that the agency's decision not to appeal was reasonable in the circumstances. He hoped that that roadmap would provide the way forward. It was important, in his view, that all parties work together to shape the future via the Code and the standards, and via the available instruments. His only further comment on the Chinese file would be that, in matters such as that, he thought that collaboration would yield a far better outcome than dealing with it through the media or the political arena.

Finally, he wanted to highlight that their friend and colleague, Mr René Bouchard, whom most of the members knew, had decided to take well-deserved retirement. That would be his last meeting. Mr Bouchard had been with WADA since 2016. Before that, he had been the first chairman of the Compliance Review Committee, and before that, he had sat in one of those seats around this table on a number of occasions for the sport minister of Canada at the time. Mr Bouchard had therefore been present for a long time and WADA had benefited from his wise advice. He was known as the 'Foreign Affairs Minister' within WADA and he thought Mr Bouchard had played his role very well in that mission. Having been based in Montreal, he had worked 24 hours a day talking to all the stakeholders despite the time difference. It had been possible to call Mr Bouchard at any time from any place. He wanted to acknowledge all of his work and express the profound gratitude of the organization.

MR BOUCHARD thanked the Director General for his kind words and wished to thank the community for the support he had received, which had made his job easy. He wished to thank his colleagues from the WADA team, who were extremely capable. They had the expertise, were very professional, and were there for good reason, and he had been honoured to work with them. His colleagues had always provided him



with the support that he had needed, and he had needed a lot of support. He thanked the Director General for his constant support and for creating a working environment that was open and enabled a fruitful exchange of views. He thanked Vice-President Yang very much for her kindness and support. He thanked the Chairman for the support, camaraderie and nice words and atmosphere that he created when they engaged in serious discussion. It was time for him to move on. He had initially signed up for what he had thought would be three years, which he had then extended to five years, and it had finally been eight-and-a-half years, so it was time to move on. He reiterated his thanks.

THE DIRECTOR GENERAL thanked Mr Bouchard and noted that he would be replaced by Mr Darren Mullaly from Australia, who was also known to many due to his long track record in anti-doping. He had been involved in anti-doping for the past 20 years. Mr Mullaly was a brave Australian who was moving to Montreal in the middle of January. He warmly welcomed him. That concluded the Director General's report and he would be happy to answer questions.

THE CHAIRMAN thanked the Director General and wished to echo his words that Mr Bouchard was not only the 'Foreign Affairs Minister' but also the crisis manager. He thanked Mr Bouchard for everything he had done, for his friendship and his passion for clean sport. He would be missed. He wished Mr Mullaly good luck and welcomed him to the family.

Before opening the floor for comments or questions, there was a request from the representatives from Korea, who wanted to give an update on the World Conference in Busan.

MR KIM greeted His Royal Highness, Prince Abdulaziz bin Turki Al Saud, the honourable WADA Chairman Mr Bańka and the distinguished members of the Foundation Board. Firstly, he wished to ask for their understanding because, due to an unavoidable change in circumstances, the WADA Foundation Board member, Her Excellency Vice-Minister Mi-ran Jang, had had to take a return flight in Dubai on her way there. He would convey her messages to the Foundation Board on her behalf: she wanted to express her sincere gratitude to WADA and the Government of Saudi Arabia for bringing those present together. Although she was currently honoured to serve her country as a vice-minister, many of her younger years had been dedicated to her career in weightlifting, and there was a story worth telling. She had had the privilege of winning a gold medal at the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games and, four years later, at the 2012 London Olympic Games, had initially finished in fourth place. However, due to anti-doping rule violations, she had later been awarded the bronze medal. That personal experience made her current role as a member of WADA's Foundation Board particularly meaningful.

The Government of Korea had made significant efforts to advance sport over the years. As a result, Korea had successfully hosted a series of reputable international games. Moreover, Korea had proudly ranked eighth in the medal standings at the 2024 Paris Olympic Games. With its athletes consistently excelling in their sportsmanship, Korea was deeply committed to leading the charge in promoting clean sport through robust anti-doping efforts. The beginning of that effort would be the World Conference on Doping in Sport 2025, which would be held in Busan in December the following year, which would be the first international anti-doping event of that scale in Asia. She wished to express her appreciation to all the Foundation Board members and WADA for their support in bringing that important event to Busan. Thanks to that unwavering support, preparations for the Busan conference were progressing smoothly, and she would be there to listen to and address any suggestions made. She looked forward to engaging in meaningful discussions that would reaffirm shared understanding and strengthen collaboration.

On behalf of the sport movement, MS BERHANE wished to take that opportunity to thank the Director General for his detailed and excellent report. She had very much enjoyed that report, which was very informative. Despite the challenging year, WADA had continued to work very closely with all stakeholders and in particular with the athletes, keeping them at the heart of the foundation. She wished to recognize that that was very helpful. She appreciated that, despite it being a challenging year, WADA had continued to engage all of the stakeholders. On behalf of the IOC, she also thanked WADA for its presence during the Paris 2024 Olympic Games with the Outreach programme, which had been very helpful and impactful. She had observed that there was a concern about the budget and, on behalf of the sport movement, wished to note her concern about how that would affect WADA's core elements. The sport movement was matching the contributions to the WADA funding and wanted to make sure that the core business of WADA was not affected. She had noticed that the non-contribution or pending contribution of some members of the

organization had greatly affected that. She would like to know how the core business would be protected from that budget adjustment and what needed to be done. She would leave the rest to her colleague and friend from the Athlete Council to say a few words on that.

MR TAKEBE introduced himself as Mr Arata Takebe and noted that he had been appointed State Minister for Education, Culture, Sport, Science and Technology of Japan. That would be his first time attending a WADA Foundation Board meeting. He looked forward to working with the Foundation Board members in the fight against doping in sport. He thanked the Director General for his comprehensive report and acknowledged the significance of the discussion on the potential consequences of the voluntary withdrawal of government funding, not only for WADA and public authorities, but also for the entire anti-doping ecosystem. Japan believed it was crucial to devise effective measures to address the shortfall in funding for WADA's operations and activities, which had an undeniable impact on anti-doping activities worldwide. Regarding the proposal from UNESCO to cooperate on a potential revision of the continental allocation of government funding, Japan believed that ongoing dialogue at the regional and intercontinental levels, in addition to continued cooperation with UNESCO and WADA, was essential to reach consensus among public authorities. He wished to commend the efforts of the Korean Government, the Korean Anti-Doping Agency and the relevant WADA departments involved in the preparation for the World Conference on Doping in Sport to be held in Busan the following December. Japan would continue to contribute to the discussions on the revision of the subsequent World Anti-Doping Code and international standards, which were to be adopted at the conference.

On behalf of the NADOs of the world, as a representative of the NADO Expert Advisory Group (EAG), MR CEPIC thanked His Royal Highness and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for hosting that event and for letting the members experience the great hospitality of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. He thanked the Director General on behalf of the NADO EAG for his extensive report. The NADO EAG noted that the WADA management should accept the invitation to meet with the UNESCO convention secretariat in relation to the funding formulas for public authorities. While recognizing that the NADOs were a public authority mandate, the NADO EAG was concerned and would welcome the opportunity for WADA to build good relations and continue proactive and positive dialogue with UNESCO. He encouraged the new Director of Government Relations to proactively collaborate with UNESCO where possible and to support the public authorities in resolving that important issue and providing a solid financial foundation for the future.

MR BINDRA thanked WADA for the impactful presence at the Paris 2024 Olympic Games through the Outreach programme. The visibility that had been provided in the Athletes' 365 house in the Olympic Village had been greatly appreciated and he particularly acknowledged the President, Vice-President and the leadership of WADA's Athlete Council for the on-site engagement at the WADA Outreach booth. It had provided an invaluable opportunity for athletes to directly interact with the WADA leadership.

Secondly, the advancement of the Ombuds initiatives and the enhanced capacity of WADA's Athlete Council to engage with the athlete community had been a commendable milestone.

Lastly, echoing his colleague's comment, he emphasized the importance of ensuring the activities linked to education as key for athletes. Continuation of funding for ADAMS was key not only for athletes, but for all anti-doping organizations. WADA was providing an important service tool for the whole community.

MR O'LEARY thanked the Director General for his report. The reliability of funding was needed to support a robust anti-doping system and the effect of entities withholding funding and the fact that the match funding was also at stake put activities at risk. That was evident from the need to prepare and monitor multiple budgets, which had a financial and capability cost, even if the funding eventually came through, and it was not serving the aims of the organization. It directly affected meaningful athlete programmes that were vital for educating, supporting and protecting athletes in their ongoing fight against doping. He urged governments and all stakeholders to consider the broader consequences of withholding contributions. Athletes knew that a fair playing field was crucial to sport. Any disparity in the global anti-doping system undermined fairness and eroded trust. UNESCO's proposal with regard to the overall review of legislative work challenged that, in his view. He found it strange, as someone whose day-to-day work involved a huge amount of regulation, that when an entity chose to embody the Code in legislation, it would not engage directly with WADA to ensure it was aligned to be robust and equitable. He could not see how UNESCO removing that alignment would be efficient or effective in delivering a harmonized system for athletes, and

a harmonized system was the most important thing that could come out of WADA. Finally, he somewhat disagreed with some of the previous contributions on funding. It absolutely remained open to UNESCO members to discuss the charging relationship between the entities and WADA and moving it forward. However, moving it to an aggregated political level, in his view, risked the funding being caught up in even more political intrigue and had little to do with athletes and anti-doping.

MR KARTEY appreciated the opportunity to contribute to the discussions on the Director General's report on behalf of Africa. He wished to speak to three of the issues mentioned in the written report and the verbal update provided by the Director General. Firstly, in March of that year, Ghana had hosted the African Games in Accra. Throughout the planning and preparations for that mega regional event, in particular the expected anti-doping programme for the competition, including testing, laboratory engagement, training and upskilling of doping control staff, education and so forth, WADA's team of experts had been on hand to provide guidance, support and advice. During the games, the presence of the WADA Athlete Engagement programme had provided valuable opportunities for athletes to receive fun and interactive anti-doping awareness and support. He was grateful for that support and appreciated the time, resources and collaboration offered to his country and region.

On the issue of UNESCO, the African region believed that it remained paramount that the global anti-doping programme be robust and sustainable. That was why WADA had been created, and WADA's main mandate needed to remain clear and precise. For that reason, his region's considered view was that UNESCO and WADA needed to align and coordinate their activities, programmes and projects to ensure athletes could rest assured that their interests were seen to, no matter where in the world they plied their trade or which sport they practiced.

On the issue of the review of legislation, WADA ensured compliance with the Code through the monitoring of rules and legal frameworks. His country, Ghana, had recently worked with WADA on its national anti-doping law, which had since been adopted. It had been developed knowing that it would be fit-for-purpose and aligned with the Code and international best practice. That process had gone smoothly, and the interactions with the team at WADA had been helpful, supportive and guided the African efforts to contribute to the global anti-doping programme by adopting a law that conformed with the Code. He also supported UNESCO in the monitoring of the convention through the Anti-Doping Logic (ADLogic) system, and wished to express the hope that, between then and the 10<sup>th</sup> conference of parties, due to be held in 2025, UNESCO, among others, would enhance its capacity to monitor its implementation of the convention and strengthen its internal structures in order to build up the necessary capacities and capabilities to enhance its potential role in actively supporting WADA in monitoring the compliance of the anti-doping legislative framework across the globe. UNESCO and WADA should complement one another in ensuring that the global anti-doping movement and programme remained on track, and keep open lines of dialogue to avoid potential duplication and overlapping activities.

Finally, on the issue of the potential review of the global share split for WADA's funding, Africa, as had previously been indicated, believed that WADA should be allowed to determine its internal processes to review such matters. As the government representatives sitting around that table representing the interests of their respective constituencies and mandated by the regional governments, they were the ones who should ultimately consider if a change in the share split was necessary. In his view, the time for such a review had not yet arrived. However, if there was a wish by his government colleagues representing their constituencies there for such a process to be embarked upon, the decision and mechanisms through which to do so should be in the hands of the duly nominated representatives.

MR LI greeted the President, Vice-President, Director General and Foundation Board members. He was very glad to meet them in Riyadh. On behalf of the General Administration of China, he wished to make several comments. China's attitude towards doping was consistent, strict and firm. President Xi Jinping had made it clear that he would push forward the fight against doping and reinforce awareness to ensure zero occurrence and zero tolerance of doping. The importance that China attached and the support it provided to anti-doping was significant. The government's achievements were apparently well witnessed and acknowledged by the global anti-doping community. China would give CHINADA firm and steady support to ensure that it was independent, impartial, professional and had a high-quality anti-doping programme under the World Anti-Doping Code and international standards. China would always continue its steady



commitment and fully support WADA to conduct independent, professional, efficient and effective governance globally. He believed that the update of the 2027 World Anti-Doping Code and standards was an effective legal guarantee for countries to carry out anti-doping programmes independently, impartially, professionally and with high quality under unified international rules and standards, and adequate funding was crucial in terms of providing economic support for WADA to lead the global anti-doping programme and maintain the agency's daily operations. The full and timely payment of contributions was also a responsibility and obligation that all countries should fulfil. China suggested that WADA engage in in-depth communication with UNESCO to clarify the respective roles and responsibilities, coordinate effectively and work together to build a healthy global anti-doping environment. China was committed to forming a stabilizing force for the global anti-doping ecosystem and to exploring solutions for possible issues. It was committed to being the main driving force for common development and playing an active and leading role in the global anti-doping governance reform. It was committed to being an advocate for win-win cooperation among stakeholders and to supporting stakeholders in taking the path to anti-doping modernization suited to respective national conditions. China believed that the global anti-doping family would combine great strength and stand up to its responsibility of building a global anti-doping community with a shared future.

MR McCANN introduced himself as Mr Luke McCann, representing the Australian sport minister. He looked forward to working with the Foundation Board over the coming years as he stepped in to replace Mr Mullaly. He had a brief comment in relation to the Director General's report, and particularly the strong preference for the status quo in relation to legislative compliance. Acknowledging that systems were not always perfect, the system had been largely operating under the same mechanisms for 25 years. To that end, the case for change was unclear. WADA had demonstrated expertise over many years, and changing the system then would require a compelling case for change.

THE DIRECTOR GENERAL thought that there were some common themes in the remarks and interventions and he would try to address them all where possible. First of all, he appreciated the positive remarks about WADA's presence in Paris in particular, which had been a great experience for all.

Concerning the budget, he was very clear on the fact that there might be scenarios that would require choices to be made. WADA was prepared for that. It had been discussed with the Finance and Administration Committee and two scenarios had been prepared for that budget to respond to the fact that the Russian contribution had not been received the previous year. He was still optimistic that it might arrive at some point. There had been some contact recently, but it was complicated in the current world in which sanctions were in place that made the transfer of funds very complicated. He hoped that other big contributors, in particular the USA, would still pay their dues that year, but preparations were being made for all scenarios. Of course, the approach would be to preserve the core activities of the organization if choices had to be made. First of all, everything concerning the athletes' programme, the mandatory activity under the Code, IT and ADAMS was very important, as were science, legal and education matters. Some choices would perhaps have to be made. The initial approach would be to seek alternative sources of funding. He thought that it was necessary to be optimistic that there was commitment from the community in the work WADA was doing and that it would be possible to mitigate any problems there. It had all been taken into account and would be dealt with between the Risk and Audit Committee and the Finance and Administration Committee. A budget revision exercise was always conducted mid-year, and the matter would be examined in due course.

The minister from Japan had highlighted the same concern about funding, and he concurred with that. The remark from Japan was very important and there he would also respond to the intervention from the NADO representative. WADA was in no way reluctant to engage with UNESCO in discussion, but it was not UNESCO's place to replace the governmental discussion on the share split. That was a responsibility for the public authorities, and had always been the case since WADA had been created. It had never interfered in how public authorities organized the share split among themselves. He thought that it was clear from the number of interventions that day that the moment WADA heard from the government partners that there was consensus on the way forward, WADA would be more than happy to be a facilitator. Nevertheless, it was for the public authorities to hold a conversation first.

He thanked Mr Bindra for his comments regarding Paris. It had been very enlightening to be in the village and very pleasant to meet all those athletes in the booth. He appreciated all the work that had been done there. He duly noted the concerns of the athletes. They would be factored into any priorities.

He thanked Mr O'Leary for his important points and hoped that the government friends around the table had listened carefully to his intervention, in particular regarding the concern of the athletes about the risk of losing harmonization when it came to legislation, but also the concern that a broader discussion on the share split might derail a system that was actually working well. He reiterated the importance of the public authorities reaching some consensus before moving all the pieces.

He thanked the representative of Ghana for his comment, which he agreed with. He thought that the comment about Africa wanting the system to remain coherent was in line with what he had been saying. Ghana's experience with legislation was also interesting for everybody to understand that the system was working. He had perfectly made the point that UNESCO could deal with the convention, WADA could deal with the Code, and there could be some sort of interaction as with the Council of Europe when it came to the European convention, the Code and collaboration in terms of how the individual stakeholders were performing their responsibility within their respective forum.

Finally, he thanked Mr Li for his remarks, which he had duly noted. He thought that China's support for its NADO and the system and the importance of everybody doing their share was important.

He thanked Mr McCann for his comment and thought that the remark on the legislative system and the question of why change something that had been working for 20 years rather well was very appropriate.

MS GRANGE wished to congratulate WADA on its work throughout the year. Her region wished to encourage major dialogue and continued consultation regarding the important matters raised in the Director General's report. While Jamaica encouraged compliance with the Code, it had to be noted that, since public authorities were signatories to the convention, which already had a monitoring mechanism, matters of non-compliance with the convention were therefore treated by UNESCO through those mechanisms. UNESCO had a responsibility to ensure that the monitoring mechanisms were robust and could be implemented seamlessly to ensure that the integrity of sport was recognized and monitored. She had wanted to make those comments in relation to the Director General's report.

THE DIRECTOR GENERAL stressed the point that had been clearly made, that UNESCO had a responsibility with the convention, with which WADA fully agreed. He wished for robust monitoring of the convention to be implemented by UNESCO which was a different text to the Code.

## DECISION

Director General's report noted.

### - **3.1 Strategic plan 2025-2029**

MS TAILLEFER greeted the members of the Foundation Board. She was pleased to present the 2025-2029 strategic plan. Before diving into the sections of the document, she wanted to highlight why the process had spanned over 16 months, leading to the document the members had received as part of the preparation papers. The strategic plan was crucial for supporting multilateral efforts to protect athletes and clean sport, as it defined clear objectives and aligned resources to address complex challenges effectively. It was believed that the strategic plan would enable that. One of the reasons for the confidence in that document was linked to the process conducted. That had started in September 2023 with a working session on themes and ambitions with the Executive Committee, followed by more than 30 interviews conducted with a variety of stakeholders to gather feedback on the current plan and identify themes for the second one. She recalled that, one year previously, the initial themes and ambition had been presented to both governance bodies, the Executive Committee and the Foundation Board, to collect feedback. Analysis and drafting had ensued to provide draft strategic priorities and key initiatives to the Executive Committee members in March 2024 and to the Foundation Board members in April 2024. The integration of the feedback had led to the drafting of a full strategic plan document, submitted to the Executive Committee for further feedback in September. As the Director General had mentioned, the previous day, the Executive Committee had supported the submission of the strategic plan to the Foundation Board with the suggestion of ensuring that the pictures selected represented the diversity of athletes in the global system.

The 2025-2029 strategic plan followed guiding principles that were inspired by the perspectives that had been shared by stakeholders throughout the consultation process. The five guiding principles that had been used to guide the strategic plan were that: WADA would be even more focused on implementing improvements; system partners were reinforced as key allies; WADA was entering an era of programme consolidation to simplify the system and increase efficiency; WADA would focus on being innovative, strategic, proactive and targeted; and activities and impact would be communicated in a language understandable by all stakeholders. That was evident throughout the document. The consultation takeaways had been used to inform the various sections of the strategic plan that she would now review.

To give an overview of the strategic plan sections, there was an introduction, with a celebration of anti-doping history that included the acknowledgement of the Council of Europe and the UNESCO anti-doping conventions, as suggested by the Foundation Board in December 2023. The growth of the anti-doping system over the previous 25 years was proof that sport, governments and all stakeholders could continue to go further together as there was still much more to be done for athletes worldwide.

The ecosystem trends on the second part of the page had been co-developed with stakeholders and provided a relevant picture of the environment, notably when it came to trends such as increasing costs, climate change, complex contamination scenarios, pressure for a higher standard of governance worldwide, the complexity of cybersecurity and data protection and the importance of protecting human rights, and the fact that opinions were increasingly polarized and publicized. Those were mentioned to make sure that there was an understanding of the environment in which WADA was evolving.

Turning to the core section of the strategic plan, comprising the strategic priorities and the associated key initiatives, there were five strategic priorities set down on the left-hand side of the page, 15 flagship project examples shared in the document to help provide enough tangibility for the different strategic priorities, 35 key initiatives and 15 strategic indicators. The plan was an ambitious yet feasible and multidisciplinary proposition to go further together.

In the last section, on achieving the mission, there were four approaches with respective areas of focus that had again been informed by the stakeholders' perspective. The consultation process had entailed much discussion of not only the what, but also the how. She would proceed to review the four approaches. The first one, which had started to sound like a repeated concept, was delivering together, with a focus on promoting excellence, signalling new opportunities and threats, scaling up effective solutions and approaching the protection of athletes as a shared responsibility. The second approach was catalysing innovation, with a focus on improving athletes' experience, driving efficiency and providing equal access to the benefits of data analytics. The aim was also to incorporate sustainability in achieving the mission, and the key areas of focus were linked to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals of good health and well-being, quality education, peace, justice and strong institutions, and partnerships for the goals. Finally, she mentioned fostering an agile and dynamic global anti-doping system with a focus on facilitating an accessible and navigable 2027 stakeholder update process for the Code and the international standards, rolling out a robust Code implementation support programme and working to simplify information and communications.

That was a concise overview of what the 2025-2029 strategic plan had to offer. The next steps in terms of upcoming activities would be the publication of the plan upon the Foundation Board decision, validation of 2025 operational plans and budget, because implementation was as important as planning, and the assessment of the resources required for 2026-2029, bearing in mind the situation and context in which the organization was evolving. That concluded her presentation.

MR TAKEBE wished to begin by commending the Strategic Management Office and all those involved in the development of the strategic plan for the efforts over the past six months or more. He congratulated the team on the completion of the final draft of the strategic plan. Japan was pleased to endorse that strategic plan for the period from 2025 to 2029. He wished to acknowledge the inclusion of human rights and sustainability in the new strategic plan. It was of the utmost importance that all stakeholders collaborate to achieve a level playing field for all athletes around the world. Japan wished to commit to assisting in that endeavour over the coming five years, as set forth in the five strategic priorities outlined in the new strategic plan and the associated key initiatives.

MR O'LEARY welcomed the presentation of the strategic plan on behalf of the Athlete Council. He noted that the council had been involved and consulted throughout. He was delighted to see that elements such as the Ombuds and the human rights impact assessment had been included in the plan. The fact that the Athlete Council had been included along the way had allowed it to align its own action plan to the strategic plan, (which would be presented later on by the Athlete Council chairman) enabling support of it throughout its development.

MS BERGQVIST regretted not attending in person that day. However, she appreciated the opportunity to participate in the meeting online. She was grateful for the presentation of the proposed strategic plan for the coming five years and was pleased to note that the plan included the issues that the Foundation Board had suggested the previous year, namely gender equality and sustainable development. She and her European colleagues were ready to approve the plan. While she welcomed the incorporation of the UN Sustainable Development Goals into the strategy, she also stressed the importance of considering them at the same level as other key initiatives of the strategic plan when implementing the plan. She saw that the updated key performance indicators related to the SDGs supported that aim. Setting costs within the limits of the budget was sustainable economic management. Therefore, Europe requested that WADA ensure that the plan was implemented within the current budget framework. In that respect, she recalled WADA's engagement to try not to increase the budget or budget forecast.

DR TAN wished to commend the team on the strategic plan on behalf of ANOC and the sport movement. Research had been a key pillar over the previous five years, with the research budget raised to as high as 4.5 million US dollars per annum. He was pleased to see that research remained central to the new strategic plan, as that was essential for the anti-doping community to address the emerging risks. He also welcomed the ambition to secure new partnerships that could help WADA and the anti-doping community effectively execute the anti-doping framework.

MR CEPIC congratulated WADA on behalf of the NADO EAG on its new strategic plan, and the NADOs looked forward to contributing to that athlete-centred implementation. The NADO EAG especially appreciated the approach to collaborate and to unite all stakeholders in order to secure a unified and global anti-doping system.

MS SÖRLING thanked WADA on behalf of the sport movement for the reviewed strategic plan and underlined the importance of leveraging data and securing new partnerships, supporting innovations and WADA's mission, as well as being athlete-centred, engaging all stakeholders and striving for greater efficiencies in the global anti-doping system and internal processes. She highlighted that she appreciated the process and the very good cooperation with the WADA leadership. She also wanted to reflect on some of the achievements that had been made during that current strategic plan and those reforms also allowing for stronger athlete and NADO representation such as the comprehensive governance reforms, more athlete representation, better recruitment, better use of NADO expertise, the Code of Ethics and improved auditing. That being said, the sport movement also underlined that securing WADA's resources would be essential to ensure the delivery of the ambitious strategic plan.

THE CHAIRMAN saw no more requests for the floor. On behalf of WADA, he thanked everybody for their engagement. It had been a very comprehensive process with long consultations. That document was extremely important for the future of the fight against doping in sport. He thanked Ms Taillefer and her team for conducting that very lengthy operation. He hoped the time had finally come to adopt that plan. He asked for the record if the members were in agreement with approving the 2025-2029 strategic plan.

## DECISION

2025-2029 strategic plan approved.

### - **3.2 Strategic key performance indicators update**

MS TAILLEFER stated that in line with the strategic plan exercises was the equally important topic of the strategic indicator results, which were a helpful measurement for WADA to build on strengths and uncover areas for improvement. That year was the third edition of measuring indicators, and she was, as always, eager to learn from the experience to keep improving the approach.

The 2024 response rate in terms of perception surveys was comparable but lower than the previous year, which might indicate survey fatigue. The demographics of that year's survey differed to those of previous editions in a few respects which provided a helpful context to understand the results. The regions of Asia and Oceania accounted for a higher proportion of respondents compared to the previous year, and the proportion of national-level athletes was higher, at about 53% of respondents, while that of international-level athletes was lower that year, at around 30%.

That said, the takeaways that could be extracted from 2024 were rather consistent with the takeaways from the previous two years. They translated into five strengths and three areas for improvement. For time efficiency, she would not go into each of those, but would look only at an overview of strengths and areas for improvement, as there was a more detailed visual and infographics in the preparation papers. Looking at the strengths, the leadership perception indicators had all improved, with a record high of 87% for the perception of WADA being the leader in the anti-doping system. The impact of compliance efforts showed a decrease of 19% in total non-conformities. That specifically related to the results of the Code compliance questionnaire. The performance was comparable for the same anti-doping organizations. Athletes' perception of WADA's ability to be athlete-centric showed significant improvement, and that improvement had been shown steadily for the previous three years. The number of active learners had increased by 55% on the education platform, given the content offered, but also due to more languages being available. The perception of collaboration by members of governance bodies and stakeholders had steadily improved over the previous three years.

With regard to areas for improvement, those were areas on which WADA was actively working specifically, user satisfaction with ADAMS remained low, and an approach would shortly be presented on how that could be addressed. There was a higher proportion of athletes concerned about doping, both for their sport and for their country. That number also needed to be contextualized. There had been around 2,000 respondents, the majority of whom competed in national-level competition, so that data was interesting, but needed to be contextualized for that specific answer. On the last one, despite improvement, stakeholders' perception of WADA ranked last for the innovative attribute. As indicators were prepared for 2025, which would be a transitional year between the current indicators and those proposed in the upcoming plan (and she thanked the members for approving that plan), two important elements had to be acknowledged. The first was ensuring that perception indicator results were meaningful. The proposal to do so was to capture the perception of distinct groups of stakeholders on their experience with WADA's specific initiatives. Some examples were provided to give an idea of what that would mean, such as collecting the perception of the Athlete Council members on the athlete engagement initiatives conducted with the council; collecting the perception of anti-doping organizations on development activities they would have participated in organized by WADA, and collecting the perception of users of newly-developed ADAMS modules on their experience. The latter was a specifically important one to be able to measure the difference in satisfaction before and after improving a module or a product. Two other examples were the perception of the WADA-accredited laboratories on collaboration and knowledge-sharing initiatives. And finally, a very important one, which she had put in bold because she hoped the WADA governance bodies would engage in it, was WADA governance body members' perception of governance and engagement initiatives.

The second important element for 2025 was to ensure that the perception data measured were also supported with the reporting of strong internal data. For 2025, some examples proposed were the level of participation in the 2027 World Anti-Doping Code update process and 2025 World Conference on Doping in Sport (the number of organizations and individuals participating), partnership and private funding updates, scientific and social research grant programme updates, Ombuds programme service utilization, anti-doping organization training updates and athlete and athlete support personnel education updates.

In conclusion, she encouraged the Foundation Board members to fill in the 2025 governance member survey as mentioned in the e-mail that had been sent on Tuesday. It was an important tool to gather feedback on elements of WADA's leadership and the management of its governance structure. The Foundation Board's perspective was key in helping to identify strengths and uncover areas for improvement. The survey could be accessed from the link in the e-mail sent on Tuesday, or by scanning the QR code on the screen. That concluded her presentation.



MR REINHARDT firstly wished to apologize on behalf of his minister of state, Dr Ádám Schmidt, who could not attend that day due to duties regarding the Hungarian Presidency of the Council of the European Union. He thanked His Royal Highness and the Ministry of Sport of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for the kind hospitality, which he appreciated very much.

Regarding agenda item 3.2, he was pleased with WADA's commitment to continuous improvement and to align the organizational objectives with measurable results of the KPIs, and he welcomed the KPIs related to the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

#### DECISION

Strategic key performance indicators update noted.

#### **4. Chinese swimmer contamination case update**

THE CHAIRMAN announced that he would give the floor to Mr Wenzel to update the Foundation Board members on the Chinese swimmer contamination case since the previous update on 1 July, and then to Ms Battaini-Dragoni to present the recommendations of the Working Group on the Cottier Report Implementation, on which the Executive Committee had received a full update the previous day.

MR WENZEL greeted the Foundation Board members. They had received a brief paper in the bundle in section 4.0. There was also an attachment to the legal report in 10.10. He would be brief. The main update, since the previous meeting in July, was the final report from the independent prosecutor, Mr Eric Cottier, who had been appointed after an extraordinary Executive Committee meeting at the end of April of that year in the wake of the allegations that had been made against WADA by and through the media. Those allegations of cover-up and political bias went to the very core of WADA's integrity and the integrity of WADA's staff members who had worked on that file. It had been and remained disappointing that the parties who had made those baseless allegations, both within and without the media, had not sought dialogue with WADA to understand things beforehand, but had rather sought headlines. Had those parties sought dialogue and clarification, he suspected that much could have been avoided. Mr Eric Cottier, a former prosecutor-general of the Canton of Vaud in Switzerland, had been appointed to review that matter. He had done so thoroughly and issued an interim report, which had already been shared with the Foundation Board in July. Following the Olympic Games, a final report had been submitted to WADA. The allegations made had been baseless at the time and, in light of the findings set out in Mr Cottier's final report, they had been demonstrated to be baseless. Mr Cottier had found that he had been provided with all of the relevant documentation by WADA. He had mandated a forensic expert to verify that he had been given everything, and he had confirmed that. He had found that WADA's review of the Chinese swimmers' case had been diligent and professional, and in accordance with WADA's rules. He had found no evidence whatsoever of any bias or interference or impropriety. He had not found any because there had been none to be found. He had also found, importantly, that the decision by WADA, which was the same decision as World Aquatics on that matter, not to appeal the decision to the Court of Arbitration for Sport was not only reasonable, but, in his words, 'indisputably reasonable'. He had also found, in what was a very balanced and thorough final report, that there were no concrete elements to challenge or contest the contamination scenario, which had been supported by a bundle of evidentiary elements.

Before handing over to Ms Battaini-Dragoni to talk about the working group that had been established at the previous September Executive Committee meeting in Belek, Türkiye, he wanted to mention one last element, which was, like the working group, ongoing. It had perhaps not attracted as much attention as the headline-grabbing allegations that had been made at the end of April, but must not be forgotten. There had been serious breaches of the Chinese athletes' privacy rights. Those athletes had woken up on the morning of 21 April to see their images and names all over the press, and that was something that WADA needed to take extremely seriously. WADA had announced in the days following the allegations that it would investigate that, and that investigation was ongoing.

MS BATTAINI-DRAGONI greeted the members of the Foundation Board. In her capacity as Chairman of the Executive Committee Working Group on the Cottier Report Implementation, it was her pleasure to inform the Foundation Board that the report, which contained a roadmap to address the findings in the report, as well as the World Aquatics report, had been adopted the previous day by the Executive

Committee. The working group had convened three times since its establishment in September. Throughout its work, the group had endeavoured to ensure that the proposed roadmap and timelines would allow sufficient time for consultation with the stakeholders and internal teams of WADA, bearing in mind the importance of moving forward while allowing proper consultation to take place. She thanked the working group, in particular Mr Nenad Lalovic, Dr Gupta and Mr Ryan Pini, for their work, and thanked those supporting the working group also. She thought that the work had been conducted in the right spirit of collaboration, in the interest of making the system better and learning from the findings of both reports. Going forward, regular updates would be provided by the WADA management to the Executive Committee.

Looking at the specifics of the recommendations, the report looked first at Mr Cottier's recommendation regarding WADA's filing system. In that respect, the working group acknowledged that the Legal Department had made major progress since 2021 and had already been able to address most of the improvements proposed by Mr Cottier, in particular by turning to a more advanced digital solution to record and access result management data. That said, the group thought that that important work should be pursued and suggested further improvements to the result management database. Those particularly related to developing additional protocols as well as the automation capabilities of the database. That progress would be presented and reported to the Executive Committee in March.

On the recommendation to establish criteria on which the Intelligence and Investigation Department based its decision as to whether or not to involve itself in a particular case, the working group was of the view that triage and prioritization should be developed to ensure that the department focused on cases that presented the most significant risks. In the interim, the implementation of a provisional process to ensure the transmission of high-risk cases to the Intelligence and Investigation Department would be a key action pending completion of the project. It was also proposed that someone be responsible from the Intelligence and Investigation Department to ensure interdepartmental collaboration for complex cases.

The group had also examined the recommendation to implement an alarm system in ADAMS to support WADA in monitoring result management in terms of deadlines. In that respect, it suggested defining a triage and prioritization system, ensuring that resources were focused on the highest-risk cases. That approach should also include the set-up in the short term of an alarm in ADAMS as an interim solution, until a more comprehensive system was in place.

Furthermore, the working group had reviewed the many recommendations in the Cottier and World Aquatics reports relating to anti-doping rules and policies. In that respect, it had identified several changes that could be incorporated into the World Anti-Doping Code and international standards, notably the recourse to an independent review expert in situations where an anti-doping organization with result management authority decided to take no action on an adverse analytical finding otherwise required by the World Anti-Doping Code. All proposed changes and considerations were outlined in the report and had been submitted to the 2027 World Anti-Doping Code and Update Drafting Team. A comprehensive presentation by the Code Update Drafting Team would be given later that day, but the working group was very pleased and comfortable that all elements from both the Cottier report and the World Aquatics report had been taken on board by the drafting team and would be part of the Code and standard update process. That meant that all stakeholders would have an opportunity to comment and make suggestions on those proposals as part of the normal Code and standards revision process.

Furthermore, the working group had discussed the US suggestion that a pilot project for an independent review expert be implemented before the entry into force of the 2027 World Anti-Doping Code on a voluntary basis. It had recommended that it be done when legally feasible.

Finally, it had also examined the recommendation from the World Aquatics report regarding the conflict of interest perceived by athletes when national anti-doping organizations were in charge of supervising their own athletes due to take part in international sport events. While the working group acknowledged that the 2027 World Anti-Doping Code would incorporate more robust provisions for operational independence, it believed that that important issue should be further analysed by a specific working group. The report provided more details to that effect.

Publication of no-fault decisions and the protection of athletes' personality rights had also been discussed, and the Code team had also been entrusted to look at those confidentiality issues. She would be pleased to now have an exchange of views.

THE CHAIRMAN thanked Ms Battaini-Dragoni for her engagement and hard work, and thanked all of the members of the working group on behalf of WADA. He opened the floor for comments or questions.

MR VESPER thanked the working group on behalf of the sport movement for the excellent report that it had prepared in such a short time, within two months, under the leadership of Ms Battaini-Dragoni, whom he thanked and complimented. The conclusions of the Cottier report were right and set out the potential for improvement with clear time deadlines, which he welcomed very much. All the recommendations in the Cottier and World Aquatics reports would be enforced. That once again showed that, with the right will, it was possible to make very quick, landmark decisions. He had been an observer and had been impressed by how easily and respectfully the representatives of the public authorities and the sport movement and the athletes and the WADA management had worked together. That style of cooperation should continue to be cultivated. It had also been very helpful that Mr Richard Young was an expert in the Code review. Mr Young was not only the father but the grandfather of the Code, and he would later explain his deliberations, and he had helped to make suggestions for additions to the Code where necessary. The sport movement had full confidence in the roadmap provided for the process and offered every support. The issue of contamination would occupy even more time henceforth as the advanced analytical methods of the laboratories enabled the detection of ever-smaller quantities of substances, and the Code review group would express its thoughts on that under item eight.

He also wished to convey a major request. In recent years, there had been very intensive work on WADA's own structures in the governance reforms, and a new working group was to be set up again. All of that entailed a lot of resources, and that was right. However, the core business of enforcing fair sport worldwide through an effective control system, appropriate sanctions and prevention as early as possible should not be neglected. That was WADA's mission and that was exactly what it had to fulfil. Athletes and the public expected that from WADA.

DR TAN thanked Mr Cottier for his report on behalf of the Athlete Council. He welcomed the roadmap, which had been communicated the previous day after the Executive Committee meeting. He also looked forward to the outcomes of the investigations regarding the breach of privacy of the athletes involved. However, he also wished to address another important point, because the athletes felt that over the past few months there had been a lot of politicization around anti-doping, and such tension was not good for the athletes; it was not good for sport or for anybody. Anti-doping should not be politicized, in his opinion. It should be about protecting clean sport, protecting athletes and protecting the credibility of sport. He called upon all stakeholders to stop the aggressive media reports back and forth, to change the tone, and to discuss and stick to the promises that had been made. Most of all, he urged all parties concerned to move forward.

MR SOBHY thanked His Royal Highness Prince Abdul Aziz, the Minister of Youth and Sports in Saudi Arabia, for hosting that great meeting and for everything that he had done. On behalf of the Egyptian Ministry of Youth and Sports and the Arab League, he was very proud to be a part of that event. It was a privilege for him to participate in that discussion regarding the case of the Chinese swimmers which had been in the public eye for a considerable period. He appreciated the update provided that day, which shed light on the background, complexity and dynamism of the matter. The African region continued to hold the view that WADA had followed the correct process to deal with that matter by appointing Mr Cottier to carry out an independent investigation of the matter soon after it had come to light. Mr Cottier had since submitted his report and the Foundation Board had received continuous updates on the investigations, the outcomes and the way forward as decided by the Executive Committee. Africa fully supported the process, as it had always held the view that, if Mr Cottier discovered any untoward actions by any of the involved parties, WADA should be decisive in dealing with such individuals, even if they were within the organization. The Executive Committee had decided to create a working group to specifically address the matter. He had considered the recommendations following from the Cottier report, was steadfast behind the process and awaited the outcomes. The roadmap as presented by the working group seemed to be sensible and pragmatic, but moreover showed a significant degree of transparency on how WADA was handling the matter. He would continue to do his duty and support the work and persistence of the working group under the leadership of

Ms Battaini-Dragoni. His region was also very concerned about the continuous negative media attention that the story continued to attract and generate, but to ensure consistency in the approach to the matter, he would not comment on the sideshows playing out in the media on those issues. However, he was mindful and slightly worried about the impact that media reports and other public communications emanating from various sources had on the image of WADA. He hoped for a speedy conclusion of the matter and requested all involved parties to set aside narrow interest for the sake of the integrity, unity and coordination of the global anti-doping system.

MR CEPIC thanked the working group on behalf of the NADO EAG for its excellent work and excellent report. He thanked all the members, especially Ms Battaini-Dragoni for her leadership, and took note of the recommendations in the roadmap from the Executive Committee Working Group on the Cottier Report Implementation that had been approved by the WADA Executive Committee. The NADO EAG recommended that WADA ensure that both the NADOs and the laboratories were engaged in the way forward in order to benefit from their expertise in their respective areas. In particular, the NADO EAG, representing NADOs worldwide with different organizational structures, also expressed its interest in being involved in the future working group looking at NADO operational independence as outlined in recommendation 6.2 in order to contribute with practical input from the NADO perspective.

THE CHAIRMAN saw no more requests for the floor, so would ask Professor Olivier Rabin to give an update on contamination and plans for the future regarding that issue.

PROFESSOR RABIN recalled that contamination was not really a new issue in the anti-doping landscape. WADA had established a Contaminants Working Group a few years previously, which was a technical group composed of lawyers and scientists. That group had already delivered some tangible outcomes in the form of minimum reporting levels that had been applied to some diuretics and some anabolic steroids that were used as growth promoters in some regions of the world. One of the outcomes of the Cottier report was that WADA was in the process of establishing a contamination group. That group would take a more holistic approach to the issue of contamination and would be composed of people with different areas of expertise, to take the multidisciplinary approach to contamination that was required. It would naturally include athlete representation. A proposal on the composition of that group would be put to the WADA Executive Committee in the weeks to come.

THE DIRECTOR GENERAL responded to the intervention made by Mr Cepic on behalf of the NADOs that, indeed, many of the proposals in the working group report would be part of the Code revision process. NADOs and laboratories would have the opportunity to express their opinions and suggestions in that process. Regarding the working group he had mentioned, the participation of the latter would indeed be ensured.

## DECISION

Chinese swimmer contamination case update  
and recommendations of the Working Group on  
the Cottier Report Implementation noted.

Before moving on to the next item, THE CHAIRMAN noted a change in the agenda order and that he was pleased to welcome a guest, Mr Bâ, the Chairman of the Bureau of the COP9 (refer section 9.3 below).

## **5. Governance**

### **- 5.1 WADA president and vice-president election 2025 – process update**

THE DIRECTOR GENERAL recalled that, the previous May, the Foundation Board had approved through a circulatory vote the process and the rules for the election. The binders contained all the documents that were related to that, including the timelines, which had started on 15 November and would conclude on 29 May next year. The process had hence started and the members might have seen that the WADA

Independent Ethics Board had nominated Ms Ana Tuiketeti from Fiji as the scrutineer for that election, and that the call for interest had been posted on the WADA website. He would be happy to answer any questions.

THE CHAIRMAN wished to say a few words on that point. He wished to confirm what he had announced earlier that year at the WADA Annual Symposium that he and the Vice-President planned to run for another three years. That would be the last term of office for them. A lot of work had been done with the Foundation Board and there was a lot ahead. He thought that, together, the anti-doping community had definitely strengthened the system over the recent years. However, the system was not perfect and required some change. Anti-doping was all about collaboration. He believed that, thanks to the good collaboration between those present, together with the sport movement, athletes, governments and other stakeholders, the system could be strengthened further in the coming few years. WADA had 25 years of history, as it had been established in 1999. The situation was undoubtedly different to the past. WADA was much stronger, but the core of its work and the biggest achievement was harmonization, with the most harmonized legal system in the world. Having achieved that harmonization was really exceptional. It had been achieved thanks to the great collaboration between all concerned. For as long as he and the Vice-President served, they would protect those achievements and that harmonization. Every stakeholder was important, no matter how small or big or rich. There were almost 200 countries and 700 Code signatories. He thought that embodied equal treatment. Integrity, solidarity and fairness were the values that would lead WADA. He hoped to continue that work with no fear or favours, for the good of athletes in the world. He apologized for making that short statement, but wished to take that opportunity to reiterate that regarding the elections. He opened the floor for comments or questions regarding the process update.

MS UHRENHOLDT JACOBSEN regretted that she had not been able to attend in person and was most appreciative to be able to attend remotely that time. On behalf of the sport movement and the athletes in particular, she wished to thank Mr Baňka and Ms Yang for their efforts as President and Vice-President and welcomed the renewed candidacy. They had both presented a strategic plan that was forward-looking and striving for an organization that had a strong engagement with the whole sport community in its ongoing work. In that context, she wished to highlight their continued engagement for and with the athletes through strengthening their voice, their education and their contribution in the period that lay ahead. With that short comment, she wished them the best of luck with the fair and open election process.

MS BERHANE welcomed the renewed candidacy of the President and Vice-President on behalf of the sport movement. She very much appreciated their continued effort and commitment, but also wished to highlight that, in the history of WADA, the previous couple of years under their leadership had highlighted a very harmonized and yet open-minded and ready-for-dialogue style of leadership, which was very important to the anti-doping community. They set a true example, and that the organization could benefit from such candidatures.

On another note, the strategic plan that had been presented the previous day and that day was a true demonstration of how forward-looking WADA was in terms of giving priority and making the agency athlete-centred, but also engaging the whole community of the anti-doping system. She welcomed the renewed candidacy of the President and Vice-President.

THE CHAIRMAN appreciated the very kind comments made.

## DECISION

WADA president and vice-president election  
2025 process update noted.

### - **5.2 Executive Committee and Foundation Board memberships**

#### **5.2.1 Executive Committee 2025 composition**

THE DIRECTOR GENERAL drew the members' attention to the screen showing the list received for Executive Committee members for the following year. A few members had finished their mandates or had been changed, so the Foundation Board was asked to formally vote on the Executive Committee list on the screen. The names of the members who needed to be appointed immediately were shown in a different colour to the others, which were either renewals or replacements.



THE CHAIRMAN asked if the Foundation Board approved the composition.

MR KASAPOĞLU wished to extend his respectful and cordial greetings as a representative of Europe. He was delighted to meet the WADA Foundation Board family again in Riyadh. He wished to thank His Royal Highness Prince Abdulaziz bin Turki Al Saud, Minister of Sports of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and his wonderful team for their gracious hospitality. Together, significant reforms and success had been achieved in the fight against doping in sport. The principle of zero tolerance had been applied to the fight against doping, with an approach that was transparent, equitable, fair, athlete-focused and compatible with developments in technology. All matters were discussed. At times there was some tension, but all actions were for the athletes and a cleaner world of sport. He had always been proud to be part of WADA and that family and to work with those present. He wished to take that opportunity to wish success to his esteemed colleagues and the new representatives of the WADA Executive Committee and Foundation Board.

THE CHAIRMAN welcomed the comment. He saw no other requests for the floor.

#### DECISION

Executive Committee 2025 memberships  
approved.

### **5.2.2 Foundation Board 2025 composition**

THE DIRECTOR GENERAL noted that it was a regulatory requirement from the Swiss authorities to acknowledge the composition of the Foundation Board. A number of updates had recently been received on the composition that the Foundation Board had to acknowledge. Upon the receipt of updates from the members, the required paperwork would be completed and then filed with the Swiss authorities, which required constant updates to the trade register in Switzerland with the names of the Foundation Board members. The present update was not for approval, but it was expected that approval of a more complete set of composition changes for 2025 would be sought in the new year.

THE CHAIRMAN saw no requests for the floor.

#### DECISION

Foundation Board 2025 composition  
noted.

### **- 5.3 Permanent special and standing committee compositions 2025**

MR KASAPOĞLU took the opportunity to intervene and stated that some crucial documents had not been received until just prior to meetings. As would be appreciated, reading the documents could cause some difficulties because, like other continental representatives, it was necessary to discuss the documents with all the state representatives of Europe. If possible, sharing the documents with the relevant stakeholders with a more reasonable amount of time would enable a more constructive and more comprehensive contribution.

THE DIRECTOR GENERAL acknowledged that point. Efforts were always made to provide documents as early as possible. He thought that Mr Kasapoğlu was referring to a document that was actually for the Executive Committee primarily, which was the report of the working group. Mr Kasapoğlu would understand that the work had started in his country, in Belek, only in September, and that actually the group had managed to provide a report in time for that meeting, which was already quite remarkable given the amount of information involved. However, he absolutely understood the need for intergovernmental consultation, which had a different time-frame.

#### **5.3.1 New or renewed standing committee members 2025**

THE DIRECTOR GENERAL had provided an update to this item resulting from the Executive Committee meeting the day prior.

MR KIM said that he was aware that WADA had made significant efforts to ensure balanced representation on both the permanent special and the standing committees, and he greatly appreciated

those efforts. However, he regretted that, in that particular composition, there were only a few new members from Korea or Asia who had been included in the committees. He hoped that, with careful consideration of continental representation, more Asians would have the opportunity to play an active role in anti-doping efforts. To that end, he kindly asked for the continued attention and support of the distinguished members present that day. At the same time, his deepest congratulations went to those who had been newly appointed to the committees.

THE DIRECTOR GENERAL welcomed the comment and took due note of those points. Efforts were certainly made to be as balanced as possible. He made a plea to the Asian representatives on that Foundation Board, because it was not the first time in an open call for candidates that only a limited number had been received from Asia. A bigger pool of interest would be preferred, to make it possible to select more.

### **5.3.2 Compliance Review Committee composition 2025**

THE DIRECTOR GENERAL had provided an update to this item resulting from the Executive Committee meeting the day prior.

### **5.3.3 Independent Ethics Board membership terms ending May 2025**

THE CHAIRMAN noted that Nominations Committee Chairman Ms Diane Smith-Gander was not available that day, but she would be represented by Nominations Committee member, Professor Maja Zalaznik and welcomed her to the meeting.

PROFESSOR ZALAZNIK wished to make a few important points on the nominations processes under way at that time. The Independent Ethics Board had been established in May 2022 and Professor Hartlev had already presented its excellent work. To ensure the continuity of the proactive and very important work in that area, five seats on that board would be vacated in May 2025, with three members seeking reappointment at that time and two choosing to retire. She thanked Professor Hartlev for her insights. Those reappointments were supported because the members did provide important skills and good demographic diversity to the Independent Ethics Board. The aim was for the right demographic and geographic fit, and at the same time great skills to enhance the work. Therefore, the Nominations Committee suggested that those three candidates continue their work. The independent member and vice-chairman Mary Ang'awa, independent member Pascal Borry and sport movement nominee Marc Theisen were willing to continue. The Nominations Committee proposed that continuation to the Foundation Board for a three-year term commencing in May 2025.

Two members were not seeking reappointment, as mentioned in Professor Hartlev's report: the independent chairman, Professor Hartlev, and the public authority nominee, Regina LaBelle. The call would be launched the following week for the independent member to be put in the air, so to speak, and the aim was to end that process by April 2025. A nomination was also awaited from the public authorities which would then be vetted, in early 2025, and it was hoped that a suggestion could be put to the Foundation Board via a circular, to be approved in April 2025, if there were no objections. Those were the processes that she had mentioned as under way to be launched the following week..

There were three other major processes also under way which would be reported in due course. She thanked the Foundation Board for its support and ideas, and for the managerial understanding to enhance the processes and improve the work of the Nominations Committee.

THE CHAIRMAN thanked Professor Zalaznik. As that item was for decision, he asked whether there were any objections to the reappointment of the following three members of the Independent Ethics Board for a further three-year term, commencing on 19 May 2025: Mary Ang'awa of Kenya, independent member; Pascal Borry of Belgium, independent member, and Marc Theisen of Luxembourg, sport movement member. In the absence of any objections that day, the proposal was that all three members be automatically approved for a further three-year term. He saw no objections, so all three members were automatically approved for a further three-year term commencing on 19 May 2025.

## DECISION

Proposed Independent Ethics Board  
appointments approved.

### - **5.4 Amendments to the WADA Code of Ethics**

THE CHAIRMAN welcomed the Chairman of the Independent Ethics Board, Professor Mette Hartlev from Denmark, to present the proposed amendments to the Code of Ethics.

MS HARTLEV was grateful for the opportunity to briefly introduce the proposed amendments to the WADA Code of Ethics. The WADA Code of Ethics had been approved by the Foundation Board in November 2021 and revised the previous year, in November 2023, based on suggestions by the Independent Ethics Board and the WADA management.

According to article seven of the Code of Ethics, the Independent Ethics Board would, once a year, examine the fundamental principles of article three of the code and determine whether there was a need for amendments, and then report such recommendations to the Foundation Board. That year, the Independent Ethics Board had examined the code together with WADA and found a few issues that needed to be addressed. As stated in the bi-annual report of April and the latest report for that year, which she would present later that day, the Independent Ethics Board had gained important experience with the application of the code during its investigation of cases and also the adjudication of a case. A panel had been appointed to adjudicate a case by the end of the previous year and had recently concluded its final report and decision. That experience of following the case from receiving the complaint until the final step with the report from the panel had given important insights in areas of the code where more clarity was needed, and also where procedural adjustments could be beneficial. Those proposed changes had been first reviewed by the Independent Ethics Board's own sub-committee on the interpretation of the code, and afterwards handed over to WADA and its external legal counsel for review, and it had also made some suggestions. Hence, the amendments under consideration that day were the result of the Independent Ethics Board's and WADA's joint reviews in 2024.

The suggested amendments were set out in the document in the binders. She regretted that the members had received that extensive document rather late, but work had continued on it to the very last minute because there had been new experiences and new insights. She would not go through all of the suggested amendments because the notes to the document contained explanations, but would focus on a few of them. Firstly, ambiguity in the WADA staff definition had been removed. Her only point on that was that it had created some uncertainty as to the scope of the code but that had been rectified. Regarding the good faith and ethical duties requirement, that was an amendment to the existing provision in article 3.8. That article was on page six in the document. It had been felt appropriate to insert such a good faith requirement, to avoid not only malicious complaints, but also complaints that did not have any kind of substance. The task for the Independent Ethics Board would be to try to clarify what the good faith requirement meant more specifically in the information already provided for complainants and others on the website and other places, to make sure that it did not impede complainants filing a complaint in a situation in which they might be under an obligation to file a complaint according to article 3.8. In the same article, a reference was also made to internal policy for staff-related complaints. That was a minor but quite important amendment because the existing wording of the Code of Ethics did not take the special procedures applying to staff members into account. That year, three complaints regarding staff members had been received, demonstrating the need to have a clear legal basis in the Code of Ethics on what to do with such cases and how to hand them over to the staff ombudsman, who would be the person with jurisdiction in those cases. That was also an important amendment to the code.

In article six, on page nine in the document, there was a very small amendment that again enabled the chairman or provided the legal basis for the chairman to inform the WADA director general in cases where provisional measures had been imposed, in connection with the complaint and where there was a need for WADA to respond to that provisional measure. That was of course information that would be provided on a strictly 'need to know' basis because there was normally confidentiality, but provisional measures might be difficult to implement if those who had to respond to them did not know about them.

In article eight, on page ten, part of that clause would be deleted. The original text in the code allowed for application of the code to facts that had occurred prior to its entry into force. That was clearly against a very general but important legal principle of non-retroactivity. Therefore, that would be deleted to bring the code into line with general principles of law.

The Independent Ethics Board also suggested providing the Foundation Board with one annual report instead of two, in line with other committees and boards. At the beginning of its mandate, it had seemed necessary to report to the Foundation Board twice a year to provide comprehensive information about the progress of work, but it was now deemed appropriate to report only once a year.

Furthermore, page 12 contained a suggestion that, in the future, decisions could be made by correspondence, as was also possible for other boards. It had significantly slowed down the adjudication process every time that the Independent Ethics Board had had to make a decision requiring a quorum of seven people at a meeting who had to be convened in different time zones at the same time. The opportunity to make decisions by correspondence would significantly boost the progress of cases.

Finally, there were a number of small clarifications of rules and procedures regarding referral to criminal authorities and the independence of panel members, deliberations, report outcomes and finally investigations, which she would not go through.

To conclude, she strongly supported the recommendation that the Foundation Board approve those amendments and was available for any questions and comments.

THE CHAIRMAN saw no requests for the floor. To conclude that agenda item, he asked the Foundation Board members if they agreed to approving the proposed amendments to the WADA Code of Ethics.

#### DECISION

Proposed amendments to the WADA Code of Ethics approved.

#### - **5.5 Amendments to the WADA governance regulations**

THE DIRECTOR GENERAL noted that the document was in the binders. It primarily concerned aligning the governance regulations that had been approved earlier with documents that the Foundation Board had approved subsequently, namely the election rules for the president and vice-president, and some regulations of the WADA Athlete Council so that all documents were in line, as well as improving some of the language in the document to make it more gender inclusive. He thought they were rather cosmetic changes and adjustments and were shown using the track changes function in the documents in the binders.

THE CHAIRMAN opened the floor for questions and comments.

On behalf of Africa and his colleagues, MR SOBHY appreciated the assistance provided. Efforts were made to assist sports and athletes worldwide which the Africa region appreciated.

THE CHAIRMAN asked the Foundation Board members if they were in agreement to approve the amendments to the WADA governance regulations.

#### DECISION

Proposed amendments to the WADA governance regulations approved.

### **6. Finance**

#### **6.1 Government/IOC contributions**

THE CHAIRMAN noted that an updated document on contributions had been provided to the members on 3 December.

In the absence of the Finance and Administration Committee Chairman, Mr Ser Miang, MS CHUNG greeted the members in person and online. She would give a quick update on contributions. As of 3 December, WADA had received from the public authorities 74.4%, versus 93.4% at the same time the

previous year. About 6.4 million US dollars was yet to be received, mainly from the Europe and Americas regions. The Americas region stood at 47.3% versus 99.3% at the same time the previous year, pending 3.8 million US dollars, mainly from the USA. Europe stood at 82.8%, compared to 89.5% at the same time the previous year. There was still about 2 million US dollars pending from Russia, Belarus, Spain and Greece. As stated at the previous Executive Committee meeting in September, WADA had received 50,000 euros in late June 2024 from Russia in its bank account in Cape Town, which was a partial payment of the 2023 contributions of 1.267 million US dollars. Asia stood at 91%, compared to 94% at the same time the previous year. Contributions were still pending from Kuwait and Lebanon. Africa stood at 49% compared to 52.8% the previous year, pending about 70,000 US dollars. Oceania had remitted 100%. The total additional contribution received was 195,000 US dollars, of which about 83,400 US dollars had come from Japan for capacity development in Asia. Australia had contributed 66,300 US dollars for the Oceania Regional Anti-Doping Organization and the City of Lausanne and Canton of Vaud contributions amounted to 45,500 US dollars for the annual symposium. WADA had also received a final amount of 429,000 euros from the EU, bringing the total received to 1.4 million euros. That was for a two-year project for investigation, intelligence and capacity-building, which she was very pleased to report had been completed and delivered successfully in June 2024. She encouraged those present to make their contributions, if outstanding, and thanked all funders for their contributions.

THE CHAIRMAN opened the floor for comments or questions.

MR BERGE wished to start by thanking His Royal Highness and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for their warm and generous hospitality. He welcomed WADA's budget for 2025, and also the prudent planning for a projection without the contribution of the Russian Federation. Public authorities and governments worldwide understood the need for an effective and sustainable funding model for WADA. That was owed to the athletes and to preserve a true and honest sport. All could believe in the principle of an effective, sustainable funding model for WADA, which was also set out in the UNESCO convention, in which governments had agreed to finance WADA on an equal basis with the sport movement. He recognized the challenge that that principle posed, yet also recognized the careful balance that it entailed. When it came to finding solutions to potential shortfalls in funding for WADA and the current risk of non-payments by public authorities, he appreciated the Director General's reassurance that WADA had prepared for all scenarios, and was currently actively looking into alternative sources of funding. He also appreciated the ongoing work and dialogue between one of the member states and WADA and the sport movement to find a solution to the current impasse. Furthermore, he acknowledged the very valuable work of the working group led by Ms Battaini-Dragoni on the basis of the Cottier report.

MR SOBHY stated that all efforts to increase the financial contribution from Africa would continue to be made henceforth.

## DECISION

Government/IOC contributions update noted.

### - **6.2 2024 quarterly accounts (quarter 3)**

MS CHUNG recalled that the quarterly accounts referred to the year to date, September 2024. Part of the Risk and Audit Committee's responsibilities were to monitor the quarterly financials. The RAC had reviewed the year-to-date September 2024 financials at a virtual meeting on 7 November. At the end of the third quarter, the results showed a total income of 43.8 million US dollars, or 81% of budgeted income from all sources of funding and total operating expenditure of 34.3 million US dollars. Events and meetings had taken place as planned that year, notably, the Annual Symposium, the Executive Committee meeting in Lausanne in March and the Executive Committee meeting in September in Türkiye, and the Global Education Conference held in France on 24 February. Other planned activities and meetings with stakeholders had also been carried out in person or in hybrid mode. After nine months, many departmental expenses had been recorded at below 75%. That was predominantly due to timing, but also due to a prudent approach given the uncertainty of the contribution situation. However, on the legal fee side, there had been an increase in quarter 3 and that was mainly due to the cost related directly and indirectly to the Chinese swimmers' case. She noted that 2.5 million US dollars had been set aside for the litigation reserve as well. Given the current contribution uncertainties, it had been deemed necessary to re-examine expenses yet to



be committed to find ways to reduce costs and to gain operational efficiencies until the year end, and potentially for the following year as well. Hence, some travel for in-person meetings previously planned for the last quarter of the year had been reassessed and reduced and/or converted to virtual meetings. Capital expenditure had reached 2.9 million US dollars, which was about 69% of the revised budget, mainly from ADAMS. The total value of investments at the end of September was 23.6 million US dollars, split between UBS and Lombard, the two main banks, and 95% of the portfolio was in high-quality bonds. WADA continued to invest in secured investments as per the policy of no-risk investment and based on the recommendations of its banks. Interest income after nine months amounted to 667,000 US dollars net of bank fees.

THE CHAIRMAN saw no requests for the floor.

## DECISION

2024 quarterly accounts noted.

### - **6.3 2025 draft budget**

MS CHUNG explained that she had presented the 2025 draft budget as per status quo, including Russia, to the Executive Committee members at the September meeting. The WADA management had been asked by the Executive Committee members at the meeting in September to present the 2025 draft budget excluding the contributions of Russia. The papers provided to the members set out two scenarios: one under the status quo and the other without Russia's contributions.

As background information, in May 2022, the Foundation Board had approved annual contribution increases of 8% for 2023 and 6% for 2024 and for 2025. Following a very robust and thorough budgeting process, as always, WADA had prepared a detailed budget for 2025 that had been presented to the Finance and Administration Committee at its annual meeting in June. Following the key highlights of the 2025 status quo, the total income from all sources of funders was budgeted at 57.5 million US dollars for the year, of which the contributions from the IOC and public authorities were 26.5 million US dollars each. The remaining funds came from Montreal International (2.4 million US dollars), partnership funding with Sword (1.5 million US dollars) and other grants and income from compliance monitoring and laboratory accreditation fees (550,000 US dollars). Total operating expenses were budgeted at 52.8 million US dollars, a net increase of 4% on the revised budget of that year. A few highlights of expenses included scientific research, budgeted at 4.8 million US dollars and representing a 6% annual increase. The key upcoming events in 2025 were the World Conference on Doping in Sport in Busan, Republic of Korea, where the updated World Anti-Doping Code, the Code and international standards would be presented and were planned to be approved.

She noted that the overall running cost for the new governance reform was about 1 million US dollars per year. That was related to additional resources, new members and various bodies such as the Independent Ethics Board, the Athlete Council and the Executive Committee and Foundation Board. The World Anti-Doping Code update project, including the eight international standards, spanned over two years, 2024 and 2025, for an estimated cost of 1.1 to 1.2 million US dollars, which would be covered largely by the money received from the CAS award related to the RUSADA case. It was also planned to use the reserve fund for investigations to cover some of its operations. Staff salaries were adjusted by annual inflation, and the operating surplus was budgeted at 3.7 million US dollars, including all non-cash items. A net surplus of over 200,000 US dollars had been budgeted, which was an improvement compared to that year. With regard to cash from operations, having accounted for capital expenditure, there would be a cash depletion of close to 700,000 US dollars, which was higher than the threshold but still deemed manageable.

Turning to the second scenario that she had mentioned previously, according to the Executive Committee's instructions in September 2024, she would proceed to present the 2025 draft budget excluding Russia's contributions. The management had reviewed the draft budget to assess where modifications could be made to align with the reduced incomes. The total income in the status quo scenario was 57.5 million US dollars, which went down to 54.7 million US dollars excluding Russia's contributions, a reduction of 2.8 million dollars, split equally between the IOC and public authorities. With regard to operating expenses, if everything stayed the same, and of course she was not suggesting that, the bottom line would go from 200,000 US dollars to a negative of 2.6 million dollars on the net deficit. A net deficit of 2.6 million US dollars could not be sustained, so it was necessary to take into account cost reductions. The 2.8 million dollars in

cost reductions in the scenario without Russia resulted in about 221,000 US dollars net surplus, which was practically the same level as in the status quo scenario. With that in mind, to manage the cash depletion, certain principles and cost reduction measures had been applied for that scenario. It was important to recall that the WADA cost structure was largely weighted in terms of fixed costs and commitments; notably, personnel costs, facility costs, insurance, research grants, investigation, athlete engagement, ADAMS, security and all mandatory events and meetings. Those were the principles adhered to when looking into cost reductions, to minimize the direct impact on athletes, optimize current human resources, limit in-person meetings, and seek additional contributions from other stakeholders, including partnership and sponsorship, to support the activities that were not required by the Code. Applying those changes would result in various functions and areas where some reductions or savings could be made, including optimizing departmental structures and better synergy among the groups, which could save 1 million US dollars. Maintaining or cutting back activities to the level of 2024 would generate over 600,000 US dollars of savings. In terms of travel, converting working group meetings from in person to virtual, and reducing travel as well as other reductions in various expenses supporting those functions would amount to about 2.8 million US dollars in savings. Therefore, with all of those cost reductions and taking into account that capital expenditures were maintained mainly on ADAMS, the cash depletion would be at more or less the same level as the status quo: about 678,000 US dollars. The last column showed the same level as that which had been presented to the Finance and Administration Committee in June.

As was known, more serious measures might be needed if the US contributions remained outstanding. Such measures would be broader, but, as the Director General had mentioned earlier that morning, the core activities would be preserved as much as possible, notably, research, ADAMS and athletes. That was the goal.

Lastly, with the previous year's surplus, it had been possible to increase the operating reserves from three months to six months based on current activities. That had been presented and approved by the Finance and Administration Committee.

WADA would work with a reduced budget excluding Russia's contributions for the coming year, but having a full draft budget as a secondary plan would allow WADA to be more flexible and react with agility, strategically and operationally, especially in those uncertain times.

MR ROLLAND appreciated the presentation. On behalf of the sport movement, he wished to express deep concern about the 2025 budget and, more broadly, the risk associated with the uncertainties around the necessary resources needed for the organization to simply pursue its mission in a sustainable way. Indeed, at that very time, significant contributions remained to be paid for 2024 and, unsurprisingly, uncertainty over future contributions had been highlighted as one of the biggest risks by the Risk and Audit Committee in its first report. The sport movement would continue to meet its commitments, and called upon the public authorities to do the same and to contribute according to the agreed commitments. With regard to 2025, at the request of the Executive Committee, two scenarios had been presented: with and without the contribution from Russia. In addition to that, if a positive outcome was still sought by the end of the year, regarding the United States contribution, such a scenario was far from guaranteed as he spoke. The sport movement recommended, therefore, that a contingency plan be drawn up in the event of prolonged funding uncertainties, with a bad or worst-case scenario, where further and significant cuts were inevitable. In such a difficult exercise, he recommended that WADA prioritize and focus on its core mission and key activities. Ms Chung had presented the principles applied, and the Director General had also touched on that particular point earlier that morning when he had responded to questions related to his report and specifically about funding. However, he wondered where additional savings would be found in the event of a worst-case scenario. The sport movement would remain attentive and supportive of the approach that had been explained.

MR TAKEBE stated that, as a Foundation Board member and representative of the public authorities, Japan was deeply concerned about the current challenges that WADA's operations and global anti-doping activities were facing due to the current financial constraints. He thanked the WADA management, the Finance Department and other relevant bodies for their consideration of cost reduction measures and the preparation of the draft budget for 2025 with two scenarios. Japan approved the two budget proposals for 2025. Japan believed it was important for governments to reaffirm and respect the principle and framework

of the co-funding of the WADA budget by public authorities and the sport movement. It was of the utmost importance that athletes be able to participate in clean and fair sports and be protected. Japan would continue to contribute to international discussion and anti-doping activities, both in the Asia region and around the world.

MR NITRAS was pleased to take part in that meeting, which was his first as a member of the WADA Foundation Board representing Europe. He looked forward to the cooperation and discussions, and also wished to thank the honourable hosts, especially His Royal Highness Abdulaziz bin Turki Al Saud, Minister of Sports, for the excellent hospitality. On behalf of the public authorities, he thanked WADA for providing the 2024 quarterly accounts, as well as the information regarding the government and IOC contributions to WADA's 2024 budget. Given the challenges facing the global anti-doping system, it was extremely important that WADA and the world anti-doping system be provided with stable financing. All stakeholders should meet their financial obligations. However, because of the current geopolitical situation, that was almost impossible. It was therefore necessary to approve the two scenarios of the 2025 draft budget. One excluded Russia's contribution, although he still hoped that all stakeholders would pay their contributions. He also noted that WADA's operational reserves would reach the target of the end of 2024. On behalf of the public authorities, he wished to suggest that WADA not accumulate reserves beyond that target. It would also be beneficial if WADA could provide an update on the possible setting up of a new group to study contaminants and information about how its mandate was different from the existing Contaminants Working Group. It was important to avoid duplication between both working groups, taking into consideration the possible financial consequences.

DR TAN echoed the concerns that had been voiced about funding. It was very disappointing from the athletes' perspective to see that there were still governments that had not paid their contributions. He urged all governments that had not done so to fulfil their responsibility and to contribute.

THE DIRECTOR GENERAL wished to respond to the question posed by the minister of Poland. Dr Rabin had explained earlier that day the differences and the idea behind the new working group on contaminants. The task of the current group was to identify those substances that could be considered contaminants as they appeared, and so on. The aim of the new group, in light of the Cottier report, was to take a more holistic approach, from the legal and scientific perspectives, into how that problem would be dealt with in the future. It was a different scope of matter.

In answer to the question on reserves, the reserve level had been made in accordance with the Finance and Administration Committee recommendation. Therefore, there was no intention of going further than that at that time.

THE CHAIRMAN saw no further questions or comments. For the record, he asked the members of the Foundation Board if they approved the two scenarios of the 2025 budget as recommended by the Executive Committee.

## DECISION

Proposed 2025 draft budget approved.

### **7. World Anti-Doping Programme**

#### **- 7.1 2027 Code and international standards update – emerging themes/changes**

THE CHAIRMAN gave the floor to Mr Haynes to present that agenda item.

MR HAYNES greeted the members of the Foundation Board. He would provide a brief update on the 2027 Code and international standards process before handing over to Messrs Sieveking and Young, who would present the latest themes and trends from the 2027 World Anti-Doping Code Update Drafting Team. That year had been a very busy year. It had started with the first drafting phase, before launching a comprehensive stakeholder consultation phase between May and October. The second drafting phase had begun and would run until February 2025, before the launch of the final round of stakeholder consultation. The project was therefore on track and in line with the timeframes that had been published on the WADA website leading up to the World Conference on Doping in Sport at the end of the following year. At the start

of the project, it had been anticipated to be more of an update process. However, due to the quality and breadth of comments received from stakeholders, as well as the input from the Cottier report, the Code and some of the standards were seeing some notable revisions. They would be circulated in a final round of consultation in early 2025 for stakeholders to provide their detailed review and feedback.

From the recent stakeholder consultation phase that had concluded in October, he was very pleased to have received almost 1,900 individual comments (to the Code and the standards) from over 100 unique stakeholders, representing all stakeholder groups from over 40 countries. Those comments were also available on the WADA website. Two encouraging signs from that phase were having received comments from all regions of the world, which was also thanks to the WADA Athlete Engagement team and the Athlete Council. A significant portion of comments had also come from various athlete commissions. During that current drafting phase, work would be conducted on an abridged consultation phase that was more concise and focused on gaining even more feedback from athletes, especially on those requirements within the documents that affected athletes the most. Finally, in 2025, work would commence to generate resources and support initiatives through the Code Implementation and Support programme, which would be designed specifically to assist signatories to implement the 2027 Code and standards into their anti-doping programmes. That concluded his brief update on the project.

MR SIEVEKING stressed that the World Anti-Doping Code was always at the centre of discussions and actions. For example, earlier that morning, the new WADA strategic plan had been presented. The Code review process currently under discussion was flagged in that strategic plan as a key project. In addition, the recommendations of the group led by Ms Battaini-Dragoni on the Cottier report had been presented. Part of the recommendations that the group had made would be implemented in the Code. Hence, the Code was at the centre of work. It was the cornerstone document of the fight against doping. It was therefore WADA's responsibility to ensure that the Code always remained fit for purpose and was adapted to the constantly evolving environment in which WADA operated. The Code update process had started more than a year previously, and that important exercise was well under way, aimed at ensuring that the rules duly and efficiently protected the rights of clean athletes. The Code team was, had been and would be working hard until the World Conference on Doping in Sport in Busan, and it had already convened for more than 100 hours since the beginning of the process, during which time it had been discussing, reviewing and analysing more than 1,000 comments received from stakeholders, including approximately 600 in the current phase, which was the second of three phases. The stakeholders must be thanked for their efforts. The numerous comments received were more than helpful for the Code team to discuss the Code, and also highlighted the fact that the process worked.

Before giving the floor to his friend Mr Young, who would give a precise and more detailed update on the proposed Code changes to date, he stressed that, on human rights, a discussion would be held between the Code team and Ms Snezana Samardžić-Marković to discuss a part of her report on the human rights aspects and the World Anti-Doping Programme. Also, Mr Michael Beloff, a legal expert in human rights, former CAS arbitrator and a King's Counsel, was currently reviewing the proposed changes under the angle of human rights. He was doing so in his important task in replacing the late judge Mr Jean-Paul Costa, who had advised on human rights in the previous two Code reviews.

MR YOUNG was pleased to return to the Foundation Board. He had been present in Copenhagen more than 20 years previously, when that board had approved the first Code, which had subsequently been approved by the sport movement and the public authorities. The promise had been made that the Code would be a living document and, if it was not perfect, further reviews of how it worked in cases when applied by anti-doping organizations and international federations would be conducted approximately every six years. That had been done for the 2019 Code, for the 2015 Code, and again for the 2021 Code. The process was working very well. Taking a legal document that was subject to 2,500 to 3,000 cases a year and asking the whole world for comments on how it worked for them yielded a lot of good information. Hence, the forthcoming version of the Code set down in the next draft would comprise hundreds of changes. Many of those would be very detailed. There were many instances when stakeholders had requested clarification on a very particular situation. However, he would focus that day on eight areas that were either deemed very important by stakeholders or entailed some controversy, because the Code was not WADA's Code, but rather the stakeholders' Code. It was therefore important to know what stakeholders thought about it.

The first area was contamination. In the 20 years plus that the Code had been in effect, it had worked rather well. Cases had not been lost at the European Court of Justice. The Swiss Federal Tribunal had been generally supportive. Arbitrators had enforced the Code in the way expected. The Code had come under strain in the most recent years in contamination cases. There had been contamination cases even before the Code. However, as Dr Rabin had mentioned, laboratories were at that time able to find concentrations at single digit picograms as opposed to double digit nanograms. Therefore, there were more cases of potential contamination at very low levels. Hence, efforts had been made for the Code to deal with the discomfort of arbitrators who otherwise made strange factual findings to come to the results that they could be comfortable with. Many of those were contamination cases. The general rule was currently that, if the contamination was intentional or reckless, the sanction was four years. If it was simply negligent, it was two years. That was the case for a non-specified substance. There were then cases of no significant fault and no fault. The burden was on the athlete to show the origin of the prohibited substance in their sample. There were a lot of quite strong cases where the athlete had a lot of evidence to suggest that they had not doped intentionally, but could not prove origin. Therefore, a scheme had been devised with a four-year ban, a three-year ban and a two-year ban, which were beautifully spelled out in the Code in detail. It set down what happened with a non-specified substance, with a specified substance, with a substance of abuse, when it was or was not possible to show origin, and with degree of fault. It took about two hours to read through carefully and made perfectly good sense. However, he was the first to confess that it was not very readable. Comments to that effect had been received and work would be done to make that part more readable. As the world of contamination evolved, there was a new definition. Instead of 'contaminated product', which worked perfectly well for dietary supplements and the like, the alternative term 'contaminated source' had been introduced that applied to things like water and different kinds of compound pharmacy preparations. It applied to the most recent series of cases involving bodily contact, of kissing a person in a bar or shaking hands. That was the new group of cases emerging and that would be included in 'contaminated source'. The Director General had mentioned that a new working group would be formed on contaminations. The existing Working Group on Contaminants, comprising scientists and lawyers, whose expertise was not as broad and did not entail social sciences, had been in place for some six or seven years and had dealt with drugs in meat such as clenbuterol, zeranol and zilpaterol, and contaminants and diuretics and masking agents. Henceforth, it would be possible to set a threshold, known as a minimum reporting level, under which a result would be reported as an atypical finding instead of an adverse analytical finding.

The next area was substances of abuse. Based on the comments received both at the end of the drafting process for the 2021 Code and in the current drafting process, that seemed to be the 2021 change with which stakeholders were most happy. It dealt with athletes who were concerned that they would be facing a possible four-year ban for a marijuana case or a cocaine case. It also dealt with the concern of anti-doping organizations, be they NADOs or international federations, that a significant part of the budget should not be spent arguing over what the sanction ought to be in the case of marijuana. The aim was to go after the systematic dopers, and work had therefore continued along those lines. In 2021, it had been a three-year period of ineligibility, which could be reduced to one year on completion of a rehabilitation programme. The anti-doping organizations had pointed out that an athlete could not complete a rehabilitation programme in one month. Therefore, it had been changed to two months with no rehabilitation requirement. In the event of a second violation, it was a longer period of ineligibility, but that could be reduced to two months with rehabilitation.

The third area was a new definition of operational independence. An important principle throughout the evolution of the Code and the fight against doping was that it is not perceived as the fox guarding the henhouse. That was where the concept of independence came in. Nobody was saying that a government could not fund an anti-doping agency, but the requirement would be operational independence. Much feedback had been received on that. There was always a risk of perfect becoming the enemy of good in a proposal. Some things simply would not work for a significant number of stakeholders, and it was important to hear that, and to hear the cost/benefit from stakeholders. However, the current discussion was on the prohibition of an anti-doping organization, or a NADO, in particular, delegating a significant or any part of their doping control responsibilities to, for example, national federations. That might be a problem for some countries. There were also limitations on who could sit on a board in terms of operational oversight of budgets and cases, when that person also had a role in the operation of sport or government organizations



related to sport. That would need to be fine-tuned and it was acknowledged that in some countries there was not a big pool of people to fill a NADO board. That was problematic. He called upon the members to get in contact if that was the case. It would then be possible to examine how to make it work. The same applied to NADOs that were parts of governments.

With regard to timing, the procedure in the real world was supposed to be that an athlete provided a sample, and the laboratory was supposed to send the report in 20 days. When it came to the report, if the laboratory reported the athlete as having a positive test and an adverse analytical finding, three things had to be checked by the ADO. Did the athlete have a therapeutic use exemption? Was there a permitted use of that substance? The athlete could have tested positive because some substances were permitted by one route of administration as opposed to another. Finally, the ADO was supposed to look at the laboratory report and the sample collection report and see if there were any obvious mistakes. After that, it was supposed to promptly notify the athlete of the adverse analytical finding and tell them that they could have the B test and that they had a right to explain, etc. The inclusion of the word 'promptly' had not been very effective and there were sometimes very significant delays in that process. Hence, the next draft would state that the deadline was 21 days from receipt of the adverse analytical finding to notify the athlete. Related to that, when dealing with non-specified substances, was the imposition of a mandatory provisional suspension. He thought that the next draft would set down the obligation to impose a mandatory provisional suspension for a non-specified substance when the notification was issued. Many of the larger organizations that already did that appreciated feedback on whether that worked. It was important that athletes in different countries and different sports be treated the same way. That was not the case at that time. In terms of the charge, there was no deadline. However, if the athlete was already subject to a mandatory provisional suspension or an optional provisional suspension when it was not a non-specified substance, the onus was on the athlete to act quickly. If the athlete could prove contamination or some other justification for no cause, the ball was in their court to have that resolved promptly, as opposed to them having an advantage of dragging it out.

Finally, what happened when a provisional suspension was imposed by a major event organization and then the event was over? Was there a gap until the international federation went through the process and imposed a provisional suspension? It was stated as such in the first draft. However, the recent feedback was that it made sense for the major event organization provisional suspension to continue. However, when the athlete argued that the suspension should be lifted, it would be addressed to the international federation.

On substantial assistance and other valuable information, the fairly consistent feedback was that substantial assistance was a wonderful tool that was not being used enough. Therefore, efforts had been made to loosen the terms of what was required for substantial assistance to see if that helped to deal with the issue. Another concept had been introduced, known as other valuable information and assistance in the effort to eliminate doping in sport, which dealt with that situation. For example, if a chemist who was also a cyclist figured out a way to use EPO that was not detectable and he could do that by himself, he could not get substantial assistance for giving WADA or an ADO that information, because he was not blowing the whistle on somebody else. However, he could get a 15% reduction under the new article that had been drafted.

On public disclosure, there were two sides to the argument, with the trump card coming in at the end. Athletes had said that it was not right to disclose their names in connection with an anti-doping rule violation because, if they turned out to be innocent, that bell had already been rung and people thought they were dopers. They argued that, no sooner was there public disclosure that an athlete was involved in an anti-doping case, it caused irreparable injury. That was one side. The other side was perhaps the majority view of the public authorities and the anti-doping agency community, particularly in light of the Chinese swimmers' case. Credibility depended on transparency. The way to achieve transparency was to report everything, so there could be no accusation of a cover-up. The Code review team would need feedback on which way to go on those two issues.

And finally, there was the trump card, which was data protection. There was a case before the European Court of Justice at that time. The issue was that, even after an athlete had lost on appeal, did it still violate data privacy for that athlete's name to be published in connection with the facts of a doping case? He thought that was extreme. The current trend was towards provisional suspensions. Publication was optional, but not

mandatory. For most other decisions, except when the athlete was exonerated, it was optional. After a decision was made, it became mandatory. He appreciated that that would be more in line with the athletes' view. The European Court of Justice was expected to rule on that before the end of 2025. That decision might change whatever the stakeholders thought was the right decision. He reiterated that it was not the review team's Code or WADA's Code. It was the stakeholders' Code and the review team therefore needed to hear from all those present. The team particularly needed to hear from the athletes and the people who were administering those rules on what worked and what did not.

With regard to protected persons and minors, when it came to doping in sport, it was particularly hard to see an athlete who was a protected person or a minor testing positive when it was clear they had not acted alone. It was clear that there was somebody in the entourage. He would not talk much about that, but one example in figure skating was seeing Kamila Valieva sitting there with her coach crying. It was a really bad look for sport. There were already a number of provisions in the Code on athlete support personnel and a protected person. There would be a new provision under which, if a minor tested positive, the coach would have to be investigated. However, more could be done, and he would give a couple of ideas on what else could be done, but encouraged more feedback on that. The issue was that, when more was done, it usually put a burden on somebody to do something else. As ever, it was possible to come up with all sorts of great ideas, but there was a cost/benefit of that extra work for the IF or NADO. One idea was mandatory education for coaches, the mandatory requirement of coaches to educate their athletes, and particularly protected persons and minors, on the risks of inadvertent doping. That entailed explaining the rules, the reasons why athletes could not cheat, and the risks of inadvertent doping. That was mandatory education. That would go under role and responsibility. It would need to be enforced somehow. It was not an anti-doping rule violation. Therefore, it would need to be enforced either through a code of conduct of the IF or the NOC or the national federation. He thought it was a good idea, but it also created more work for the sport movement. Another idea was tracking coaches and athlete support personnel so that when they moved from country to country, checks could be performed. He had been working on the issue of sexual abuse of athletes for the past 15 years and there were lists of athlete support persons who had been suspended for sexual abuse. It was possible to go online and see whether a parent wanted their child to be coached by that person. Rotten apples were not able to move from club to club because all of the information was online. However, it placed another burden on the anti-doping organizations and the IFs.

MR SIEVEKING encouraged those present and all other stakeholders to continue to provide feedback. The process was at the midway point before the meeting in Busan. As he had mentioned, almost 1,000 comments had been received on the Code, which contributed to the work and thoughts of the review team. Meetings had already been held with a number of stakeholders. He urged members to get in contact if they had a specific issue or topic to discuss with the team.

MR YOUNG informed the members that everything that was submitted was read. If members wished to suggest specific language, it would make the job of the review team easier. Eight areas had been touched upon. He would be happy to answer any questions on those areas or anything else.

MS HIRAI wished to express her gratitude to His Royal Highness Prince Abdulaziz bin Turki Al Saud for his warm hospitality and, on behalf of the NADO EAG, acknowledged the process to date, including the considerable number of comments provided by NADOs and other stakeholders during the past consultation phase. She encouraged the NADOs and other stakeholders to continue to be actively engaged in the ongoing process.

MR MATESA thanked Mr Young for the detailed presentation and for drawing attention to the key topics of the Code review process, which was extremely important. He would mention only protected persons and minors, which was a very complicated and sensitive part of the Code. There was a very thin line between the protection of children and the interest of fair play, and balancing that was a huge challenge for all, including for WADA. However, he wanted to convey a very clear message to confirm the full support of the sport movement for the clarification of the proposal in relation to protected persons and minors, and to avoid any misinterpretation by arbitration panels, because it was extremely important for the future and because there had been some cases in the past which were not aligned.

DR TAN had a comment on the process of the Code review. The Athlete Council had been heavily involved since the beginning, and thanked the review team for its openness and readiness to receive

feedback. There was still a lot of work to be done, according to the presentation. Going forward, the Athlete Council was keen to continue giving feedback and input. He encouraged the review team to reach out to the Athlete Council when there were specific issues to address. He was also pleased to hear that morning that the outcomes of the Cottier report would be included in the Code.

MS WLOSZCZOWSKA firstly wished to express gratitude for the very intense and detailed consultations. As Dr Tan had mentioned, the athletes had been involved in that and truly appreciated it. In particular, she wished to thank all those who had taken the time and made the effort to read the Code and give feedback, as it was not an easy task for non-lawyers. On behalf of the sport movement, she wished to highlight the importance of strengthening measures targeting athlete support personnel. It was necessary to increase the accountability of the athlete entourage. To do so, she recommended strengthening sanctions on athlete entourage and the capacity of ADOs to sanction the entourage. Education had been mentioned and she also recommended introducing an obligation to record registered athlete support personnel within ADAMS or another database that would be available for ADOs. As the Code was pretty complex and difficult to document, on behalf of the athletes, she would really appreciate at the end of the change process a summary of those changes that affected athletes and communicating them in a targeted and simpler way so that the community could fully understand them.

MR BERGE said that he would read a statement prepared by Finland and Minister Bergqvist. First of all, he wished to thank WADA for the update on the 2027 Code and the international standards, while noticing that the International Standard for Code Compliance by Signatories had not been included in that package. Europe looked forward to the draft ISCCS to be provided in 2025. Europe recalled the continued support for a limited update of the Code and standards. He thanked WADA for the verbal update and the key changes and emerging themes and trends arising from the second round of consultations. Of course, when creating and drafting new laws, other norms or even non-legislative initiatives by a government, the process should always include an impact assessment, normally on the economic, social and environmental impact, and from the very beginning of the process. That was not only a key part of better law making or better regulation, but also relevant to achieving objectives in that aim to be most efficient and most effective. To put that in the anti-doping context, it meant increasing the effectiveness of global anti-doping activities in a sustainable and successful way. All could probably agree that that was the common goal. European representatives had requested that WADA include the impact assessment in the Code and standards update process. Unfortunately, no impact assessment had yet been provided by WADA. However, he requested that such assessment be made on the financial and human resources and shared with the stakeholders before the third round of consultation.

Finally, he appreciated the information given on the Chinese swimmers' contamination case, the update and proposals made by the Executive Committee working group, and was pleased to hear that the recommendations concerning the Code and standards had been included in the consultation process with stakeholders.

MR SOBHY was grateful for the presentation. Regarding drug use, he thought it was very common, especially among footballers. He thought there was something relating to in-competition use and another for out-of-competition use. They started taking substances for energy and then became addicted. He requested that research be carried out into that.

MR LAPPARTIENT spoke on behalf of the Olympic Movement regarding the International Standard for Code Compliance by Signatories. The sport movement welcomed the Compliance Review Committee policy of applying consequences regarding the flag only if non-compliance remained after one year, and recommended that the practice be clarified under the standard. The sport movement also supported increased flexibility regarding the watch list principle, allowing a range from four to nine months as had been presented. Furthermore, the Olympic Movement wished to make three points. The first one was that sanctions under the ISCCS must strictly meet the principle of proportionality, with the most severe consequences applying only as a last resort. The second was that sanctions must first and foremost affect the institution responsible for the non-compliance and not other groups of stakeholders. Thirdly, the sport movement also recommended introducing a mechanism providing the possibility for sanctions to be gradually reduced as the signatory made progress in rectifying non-compliance.

MR YOUNG responded that he would refer to Mr Haynes for the compliance question and would answer all the others in reverse order. The difference between in-competition tests and out-of-competition tests had been set out in the Code from day one. It had an impact on matters such as substance abuse, where it was the athlete's job to show that the substance had been taken out of competition and was unrelated to sport performance. Sometimes it would be hard, and something like cocaine was not so hard because of whether the parent was there or just the metabolite.

Regarding stronger sentences for athlete support personnel, some action had been taken. There was already a provision for administration, for example. It was tougher for athlete support personnel, but one of the changes made was for complicity. It normally started at two years and went up; but, if a protected person or minor was involved, it started at four years.

Substantial assistance had been changed. It had previously comprised a percentage of whatever the sanction would otherwise have been. That was not a great idea because the worse the violation, the greater the percentage. Therefore, the yardstick had been changed to the value of the substantial assistance and specific language had been added to the effect that, if doping of a protected person or a minor was involved, it was particularly valuable. That was another way to try to get athlete support personnel. A database of athlete support personnel who had been involved with minors or protected persons who had tested positive was widely welcomed. Again, feedback would be appreciated from stakeholders on the resources required and the burden compared to the benefit of that. For anyone who cared a lot about athlete support personnel and doping minors, that was something that would help.

Regarding impact assessment, that was part of what the project was all about when feedback was received. He did not have specific dollars and cents that would be different from one NADO to another, or one international federation to another, or a big NADO to a small NADO. However, he could assure members that significant impact assessment information was received from the stakeholders in the form of statements on what would cost a lot of money and what would force resources in a particular direction. It was an impact assessment that had helped support the introduction of substances of abuse, because NADOs had said that a significant part of their resources was being spent on the length of sanction in marijuana cases when that money ought to be spent going after doping conspiracies. That had been a very clear impact assessment from the NADOs. The process was not comparable to building a bridge and doing an environmental impact assessment. That kind of information was not available, but there had been very good feedback from stakeholders on issues that would cost a lot of money and would cause them to reprioritize resources. Similarly, smaller organizations sometimes stated that an idea might be great for the big organizations, but they had a very limited pool of people and resources. Smaller organizations had to do testing locally, so it would have a big impact if the rules on that were changed. Therefore, there was solid impact information because stakeholders did not hesitate to share their ideas. If a measure would cost them more than they perceived the value for anti-doping to be, they reported that.

MR HAYNES responded on the International Standard for Code Compliance by Signatories to confirm that those areas that had been raised the previous day and that day regarding sanctions and the extension of watch lists for legislation cases were currently being reviewed by the drafting team, and there would be an updated version of the standard the following year for stakeholder consultation.

#### DECISION

2027 Code and international standards update noted.

### **8. Permanent special and standing committee annual reports**

Before giving the floor to the various committee chairmen, THE CHAIRMAN noted that the agenda contained an annual update to Foundation Board members by the respective chairmen on their work in 2024 at each annual Foundation Board meeting.

#### **- 8.1 Athlete Council**

MR PINI was pleased to give a brief presentation on the Athlete Council's year which was an extension of the documents that had been provided. He wished to acknowledge the athletes and the former athletes

in the room and the reason why all were there. The Athlete Council had held formal meetings according to the terms of reference, in March in person, in July virtually, in October virtually, and two days previously there in Riyadh. The two main areas of focus, in terms of specific Athlete Council activities, had been to review the terms of reference, which had been completed and updated and published in May. Other key focuses had been to develop an action plan to guide activities that year and into the following, which he would touch on presently. In addition to the formal Athlete Council meetings, all outcomes had been published on WADA's website. A lot had been achieved with the action items. Many informal and specific topics had been discussed. For example, he and Ms Ahrens had had regular monthly meetings with the Athlete Engagement team to discuss salient matters and joint projects that year. Several additional meetings had been held on the case of the 23 Chinese swimmers, as well as several meetings with the Athlete Engagement and WADA executive teams. The Athlete Council had issued a statement on that matter. It had responded to all athlete groups that had written to it and had held global athlete calls to provide information to athletes on that matter and to answer any questions. In addition to that, he was part of the working group that had been tasked with turning the findings outlined in the Cottier report and the World Aquatics report into recommendations and a pathway. The initial report had been presented at the Executive Committee the previous day. In his capacity as liaison on the IOC athletes' commission, he had also been attending additional meetings along with global athlete calls. In the athlete-centred initiatives, members of the advisory group continued to be involved in the initial human rights impact assessment. The Athlete Council was looking forward to being able to present the final version of that at the World Conference on Doping in Sport in Busan in December the following year.

That year, the Athlete Council had continued to support the Ombuds programme and the athlete anti-doping Ombuds Ms Anna Thorstenson. After the Executive Committee had approved the extension of the pilot project, recognizing that the Ombuds programme and the services offered by the Ombuds were highly important to the athlete community, the Athlete Council Vice-Chair Ms Ahrens had joined the Ombuds Advisory Committee, which contributed to the promotion of the Ombuds programme and supported the development of the long-term plan. The Athlete Council was extremely pleased that the Executive Committee had approved the continuation of the programme. He thanked all those involved and Ms Ahrens for her continued involvement in the Ombuds Advisory Committee.

For the Athlete Council, the Code and international standards update process was a crucial opportunity for athletes. As such, the Athlete Council wanted to ensure that athlete feedback and insight would remain prioritized and included as part of the process. In collaboration with WADA's athlete engagement and compliance teams, the Athlete Council had hosted a webinar to inform and encourage athletes to participate in that important process. Led by Athlete Council member Ms Clare Egan, the Athlete Council had met with drafting teams and provided feedback in WADA Connect. It would continue to think of ways to engage athletes in that process through the final consultation phase and would, of course, make sure the Athletes' Anti-Doping Rights Act was updated alongside with the Code and international standards.

He was very proud to report that the Athlete Council had developed a 2024-2025 action plan. That plan aligned with the incoming WADA strategic plan 2025-2029, as well as some of the objectives of the WADA Athlete Engagement Impact Area. He was also pleased to mention that the Athlete Council had been consulted on several occasions regarding the development of the WADA strategic plan, and was very happy that many of the strategic priorities remained athlete-centred. The Athlete Council looked forward to helping WADA achieve its goal. He thanked Ms Taillefer, who had consulted with the Athlete Council to develop the strategic plan with WADA and the athlete-centred priority, as well as for her guidance in developing the Athlete Council action plan. The Athlete Council plan had identified four main goals it wanted to achieve by the end of 2025. For each goal, it had identified specific activities, timeframes, and responsible people, and the completion of those activities and how it would measure success. He looked forward to reporting on that progress each year.

The most fun part had to do with athlete engagement at major events, and there were also independent observer teams, which were part of those major events as well. The Athlete Council had also participated in the Youth Winter Olympic Games in January in Gangwon in Korea. Ms Clare Egan had been a member of the Athlete Engagement team and that event had been delivered in collaboration with the ITA. The Athlete Council had also participated actively in the WADA Annual Symposium held in March earlier that year. The



Olympic Games had been held in France and Ms Adriana Escobar and Ms Dora Hegyi had been members of the Athlete Engagement team, and Mr Iñaki Gomez had been a member of the Independent Observer team. At the Paralympic Games, Mr Ivan Ćosić had been a member of the Athlete Engagement team and Mr Patrick O'Leary, a Foundation Board member, had been a member of the Independent Observer team. He thanked the IOC, the IPC and the athlete commissions and the athlete departments involved for the inclusion of the WADA athlete booth at both of those major events.

While on that topic of the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games, he wished to congratulate Athlete Council members Ms Ella Sabljak, Ms Kristen Kit and Ms Jitske Visser on their participation as active athletes and also winning medals in their respective events.

A number of athlete forums had also been attended, and he had joined the Oceania athlete forum in Fiji in October and provided a high-level overview of the activities of the WADA Athlete Council. Ms Kit had engaged with athletes at the Panam Sports athlete forum and Ms Terho had also been in attendance at both of these meetings as well as other forums throughout the year.

To highlight the extent of activity that the Athlete Council had been involved in, Ms Maja Wloszczowska had joined the Council of Europe conference of sports ministers meeting held in October in Porto, where she had represented the WADA Athlete Council, and her remarks had been made under the title 'When it comes to collaborative governing, is it time to adapt the rules of the game?' Ms Wloszczowska had given introductory remarks and then participated in the panel discussion. Athlete Council member Ms Emma Tehro had attended the IF forum in Lausanne in October, where she had been on a panel discussing the importance of the athletes' voice in anti-doping matters. Ms Gaby Ahrens had participated and co-hosted the Athletes' Anti-Doping Ombuds webinar, with over 400 participants. He personally had attended virtually in Oceania the sports ministers meeting hosted in Samoa on anti-doping and provided an overview of the Athlete Council activities. Most recently, he was very proud to report that, the previous day, members of the Athlete Council on their day off had hosted a session at a school there in Riyadh with schoolchildren.

Governance did, therefore, matter. While the Athlete Council wanted to have an impact with athletes from all around the world, it also wanted to ensure that the impact was felt within WADA. It was important to work together and to continue to be active members of several important committees. He sat on the Executive Committee. Dr Yuhuan Tan and Mr Patrick O'Leary, who were in the room that day, sat on the Foundation Board. Ms Dora Hegyi was a member of the Education Committee and Ms Kristen Kit of the Finance and Administration Committee. Another member would be elected early in the following year for the Health, Medical and Research Committee. For the Compliance Review Committee, Ms Renae Domaschenz was not an Athlete Council member, as per the rules on independence but was appointed as athlete voice. The following week, the election of group two members for the 2025 Athlete Council would be held, resulting in eight members joining the Athlete Council. He wished all the athletes involved in that the best. He also took the opportunity to thank the members who were ending their term that month: Ms Kristen Kit, Ms Alessia Zecchini and Ms Clare Egan. Their contributions had been invaluable and, while their terms had ended, he hoped that he could reach out to them and keep them engaged. With some members ending their terms and depending on the results of the upcoming election, the need to replace some members in the appointment process in 2025 would be reviewed. In addition, Ms Jitske Visser had finished her term on the IPC athletes' commission at the conclusion of the Paralympic Games in Paris. For that reason, her role on the WADA Athlete Council had also come to an end, and he thanked her for all of her work and incredible involvement in the Athlete Council. The IPC had just the previous week confirmed that Ms Yujiao Tan, who was a para-athlete from China, would be the new IPC representative on the WADA Athlete Council. He looked forward to welcoming her.

In closing, he thanked all members of the WADA Athlete Council for their contribution to clean sport and including their work in different projects and representing the Athlete Council in different avenues, and for making him look good. He also thanked WADA and the Athlete Engagement team for their ongoing support in prioritizing athlete matters. Such collaboration continued to strengthen the athlete voice globally.

MR O'LEARY thanked Mr Pini for the work he was doing and for how he represented the Athlete Council and how he included the other members by informing them of what was happening in the Executive Committee. He also thanked Ms Karine Henrie and Ms Stacy Spletzer for their fabulous support.

MS ZHANG appreciated the leadership and great report on the activities of the Athlete Council. She wanted to take that opportunity to underline, on behalf of the sport movement, the importance of ensuring proper communication with the athletes. As a member of the Foundation Board and the Athlete Council, progress in that area had been seen in the past year, but she believed that improvements could continue to be made to ensure communication that was accessible to athletes in the future.

THE CHAIRMAN saw no more requests for the floor. On behalf of WADA, he thanked Mr Pini for his report and thanked all of the members of the Athlete Council. During that year, the members had been extremely engaged in all areas, and WADA was very proud of that engagement. It was a very valuable attitude and they helped hugely to better understand the perspective of athletes, during the Olympic Games, the Paralympic Games, on many committees, and in many areas. He hoped that good work for the athletes would continue. It was something to be proud of.

## DECISION

Athlete Council update noted.

### - **8.2 Compliance Review Committee**

MR GOURDJI greeted His Royal Highness and the members of the Foundation Board. The paper provided a summary of the main activities undertaken by the Compliance Review Committee in 2024. Over the past year, the Compliance Review Committee had been quite busy since the previous report to the Foundation Board. It had met four times that year, twice in person and twice virtually with the WADA management. For each meeting, the Compliance Review Committee had held in-camera sessions to review documentation and discuss decisions. Additionally, efforts had been made to document and enhance the Compliance Review Committee internal operations by establishing procedures to ensure consistency and standardization in how the Compliance Review Committee functioned. At each Compliance Review Committee meeting, it had reviewed cases of non-compliance and received updates on any developments concerning non-compliant signatories. In total, it had reviewed 19 cases of non-compliance, of which 15 had eventually been presented to the Executive Committee for decision. Beyond those meetings, it had also maintained regular oversight with updates on non-compliant signatories provided roughly every two weeks by the WADA task force. The summary in the document submitted to the Foundation Board included a list of signatories that were currently non-compliant.

In addition, the Compliance Review Committee received updates on signatories placed on the watch list and the progress they were making. Following the Executive Committee meeting the previous day, there were at that time eight signatories on the watch list, essentially meaning they had four months from the time of an Executive Committee decision to implement critical corrective actions. Otherwise, automatic consequences agreed by the Executive Committee would come into effect. There were currently three signatories whose cases had been referred to the Court of Arbitration for Sport, namely the NADOs of Russia, Nigeria and Venezuela. The Compliance Review Committee received updates on those NADOs regularly. Another CAS case concerning the South African NADO had been recently withdrawn following the adoption of the required legislation aligned with the WADA Code.

For most of the year, the Compliance Review Committee had continuously reviewed the progress being made on the anti-doping programme implemented by the Ukraine NADO and the testing of Ukrainian athletes who were still competing. A couple of months previously, after careful review, the Compliance Review Committee had agreed with the WADA management's recommendation to close the compliance procedure for the Ukraine NADO.

With respect to standards, the Compliance Review Committee provided input to the revision of standard related to compliance. That year, it had contributed to the current version of the standard, which had come into force in April 2024, as well as the updated version, which was scheduled to come into force in 2027.

The Compliance Review Committee continued to play a key role in providing guidance and oversight to WADA's compliance programme. It was satisfied with the progress and the maturity of the programme. It had also been actively involved in WADA's compliance risk management system, which had been in place for two years. Together, risk registers were compared to identify new or emerging risks and agree on

mitigation strategies. Additionally, it had monitored WADA's progress in achieving its 2024 annual plan, which included its strategic objectives and targets.

Finally, the Compliance Review Committee had endorsed the Compliance Task Force proposed signatory audit plan for 2025.

At that time, he wanted to acknowledge two Compliance Review Committee members: Ms Barbara Leishman, who was his vice-chairman and an independent member, and Mr Tom Dillon, representing the sport movement. Both had reached the end of their terms, having served since the inception of the Compliance Review Committee back in 2015. Their expertise, knowledge and professionalism had greatly benefited the Compliance Review Committee and they would be missed. However, with the Executive Committee decision the previous day, he looked forward to welcoming the two new members in 2025. That concluded his report.

## DECISION

Compliance Review Committee update noted.

### - **8.3 Independent Ethics Board**

PROFESSOR HARTLEV noted that, on behalf of the Independent Ethics Board, she was very grateful for the opportunity to present the second biannual report to the distinguished members of the Foundation Board, and also to give a brief update of activities and some insights into future priorities.

She recalled that the Independent Ethics Board had been established in 2021 following the governance reform and the adoption of the Code of Ethics, and the members had been appointed by the end of May 2022. She showed a list of the current composition of the Independent Ethics Board. In terms of activities, it met virtually every four to six weeks for two hours normally, to keep up with ongoing commitments. In addition, that autumn it had held a nine-hour virtual meeting spread out over three days in one week to be able to focus on the development of various documents. As she had already reported when she had introduced the amendments to the Code of Ethics, a lot of experience had been gained during that mandate year through investigations and the management and adjudication of cases. That had resulted, among other things, in a review of the Code and suggestions for amendments to the Code which had been approved by the Foundation Board that day. A lot had also been learned about cases that concerned complaints regarding staff members, which followed a completely different pathway, and non-staff members. Among other things, more information about the different complaint pathways was needed on the reporting platform, on the website and in the Code of Ethics so that complainants were aware that complaints about a staff member followed a different procedure to that outlined in the Code of Ethics. Lessons were being learned from those experiences. The nine-hour meeting had been spent developing some documents, with a process mapping and also more specific procedural guidelines for the entire case management process. In that respect, the board had also profited from the very smooth and valuable collaboration with the WADA Ethics Officer, Mr Gautier Aubert, who was responsible for investigating cases.

In addition to being engaged in case management, election scrutineers had also been appointed. Ms Emma Johnson had served as the election scrutineer for the Athlete Council election that autumn, and Ms Ana Tuiketei had been appointed for the upcoming election of the president and the vice-president.

In addition to being engaged in case management and surveying elections, the task of the Independent Ethics Board was to provide information and education about the Code of Ethics so that a culture of ethics within WADA could be nurtured. As of the following year, there would be a newly developed e-learning module in ADEL. The Independent Ethics Board and especially its Sub-committee on Communications and Education had worked very closely together with the Education Department to develop that e-learning module, which would be for all WADA officials to complete once it had been finished and published, and also part of the annual governance information package, which was received every year.

She warmly thanked the Education Department for its very dedicated and extremely professional work on that module, and Ms Samantha Dubois for coordinating that process. She had tested the module some weeks previously and had looked at it the previous day again and was very impressed. It was a very interactive and inspiring e-learning module that she would briefly demonstrate shortly.

Firstly, she would also say that another new aspect to be introduced in 2025 was the opportunity for the Foundation Board or the Executive Committee or other the WADA committees to profit from the Independent Ethics Board's insight into the Code of Ethics in a training session, either during a meeting or one specially organized for the members of those committees. Past experience of doing so had been positive. A session had been provided to staff in 2023, and the Independent Ethics Board would be more than happy to provide such training sessions for other bodies in WADA.

She would briefly demonstrate the e-learning module. The overarching idea of that e-learning module was how to create a culture of ethics. The focus was on all levels, from the overall organizational level to ethics in very specific and concrete situations. It was very interactive. It was possible to click and flip and learn through those exercises. Users were also confronted with different kinds of case and situation in which they had to assess if anything unethical was going on and what kind of ethical problem there was in a particular case. It enabled reflection upon one's own understanding of ethics and so forth. She was deeply impressed with the work of the Education Department and the collaboration between the Independent Ethics Board's sub-committee and the Education Department on that module, and was looking forward to it being published and seeing how it would work in practice and how the members would experience it. That concluded her intervention.

MR KASAPOĞLU welcomed the second biannual report for 2024, and thanked Professor Hartlev for that detailed report.

THE CHAIRMAN saw no more requests for the floor.

#### DECISION

Independent Ethics Board update noted.

#### - **8.4 Nominations Committee**

THE CHAIRMAN recalled that the Chairman of the Nominations Committee, Ms Diane Smith-Gander, had been unavailable to attend the meeting in person due to a travel conflict. Nominations Committee member Professor Maja Zalaznik would therefore provide the report.

PROFESSOR ZALAZNIK greeted the President and the distinguished members of the Foundation Board. It was her pleasure and honour to report on behalf of the chairman, Ms Smith-Gander, who could not be there that day. On behalf of the committee, she appreciated the opportunity to share the work and processes of the Nominations Committee in 2024, as well as what remained of that year and the forthcoming year. With regard to composition, there were three independent members, one representative of the sport movement and herself, the representative of the public authorities. Those processes were being established in the area of nominations due to the better governance of WADA and in line with all of the processes to increase quality. The members were skilled, had great capacity and understood WADA's processes and growth.

Certain processes had been carried out and were going on in the Independent Ethics Board, as had been approved earlier by the Foundation Board. Messrs Nicholas Griffin and Andrew Ryan from the sport movement, had just been recommended by the Nominations Committee for appointment to the CRC, and that had been discussed the previous day in the Executive Committee. There was another process going on concerning reappointments in the Nominations Committee itself and further work on positions on the Independent Ethics Board. As members could see, some appointment proposals had already been confirmed and some were still on the table, but with the support and understanding of the Foundation Board, and if the members agreed with the recommendations, she hoped that the processes would end as soon as possible.

Regarding the work of the Nominations Committee the previous year and that particular year, one in-person meeting had been held in Lausanne as well as four virtual meetings. The purpose of those meetings was mostly to assess the performance of the committee and to see whether all actions and work scheduled for the year had been completed. It was important to enhance insights into understanding of the requirements set down by the WADA management or governance processes. It was crucial to attend the WADA Annual Symposium and, as previously mentioned by the Athlete Council, the focus was on athlete-centricity. Many consultations had been carried out with the chairmen of key WADA bodies, for which she

was very grateful, as they provided more insights into the work, skills and capacity-building needs in those committees. The Nominations Committee had also, in line with the talks and interviews with the chairmen and members, allocated the work for 2024 and 2025.

With regard to the forthcoming year and current year, there would be elections for the president and vice-president. The process of reviewing and vetting the candidates would take place between February and March. The Independent Ethics Board had already been mentioned, and there was one independent member who should be nominated by May 2025. The dates referred to the end of the terms of the members and the public authority nominee also in May 2025. Another committee was the Risk and Audit Committee, and that process was expected to end during that year, before the end of September, which was the time the mandate would be ending.

Also, for the Executive Committee, there were two independent members, and a process would of course need to be launched.

There were also different groups within the Athlete Council, and there was one appointment, which was for the Athlete Council Appointment Panel, also in process until the end of 2025, and the Compliance Review Committee, with two independent members ending their mandate at the end of the year, as well as the public authority nominee.

Also, the standing committees chairs positions would end in 2025, and there would be the process of vetting three committee chairmen. Therefore, 2025 would be quite a dynamic year for the Nominations Committee. However, she was sure that, with the support of the management, the group and the team, especially Ms Withers and Ms Dubois, supporting all the work, which was highly appreciated, the work would be completed on schedule and in terms of content, thereby enlarging the pool of respectable candidates, which was the major purpose of the work. The aim was to ensure skilled capacity-building and dedicated people, which, as had been stated by the committees and the Foundation Board, was always a challenge. She believed that, together with WADA's support, the Nominations Committee could perform its role properly.

THE CHAIRMAN thanked Professor Zalaznik for the excellent work and engagement. As there were no requests for the floor, he would proceed to the next agenda item.

#### DECISION

Nominations Committee update noted.

#### **- 8.5 Risk and Audit Committee**

THE CHAIRMAN noted that the Chairman of the Risk and Audit Committee, Ms Nathalie Bourque, had been unable to attend the meeting either in person or virtually, so the Executive Committee member of the Risk and Audit Committee, Mr Kejval, had given the presentation to the Executive Committee the previous day. However, he had since left Riyadh, so Mr Stuart Kemp, WADA's Chief Operating Officer, as the WADA management person responsible for the Risk and Audit Committee, would provide the update.

MR KEMP conveyed apologies on behalf of Ms Bourque, the independent Chairman of the Risk and Audit Committee (RAC), who had been unable to attend that week in Riyadh, but he was pleased to present on her behalf and would take back any questions or concerns to all three members of the group following those meetings.

By way of background, he thought that it was important to look back and remember why that group had been composed in the first instance, as that was the first annual report of the Risk and Audit Committee. As part of WADA's broader governance reforms, it had been deemed necessary to have an independent board that would provide advice to the Foundation Board and management on two specific areas: financial reporting to provide an additional layer of scrutiny on WADA's finances and expenditure, and in particular through its professional reporting obligations, as well as to help WADA with the maturation of its risk mitigation strategies and risk assessment protocols. To that end, the past year had very much been about learning more about the WADA ecosystem, and understanding the anti-doping environment globally so that members of the RAC could pursue those objectives. In terms of the composition of the group, the chairman



was Ms Nathalie Bourque, from Canada; the vice-chairman was Mr Kashif Farooq, also from Canada; and Mr Jiří Kejval was the representative from the Executive Committee.

In terms of what the RAC had achieved in the past year since its first meeting, it had met initially to vote on who would be the chairman and the vice-chairman and, following that, to set out a general work plan of when it would meet, how often it would meet, and what the priorities would be for the year. Given that the terms of reference of the RAC were quite clear as to what the responsibilities were with respect to financial reporting, that had been the main emphasis of the past year. In particular, it had a responsibility to monitor the quarterly profit and loss statements, as well as to review balance sheets on a regular basis with WADA's chief financial officer, and also ensure that all of WADA's reporting, both to the Swiss GAAP and to the IFRS, was in line with those requirements prior to any documentation being submitted to the Finance and Administration Committee, prior to going to the Executive Committee. In that case, it reviewed all financial statements before they were submitted to the Finance and Administration Committee in June of each year. Additionally, the RAC currently had a role in making a recommendation to the Foundation Board as to who would audit the financial statements, which it had done. He recalled that it had made a recommendation, which had been subsequently approved by the Foundation Board by circulatory vote in June.

In addition to those financial responsibilities, he had mentioned that it was the role of the RAC to help and support WADA with its risk assessment and mitigation strategies, and so much of that year had been spent understanding what WADA did internally with regard to the general risk management cycle. In order to be able to apply its expertise and assist WADA, obviously, it was important that the RAC help and take the time to understand the unique and complex environment that WADA and all of its stakeholders operated in. Significant time had therefore been taken to try to provide members with an induction to better understand how they could support the agency. In terms of the finances, he could report on behalf of the chairman that the RAC had been very satisfied with the financial processes of the agency. However, the RAC had made some very constructive recommendations as to some minor changes that could be made in terms, for example, of the way that grants, programmes and so on were deployed in a slightly more fiscally prudent manner.

On top of the RAC's capacity to assist WADA with financial processes, in the limited time it had had to assess some of the risks that the agency faced, three particular areas that it wished to spend more time on in the coming year had been identified. Those three particular risks were firstly WADA's efforts in the cybersecurity space, as the RAC had quickly acknowledged the threat that WADA faced, because of the geopolitical environment in which it operated, but perhaps more so because of the highly sensitive data that its databases contained. Secondly, as had been a theme throughout that day's meeting and the previous day's Executive Committee meeting, recognizing the importance of financial stability to the organization and seeing what more could be done to ensure stable and sustainable funding for the agency in order to serve the clean athlete community. Thirdly, it obviously had great interest in the Chinese contamination case given the risk that posed to the agency's reputation, however real or perceived that risk might be. To that end, the RAC wanted to better understand the case itself and the broader result management processes. On that final point, he would add that the RAC wished to better understand the current result management process of WADA's Legal Department in terms of how the department classified the complexity, the risks, the costs and other factors of cases that crossed the department's desk, and given the obvious risk that any decisions that were taken by WADA might have for the reputation of the agency, the RAC saw value in assessing current practices and providing possible process improvements that might support any recommendations from the Executive Committee Working Group on the Cottier Report Implementation. Since that working group report had been tabled and would be made public, he thought the RAC would have an opportunity to see what value it might be able to add to the recommendations that had been made in that report and, in the future, the RAC would liaise with the WADA management to see how it might support that process in an independent, expert and objective manner.

In closing, he wished to convey the thanks of the membership of the RAC for the confidence of the Foundation Board members in its abilities and capacity. A great deal had been learnt in the past year about the complexities of WADA's environment, and the members were very much looking forward to adding further value to the agency's efforts. On behalf of the RAC members, he thanked the Foundation Board for its interest and would be happy to answer any questions.

THE CHAIRMAN opened the floor for comments or questions.

MR O'LEARY welcomed the year's work and understood fully why the RAC had concentrated on the financials that year. He thought that one weakness of the Foundation Board was that it met once a year, and there was so much on the agenda related to regulatory things that the Foundation Board could miss the oversight role that it had. The RAC had a real potential to support the Foundation Board in that oversight role. He thought that risk, including compliance, but also reputational risk, was very important. He wished to know through the RAC how the corporate risk register was really developed and being actively managed. He wished to know that project risk registers existed and were being managed, and that there was also a developed internal audit plan that monitored key risk areas, on matters such as ICT, as mentioned, but also HR, disaster recovery, legal and communications, and that audit findings were being followed up and any items unresolved would be escalated to the appropriate level. He thought that the RAC could provide that assurance with sufficient support and absolutely encouraged WADA in general to continue to support the committee in that regard.

On behalf of the sport movement, MS GRÖSSWANG welcomed that extensive and interesting first report by the Risk and Audit Committee on the work done within the first year. She appreciated the excellent work. She noted that the Risk and Audit Committee was an important addition to WADA's greater movement towards broader government reform. That day, the Foundation Board had heard many committee reports, which she believed contained very many details and expertise, and she thanked the President and Vice-President, because government reforms must be supported by the President and Vice-President, for initiating and not just supporting those, but also putting them into action. Anybody who had done any work in an entity or an audit knew that that was possible only with good operational management. She thanked the entire team, because committees could do their work only with the right documents.

Returning to the Risk and Audit Committee report, the fact that not only the Intelligence and Investigations Department auditor had reviewed the independent prosecutor's investigation but that the Risk and Audit Committee had also discussed the process applied by WADA in relation to the Chinese case, gave athletes reassurance that there was a strong oversight mechanism in place and continuous support to strengthening WADA's internal process. That was very reassuring.

In addition, on the financial risk for WADA, the sport movement welcomed the priorities identified by the Risk and Audit Committee for 2025, such as the maturation of WADA's risk management processes and the review of the result management unit process. She reiterated her thanks for that very important report, which contained a lot of expertise.

MR McCANN appreciated the report and wished to welcome the important work of the Risk and Audit Committee. He was encouraged by the committee's desire to enhance the way in which WADA managed risk. The report contemplated an assessment of the current result management processes within the WADA Legal Department. He supported that work as an important extension of the new Working Group on Contaminations. Empowering the Risk and Audit Committee to examine issues as they arose was an important evolution in the governance architecture within WADA that he supported. He welcomed WADA's consideration in sharing the Risk and Audit Committee's work plan with the Executive Committee and Foundation Board for consideration and suggesting possible input that might be useful in future. That was a critical oversight function for the organization moving forward.

MS BERHANE noted that, in order to strengthen the work that had been started by the RAC, she believed that it could benefit WADA and the management could benefit from having an independent internal control unit or person to support the work of the RAC, and secondly, to also strengthen the independence of the work of the Finance and Administration Committee within the administration.

THE CHAIRMAN recalled the comment made by the Director General at the Executive Committee meeting the previous day that a decision had recently been made to hire an internal auditor function in support of the work of the Risk and Audit Committee.

MR KEMP said that he would answer the questions in the order in which they had been received. In response to Mr O'Leary's good questions, first and foremost, WADA already had in place significant risk management protocols. In particular, it did maintain a risk registry, which was reviewed on an annual basis with input from all departments so that it was examined not just through a management lens, but rather from

various lenses in the different departments of expertise. There were also additional plans within that protocol, such as different business continuity processes. He thought that the unique space it was in at that time was that it had an opportunity to seek outside counsel and advice on the protocols currently in place to ensure that they remained fit for purpose. That was certainly the role of the RAC going forward.

He would not comment further on the comment about the need for an internal auditor, as the Chairman had made reference to that.

He thanked the sport movement for the supportive comments. Specifically, the RAC would be looking at trying to devise a further protocol about how it linked the Risk and Audit Committee to the internal risk management protocol. WADA had an internal body called the Risk Crisis Management Board, which was composed of members of the management and those who were at the particular touch points of risk within the agency, such as the data privacy officer and the IT group. It was currently necessary to find ways to link their work to the independent and objective work of the RAC in the same way that the Finance Department worked closely with the Finance and Administration Committee externally.

Finally, in response to Mr McCann's comment, the RAC's work was in its relative infancy. It had taken the time to learn more about WADA's work, which had started with scrutinizing the numbers, but currently needed to take the time to connect those numbers with the actual business activities, and to then understand the risks. It was tremendously helpful to have a member of the Executive Committee on the RAC who could provide information as to the meaning of those numbers. In terms of devising a work plan, it would be very helpful to have that connection so that the business was connected to the objectives as well.

## DECISION

Risk and Audit Committee update noted.

### - **8.6 Education Committee**

MS KANOUTÉ greeted the esteemed members of the WADA Foundation Board, excellencies and esteemed colleagues from the anti-doping community. She was grateful for the opportunity to highlight some of the key deliverables and projects that the Education Committee had been involved with in the previous year. It worked on a voluntary basis and according to a pre-agreed work plan, along with the WADA Education Department led by Ms Amanda Hudson, and on which it scaled the priority level, whether it was high, medium or low, of the projects to deliver. She would give a more in-depth snapshot of the specific projects highlighted, but also an in-depth overview and feedback from the Global Education Conference, which was a key event for the community and which had taken place in France earlier that year prior to the Paris Games. She would finish with some key priorities for 2025.

As had been explained by the Code review team, the International Standard for Education had been introduced in 2021 and was also a living, evolving document, which the members and experts had been supporting, not only in the drafting but also in the current review process. That was a key priority agenda item. There were some key themes in mind, such as the in-depth analysis of definitions of such concepts as an education pool but also recognizing and clarifying the roles and competencies of different stakeholders within the anti-doping landscape. That had been a high priority. The team, the sub-group for the review of the international standard, had met in person a few times, even as recently as in November, and was continuing the work.

Under the WADA key priorities to grow impact and build capacity, the Global Learning and Development Framework was also an important priority item. Therefore, the team had been working and contributing to the delivery of the GLDF with two components. One part was with the development of professional standards and role descriptors, with the latest additions being for testing, compliance, major event organizers and government advisers. Each of those standards came with a role descriptor. She was grateful to the Executive Committee for having acknowledged them the previous day. Another component of the GLDF was the delivery of in-person and online training, to strengthen capacity and train new experts on the ground. A pilot phase was taking place in Europe and in Asia. To date, up to 500 experts had been trained through that programme.

It was necessary to keep pace with digital developments. The digital and learning strategy had been endorsed by the committee. The key priorities were education anytime, anywhere, but also the narrative

and the concept of making sure that education took place from playground to podium. In other words, from the grassroots level to the Olympic level, if that could be a benchmark, but also looking at beyond the athletes to include the athlete support personnel and entourage. It was important to keep in mind that that dedication had to be maximized. The reach and opportunity had to be maximized, and the impact demonstrated continuously.

With regard to impact, that could be reflected through the Three Years On Report, which was now available and published. She encouraged the members to have a look at it. Some key numbers that were very encouraging were: a user base of 438,000, among whom over 300,000 were athletes, but also the highest recorded active users per month was 29,000 users, with 20,000 completed modules, which was huge, before the Paris Olympic Games. That initiative was led in collaboration with the IOC and the IPC. The platform also enabled what were called 'power users', who obtained specific features allowing them to customize their approach to the platform, but also to exchange not exactly best practices but rather preferred practices among users. The figures - 178 ADOs acting as power users, was enormous. There had been 1.12 million course completions on ADEL since its launch.

Social science remained a key priority and the backbone. Thanks to the contributions of the Foundation Board, that area had been evolving significantly, especially through a strategy and some key priorities that had been set for 2020 to 2024. Some of those key strategic priorities were to make sure that research was coordinated through a clear agenda, but also contributed to global insight, to have a rich and more equitable way of involving all regions of the world in the process of selecting grants (that had been done in a tiered approach), but also making sure that WADA was leading by example in that space, and developing research capability and establishing research partnerships.

Also, for the first time, the social science community had been able to meet in person in March at the Global Education Conference, through the invitation of the Social Science Research Expert Advisory Group, which was also led by a member of the Education Committee, Mr Thierry Zintz, connecting researchers to create synergies and share best practices. That was also reflected through a platform that was currently available, and which had been put together in collaboration with the International Olympic Committee, the European Union, the Council of Europe and UNESCO, among other partners, making sure that universities and clean sport academies could be part of that journey. That was the endeavour of having that ongoing support of the academic world as well.

There was a new ongoing social science strategy for 2025, and that had been one of the key outcomes from the Global Education Conference. She thanked all of the members who had been able to attend the conference, among which notably the President for his support, but also the Director General for his presence, and members of the athlete community who had been willing to be guinea pigs for some of the activities that had taken place. Thanks to everyone, the event had been more than successful. Over 400 people had attended. It had been a highly successful event, highlighted by some regional conversations, but also a 'show and tell' of best practices among the anti-doping community. It also gave the opportunity to consult with peers and continue the journey on agreeing on a common agenda for the future. That agenda for change had already been highlighted during the previous Global Education Conference in Sydney. The changes included achieving a balanced anti-doping system, where support and prevention were valued as much as catching and punishing, but also to see athletes being educated, as she had said before, from the grassroots level to the elite level, in valuing behaviour, in addition to making sure that the athlete entourage was also educated. More investment in people as well as in paper was another aim. That meant making sure that skilled anti-doping practitioners were trained, and continued to be trained, in the technical areas of anti-doping, but most importantly, the first step to all of that was to make sure that the reduction in averting doping was evident.

In 2025, that agenda would continue. She was not worried about the agenda, as Ms Hudson and her team were keeping the committee busy. The agenda included some ongoing projects such as the Code and the International Standard for Education review. A new member from South America would also be welcomed onto the team next year. She warmly thanked the departing member, Mr Mark Harrington from the Rugby Federation. The committee would continue to work on clean sport academies and the establishment thereof, but also on the social science research programme with the new forthcoming strategy and the ongoing grant programme with the focus on unintentional doping as a research priority. Some new

sub-groups had been formed, and she was happy to say that, on e-sports per se, the committee would be welcoming a member of the International Testing Agency education team to support that effort to keep up to trend. Given the Olympic agenda, with e-sports Olympic Games to take place in 2025, there in Saudi Arabia, the committee would also be supporting the process of clean e-sports and anti-doping education, and still focusing on subject areas that were important to that clean sport behaviour. That concluded her intervention and she would be happy to answer any questions.

THE CHAIRMAN thanked Ms Kanouté for her comprehensive report and engagement.

MS YANG thanked Ms Kanouté for that wonderful report. She had one comment about social science research. As the Code review included entourage behaviour, she wished to encourage work to understand how the Code could be improved with regard to the entourage impact. She also encouraged the ministers present who had the power to do so to invest more in education, which would be very valuable for anti-doping in the respective countries.

MS FORTES appreciated the report on behalf of the sport movement. All agreed that education was a fundamental pillar in the fight against doping in sport. Educating athletes and their support staff was essential and that educational support had to be provided. Training programmes were necessary to truly bring about change. Each activity carried out would bring about healthier, fairer sports. All those present had underscored the importance of education, not only for athletes, but also for trainers, coaches, even parents and all the support staff. To that end, it was essential to continue providing sufficient support for research into education and social sciences in order to understand vulnerabilities and behaviours, to guide policies and educational programmes and ensure they had a real impact on society.

MR PIZARRO firstly wished to thank Saudi Arabia and its authorities for the excellent hospitality and to express his gratitude to all the teams who had presented that day for the quality of their work. Without a doubt, every effort made towards education was not only necessary and essential, but also an absolute top priority. His region would continue to support those programmes, collaborating as best as it could to address any possible divergences, and also to place greater emphasis on the care and development of athletes at all levels, as well as their entourage. He understood and shared the thoughts that had been expressed in terms of reinforcing the educational aspect of the athletes and those that surrounded them.

#### DECISION

Education Committee update noted.

#### - **8.7 Finance and Administration Committee**

THE CHAIRMAN proposed skipping the agenda item because the chairman of the committee was unable to participate in that meeting, and most of the information had already been included in the discussion on the budget.

#### DECISION

Finance and Administration Committee update noted.

#### - **8.8 Health, Medical and Research Committee**

PROFESSOR ENGBRETSSEN informed the members that he would give a very short report on the Health, Medical and Research Committee. He recalled that its task was to look at the Prohibited List, the TUEs, the research programme and the grants and oversee the laboratories. There had been few changes to the list that year, with no major changes that would affect decisions. He merely drew attention to his report on that. Likewise, there were no new rules for TUEs either. However, research grant applications were being dealt with in a new way that year. He recalled that researchers had previously been able to submit an application just once a year and it had been a very slow process. The new part of the process was that an application could be submitted three times a year, and the Health, Medical and Research Committee would continuously and dynamically look at them and score them. It was henceforth possible to deliver an application at any time and obtain a reply within a few months, which was a far better process than previously. The number of research applications had increased quite substantially, as detailed in his report.



That was the main point from the Health, Medical and Research Committee. It also oversaw the laboratories, and his written report included a very short report on that aspect. He thought the committee was a very good one, with 12 very good scientists and clinicians, and it was a pleasure to lead that group. He encouraged the members to read his report and ask any questions they liked.

MR TAKEBE thanked the committee chairman for his report. Japan wished to welcome the increase in the number of applications as a result of the revised review process of the research grant programme. Although the number of applications from the Asian region was still very small, the Japanese Government had included promoting cutting-edge anti-doping research as a major priority in the sport basic plan, and was focusing on expanding research, funding and building a foundation to promote domestic anti-doping research. Specifically in cooperation with the Japan Anti-Doping Agency, it was seeking research topics based on anti-doping issues in Japan and Asia, as well as global issues, encouraging domestic research institutions to apply the results of cutting-edge medical research and microanalysis technologies to the field of anti-doping, and supporting and facilitating the application of such research to WADA's research grant programme. Japan also agreed on the importance of cooperation with the pharmaceutical industry. There were a number of pharmaceutical companies in Japan, and he wished to encourage them to share information with WADA on new compounds with doping potential and their detection technologies.

MS NSEKERA thanked His Royal Highness for his hospitality. On behalf of the sport movement, she wished to thank Professor Engebretsen for his very brief report. The work done by the committee was very important for the activities of the organization. She wished to underscore the importance of continuing to allocate funds for research.

PROFESSOR ENGBRETSSEN noted that the good thing about the new application system was that the friends from Asia, including Japan of course, not only the anti-doping laboratories, but also universities in Asia, were coming forward with applications that they had not submitted before. That was a very positive improvement. In response to Ms Nsekera, the new system was also open for any universities to send in applications to WADA for research grants, which he thought was a very positive improvement.

#### DECISION

Health, Medical and Research Committee update noted.

### **9. Other organization reports**

#### **- 9.1 Institute of National Anti-Doping Organizations**

THE CHAIRMAN invited Mr Anders Solheim, Chairman of the Board of the Institute of National Anti-Doping Organisations, iNADO, to present the report on behalf of his organization.

MR SOLHEIM firstly wished to thank the esteemed Foundation Board members for allowing iNADO to present its work to WADA's highest representative body, the legislature in the field of anti-doping. He had been the Chairman of iNADO since the general assembly and the subsequent board meeting in March of that year. The Institute of National Anti-Doping Organizations was a non-profit organization located in Bonn, Germany. The vision was clean sport, together. Its mission was to facilitate quality national anti-doping programmes in all countries through best practice and to emphasize the critical importance of NADOs. 51 members had participated in the general assembly in March 2024 and elected the people shown on the screen to serve on the iNADO governing board for the following three years, representing a variety of NADOs: Sport Integrity Australia, the French Anti-Doping Agency, the Finnish Centre for Integrity in Sport, UK Anti-Doping, the South African Institute for Drug-Free Sport, Anti-Doping Norway, the US Anti-Doping Agency and the China Anti-Doping Agency. Since May 2024, Dr Andrea Gotzmann had been the acting CEO of iNADO. He recalled that she had been the chairman of the executive board of the German NADO. The governing board had recently appointed Dr Peter Van de Vliet as the chief executive officer as of 1 December 2024. He had extensive experience in anti-doping and sport medicine. The members of iNADO were 60 NADOs and nine RADOs. It covered all regions of the world but still had space for more members. It was a representative organization that valued freedom of association and the autonomy that followed as

had been learnt from the sport associations. It focused on human rights and sustainability goals, such as protecting the health and well-being of athletes and, amongst other matters, justice and strong institutions.

To slightly change the focus, he asked the members what the 10 NOCs shown on the screen had in common. What he would proceed to show was not a scientific document, but a way to paint a broader picture. Regarding those NOCs, insofar as could be ascertained, they were the 10 nations to have won the most medals when combining the number of medals won the previous summer and at the Winter Olympic Games. Those 10 NOCs had won close to 750 medals and approximately 55% of all gold medals from those two editions of the Olympic Games. Looking at those 10 NOCs, they also came from countries where the NADO was a member of iNADO. With the addition of five more iNADO members, the organization covered close to three-quarters of the Olympic gold medals. He wished to look more closely at the NADOs covering those 10 top NOCs. The combined revenue of those 10 NADOs amounted to approximately 100 million US dollars. The total number of samples collected by those 10 NADOs amounted to approximately 115,000 samples. 11 out of 30 WADA-accredited laboratories were located in those countries. A total of 25 out of 30 laboratories were in countries that had a NADO that was an iNADO member. He had not calculated the total contribution from all iNADO members to doping-free sport, but he could say with certainty that it was a huge annual investment to protect sport from doping. He also wanted to mention that, when IFs or the ITA needed to collect samples, it was often the NADO organizations that had trained and authorized personnel to collect those samples, even in major international competitions. Therefore, he would say that NADOs were the cornerstone or the bedrock or foundation of anti-doping work. It was therefore important that WADA require independence and objectivity from the NADOs. Not least, it was crucial that the NADOs had an anti-doping programme that took care of the top athletes of the country every day throughout the year, both in terms of education and testing. He thought that everybody should be proud of and promote that investment and effort because it was an insurance for elite sport which protected and promoted athletes as role models which made sport engagement so great. The NADOs must have a legal basis to run an anti-doping programme and know its sporting culture. It was expected that athletes be targeted through testing out of competition and in competition, and that athletes be educated from an early age. NADOs spoke the language and knew the culture and attitudes to ensure education that matched their sporting population. It was expected that NADOs be aware of the medical practice and tradition when following TUE regulations. Further, it was expected that NADOs have a trustworthy and legally-based collaboration with law enforcement and a result management process and judiciary protecting the rights of the athletes and ensuring a fair judiciary, and that they support governments and their NOCs.

Finally, he wished to highlight some of iNADO's activities over the past year. It had adopted a guiding principle for the future of anti-doping, which was comparable to a set of targeted sustainability objectives. It was offering legal support to its members through a partnership with Bird & Bird, to provide members with free training on legal and anti-doping issues. It had signed an MoU with the World Association of Anti-Doping Scientists. It was hosting an ADAMS user group for iNADO members and stakeholders from IFs. It supported its members during the stakeholder consultation process when it came to the Code and the standards. It was hosting online consultation meetings on gender-diverse athletes in testing. It was facilitating an athlete representation survey aimed at gathering insight and feedback from ADOs to better understand how it could improve athlete representation and support for athletes in anti-doping. It had hosted online meetings about the 2025 Prohibited List, organized webinars to educate anti-doping staff, and he was excited to announce that registration was currently open for the 2025 iNADO annual workshop on 17 March 2025. He wished to welcome everyone to the annual workshop in Lausanne to experience the competence, dedication and, last but not least, enthusiasm among the iNADO staff to protect sport from doping.

THE CHAIRMAN thanked Mr Solheim for his very comprehensive report and opened the floor for comments or questions.

On behalf of the NADO EAG, MR CEPIC thanked Mr Solheim for his report and wished to congratulate the new CEO, Dr Peter Van der Vliet, on his appointment. The NADOs were looking forward to collaborating with the new iNADO leadership for the benefit of clean athletes and clean sport.

#### DECISION

iNADO update noted.

## - 9.2 International Testing Agency

THE CHAIRMAN gave the floor to Dr Valérie Fourneyron, Chairman of the Board of the ITA, to present the report on behalf of the ITA.

DR FOURNEYRON firstly wanted to thank His Royal Highness, the host, and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, for the beautiful welcome. She was grateful for the opportunity to give an account of the main activities delivered by her organization. A detailed report could be found in the working documents. She wished to give a short overview of the recent activities and latest initiatives, especially concerning the ITA-led anti-doping programme for the Olympic Games in Paris in 2024.

She would first briefly present an overview of activities. In 2023, the ITA had collected over 40,000 samples from athletes belonging to 185 nationalities. The majority of those samples had been collected out of competition all over the globe. Together with the processing of 800 therapeutic use exemptions, intelligence and investigations and Athlete Biological Passport activities, the ITA had managed 922 cases of whereabouts failures and almost 500 potential anti-doping rule violations. It had also seen an increase of 110% compared to 2022 of proactive reports to reveal its confidential reporting platform. Over 1,700 participants had graduated from one of the specialized training programmes for the anti-doping workforce. The progress achieved was substantial. Some of the statistics for the current year could also be found in the documents.

At the same time, the work ahead was even more critical. Both the ITA director general and she were fully committed to listening to suggestions for improvement to continue improving the fight against doping together.

Regarding the Paris 2024 pre-games programme, she would provide a debrief on the anti-doping programme for the most important sporting event of that year, the Paris Olympic Games. It was the third edition of the Olympic Games that the ITA had managed independently, after Tokyo and Beijing. Following extensive preparation, the anti-doping programme for Paris 2024 had launched effectively with the pre-games phase six months before the event. The ITA team had coordinated and monitored, together with experts from various NADOs and IFs, the testing of athletes likely to participate in the Olympic Games. Drawing on experience from the two previous editions of the Olympic Games and looking in particular at the testing gaps ahead of the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games, the ITA and the Paris pre-games expert group had focused on issuing strategy and targeting recommendations to reduce those gaps. Those recommendations had been shared with anti-doping organizations worldwide and monitored by the ITA until the Olympic Games had begun. That effort had resulted in the most efficient pre-games programme to date, with 90% of participating athletes tested at least once before the competition. She extended her gratitude to the IFs and national and regional anti-doping organizations for their collaboration in ensuring a wide coverage of athletes tested ahead of the Olympic Games in Paris. To enhance transparency, communicate achievements and address ongoing challenges, the ITA had published a detailed report on the pre-games programme for the first time. That report set a new standard that the ITA aimed to uphold for future Olympic Games and major events. She also appreciated WADA's support, particularly in reinforcing the importance of implementing those recommendations across anti-doping organizations, and looked forward to further reinforcing that programme together.

Drawing on the specialized tools and processes developed over the past five years, the agency had successfully led a robust and credible anti-doping programme during the Olympic Games in Paris in 2024. That achievement had come despite facing organizational, structural and workforce challenges. In collaboration with the organizing committee and the French NADO, the highest ever proportion of athletes, nearly 30%, had been tested during the Olympic Games. Beyond the numbers, there was evidence that a more targeted approach to anti-doping, with tests carried out with increased intelligence, assessing risks, monitoring performance, analysing and interpreting data, was currently possible thanks to digital tools that allowed for a fully digitized process, from test planning all the way to the long-term storage of the samples after analysis. In addition to uncovering over 80 anti-doping rule violations in the crucial phase leading up to the Olympic Games, the ITA had asserted five anti-doping rule violations based on samples collected in Paris, and actively cooperated with the French police on one additional case still under criminal investigation. The ITA had also reported very positive and constructive collaboration with WADA's independent observer

team. That partnership ensured that the anti-doping programme fully complied with the Code and international standards, with any feedback or necessary corrections implemented immediately.

She would briefly address a matter that had surfaced during the preparatory period of the Olympic Games and become a highly discussed topic during the Olympic Games and by the WADA Foundation Board: the case of the Chinese swimmers. Throughout the ITA's testing activities on behalf of World Aquatics in the lead-up to the Olympic Games, it had done its best to respond to the concerns of the athletes and the public by reinforcing clean sport activities in that sport. Those measures had not been intended to undermine the decisions and actions taken regarding those athletes, but to address perceptions and uphold the credibility of the anti-doping system. In a climate of suspicion and doubts, the ITA again served as an independent safeguard to enhance transparency and avoid even the perception of a conflict of interest. As suggested by the World Aquatics anti-doping audit review committee, as well as the WADA working group led by Ms Gabriela Battaini-Dragoni on the Chinese cases, and further to the athlete community's call for increased independence, the ITA had been able to support and conduct, in cooperation with NADOs, the testing of international-level athletes prior to an important international competition. That had increased transparency, built confidence and protected the sport from potential conflicts of interest, whether real or perceived. The anti-doping community must indeed continuously look for improvements to the system and the ITA was ready to contribute on that front.

To finalize her report on the ITA's work at major events, she wished to express her appreciation to WADA for the fruitful collaboration in the area of clean sport education during the Youth Olympic Winter Games in Gangwon in 2024 and the Olympic Games in Paris. Together and with local partners, the strengths of that partnership had been demonstrated in promoting the importance of fair play and instilling the right values, ensuring athletes were well-informed, empowered and able to actively uphold the principles of clean sport. Looking ahead to the next edition of the World Anti-Doping Code in 2027, the ITA had provided WADA with extensive feedback aimed at enhancing the Code's effectiveness, ensuring its practical applicability and strengthening its impact in the global fight against doping. That feedback was firmly rooted in the ITA's day-to-day anti-doping operations worldwide, and reflected the realities and challenges faced on the ground. In that regard, the ITA remained firmly committed to supporting WADA in its vital role as guardian of the Code and regulator of the anti-doping system.

In 2024, the team had continued to provide comprehensive support to its partners to ensure their compliance with the World Anti-Doping Code and WADA's international standards. As part of that effort, the ITA compliance department had assisted its partners with the timely completion and submission of WADA's Code compliance questionnaire and extensively supported them in resolving non-conformities. Notably, partners with the full programme delegation to the ITA had experienced 93% fewer corrective actions in 2024, a testament to the efficiency and rigour of the ITA's compliance activity for its partners.

To finalize her activity report, she also wished to report that the agency was currently half-way through its 2023-2026 strategic plan, which had been presented at the previous year's WADA Foundation Board meeting and which had been designed with WADA's contribution. The plan fully supported the WADA strategic initiatives aimed at strengthening the global anti-doping system. One of the six main pillars of the plan was cooperation with the entire anti-doping community to continuously advance clean sport. In that regard, she invited any organization wishing to extend, seeking support or operational collaboration, to engage with the ITA as a trusted partner. She would be happy to answer any questions on the activities of the ITA.

THE CHAIRMAN thanked Dr Fourneyron for her very comprehensive report detailing the impressive figures and the work that had been done by the ITA, especially before and during the Olympic Games, and the collaboration between the WADA and ITA teams. He opened the floor for comments or questions.

MR BINDRA appreciated the detailed report and merely wished to express his appreciation to the ITA for its work, especially in the lead-up to the Olympic Games in Paris in 2024. The pre-games testing programme had been critical and had definitely contributed to closing gaps in testing and enhancing intelligence-led approaches to clean sport. The emphasis on education had provided valuable support to the NOCs in their preparations for the Olympic Games, and he hoped that could continue and be further strengthened in the future, as those efforts helped to reinforce athletes' trust in the integrity of competition.

MR DAHLIN thanked Dr Fourneyron for her report. On behalf of the sport movement and the Winter IFs, he welcomed the work led by the ITA at the Youth Olympic Games in Gangwon in 2024, hosted by the colleagues from Korea. He also wanted to highlight the excellent cooperation between WADA and the ITA in delivering education in Gangwon with the support of the local NADO and the WADA Athlete Council.

MS SÖRLING appreciated the comprehensive report. On behalf of the sport movement and the IFs, she wanted to stress the importance of good cooperation.

#### DECISION

ITA update noted.

#### **- 9.3 United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization**

THE CHAIRMAN gave the floor to Mr Matar Bâ, Chairman of the COP9 Bureau, and Mr Marcellin Dally to address the Foundation Board.

MR BÂ greeted the honourable members of the Foundation Board and conveyed his gratitude for the invitation to attend the meeting and to the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for hosting the meeting. He was always delighted to return to Riyadh. He was honoured to speak that day as the elected representative of 204 states parties and territories in the framework of the International Convention against Doping in Sport. At the conference of parties, those states defined the framework, challenges and priorities of the convention. At its ninth session the previous year, the COP had drawn up a strategic roadmap to strengthen the impact of the convention and to improve the capacity of the governments to implement it. That reform had been promoted by the governments and was based on four fundamental pillars, deemed a priority by the COP. First of all, it was necessary to clarify the world ecosystem of values, ethics and sport integrity, in particular concerning the roles and responsibilities with respect to the convention and the World Anti-Doping Code, as well as UNESCO and WADA. Also of importance were better ownership by the states parties through a control mechanism in addition to the current monitoring mechanism, as well as the implementation of a mechanism for the peaceful settlement of disputes between states parties on the implementation of the convention. All of that obviously required a systematic, appropriate and sustainable funding mechanism.

He thanked WADA, which participated in an observer capacity in the work of the open-ended working group, created at the request of the COP. He underscored that cooperation was essential in order to ensure the progress of the world ecosystem of sport. Dialogue was in the DNA of the convention as an international treaty. In that regard, he welcomed the exchanges with Messrs Bańka and Niggli since COP9, in a very positive spirit of cooperation and transparency. As the chairman of COP9, he was committed to helping WADA in the same way as WADA was expected to help the convention in the interest of society and the athletes who had placed their trust in it.

The recent media coverage of events in the sport ecosystem had proven once again that perfection did not exist, but that it was always necessary to strive to achieve it by working together in a spirit of mutual effort and transparency, as the Foundation Board had shown that day. The exchanges promoted by WADA were appreciated, as they would improve the impact of the convention.

The convention reform under way aimed to strengthen it and close the gaps in the ecosystem, for which the governments bore the main responsibility. The work undertaken by the governments sought to guarantee the role and responsibilities of the states in the fight against doping in sport, and more generally in the promotion of values, ethics and integrity. The alignment of legislation was an example that highlighted the need for further dialogue to ensure that WADA was not weakened, whilst seeking to ensure that the rule of law was upheld. That formed part of the priorities of the dialogue he would pursue with WADA on behalf of the COP. Having said that, the work accomplished by the governments deserved positive recognition.

The current reform of the convention also sought to strengthen the ecosystem as a whole. The COP bureau, the states parties to the convention and the convention secretariat sought to provide the ecosystem with the necessary tools for it to function properly. It was necessary to understand the importance of the convention, the role it played and the way in which the world anti-doping ecosystem had adopted the convention with an unprecedented consensus within the United Nations. The work was guided by the recommendations made by high-level legal experts and also by the proposals made by the governments



involved in the open-ended working group. The sport ecosystem had to adjust and adapt continuously to meet new challenges. One of the new priority issues was the use of traditional pharmacopoeia in the context of ethical values and sport integrity. Three strong commitments had been made by the parties to the convention, with COP7, COP8, and recently COP9. Indeed, since the Covid-19 pandemic, under the leadership of the COP bureau, the convention, with the highly recognized support of the competent authorities in Saudi Arabia, had launched an innovative reflection process, both political and scientific, and collected data to draw up guidelines on traditional pharmacopoeia in sport. The pilot phase had been carried out in the Arab region, and was currently being extended to the rest of the world. WADA's involvement and collaboration in that essential work would be beneficial.

In that same spirit of synergy and open cooperation, he invited WADA to appoint a representative who would work together with a high-level government representative designated by the bureau to make a consensus-based proposal on the regional distribution of the funding of WADA by the governments.

He wished to take that opportunity to thank the Council of Europe and all of the other regional and intergovernmental organizations for their cooperation.

To conclude, he urged everybody to strengthen the dialogue among all the stakeholders in order to improve the ecosystem together.

THE CHAIRMAN thanked Mr Bâ for his report and opened the floor for comments or questions.

On behalf of the sport movement, MS BERHANE thanked the speaker for his report. She was very touched by his comment that perfection did not exist in such a complex dynamic, but it was even more important to capture the mutual effort and transparency to enhance cooperation between WADA and UNESCO. She appreciated the emphasis on that in the report. She stressed that it was very recent history, as only 25 years ago, a unique partnership had been established between the sport movement and public authorities, together with WADA and then the UNESCO convention. Establishing that convention had sought to ensure that firstly the policies and secondly the rules agreed upon by the sport movement and the public authorities, through the WADA Code, could also provide a legal mechanism to help governments ensure that the Code could be implemented within the national framework. Concerns had been raised about the risks of loopholes in the system and if those were not addressed, but the sport movement was encouraged to hear from that report and from the Director General's report that there was willingness from both organizations to find the best pathway to align on priorities and identify the priorities where WADA and UNESCO could support one another in the interest of the athletes and clean sport. On behalf of the sport movement, she invited UNESCO and the public authorities around that table to support WADA and facilitate dialogue with UNESCO and the anti-doping convention bureau. The sport movement was confident that, through meaningful dialogue, a pathway could be found to work together to combat doping. She underscored the need to ascertain how that could actually happen in practice. She reiterated the gratitude of the sport movement and looked forward to possible solutions.

MR TAKEBE was aware that since the ninth conference of parties to the UNESCO convention, a dedicated working group had been established to discuss and examine the clarification of the role of WADA and UNESCO, as well as the issue between WADA and governments. As a member of the working group, Japan had participated in discussions on those issues at the UNESCO forum and had emphasized the importance of the complementary relationship between the World Anti-Doping Code and the international convention. WADA and UNESCO both played pivotal roles in the anti-doping ecosystem, and the positive relationship between the two organizations was vital for governments. He anticipated continued constructive dialogue and collaboration between the two organizations.

MR LANGE appreciated all of the very interesting presentations and hard work done for clean sport and anti-doping.

MR BERGE had a statement prepared for item 10.7 but, as it was about UNESCO and the working group, he would deliver it then to save time. First of all, he wished to thank the government relations team that ensured and developed relations with the various public authority stakeholders and intergovernmental organizations. Everybody was aware that WADA and UNESCO were very important actors in the fight against doping in sport and, when they worked together, stronger steps could be taken in that field. He was going to point to the third chapter of the document under agenda item 10.7, which was entitled government

relations and addressed the relationship of WADA with UNESCO. On behalf of Europe, he wished to draw attention to the update in that section with regard to the UNESCO open-ended working group. That working group was composed of representatives appointed by the member states in accordance with the resolution of the COP9 conference. Those representatives were exchanging ideas to make concrete proposals to be presented to the COP10, aimed at strengthening the global anti-doping system by strengthening the convention rather than weakening the system. Furthermore, he wished to encourage WADA to take a more positive approach. He underlined that the work of the UNESCO working group was aimed at strengthening the UNESCO convention overall and thereby also strengthening the global anti-doping system rather than weakening it.

MR KASAPOĞLU noted that all of the members were aware that WADA and UNESCO were very important actors in the fight against doping. When they worked together, much stronger steps could be taken in that field. He wished to emphasize that both organizations should take a more constructive and comprehensive approach.

MR BA appreciated all of the comments, which showed that there was a great need for dialogue and cooperation in the interest of the athletes and clean sport. That was why he reiterated that UNESCO had undertaken a commitment and had understood that, ever since the convention had been set up, the solution was for all parties concerned to work together.

THE CHAIRMAN thanked Mr Bâ for his speech, presence, declaration and willingness to collaborate with WADA, which was much appreciated. He believed it was possible to work together for the good of clean sport.

## DECISION

UNESCO update noted.

### **10. Department/impact area annual reports**

THE CHAIRMAN opened the floor for comments or questions on any of the department or impact area reports included in the document set for that day's meeting.

MS HIRAI stated that, based on the feedback received from a number of NADOs, the NADO EAG wished to express its concern regarding the high cost of the API that WADA was offering. The NADO EAG understood that WADA was currently reviewing the pricing structure and encouraged consideration of that concern. In addition, the NADO EAG recommended that WADA ensure that any required changes to ADAMS related to the 2027 Code and international standards were completed as far in advance as possible in order to allow the NADOs enough time to train and support their athletes in understanding those changes.

MR KEMP replied that, with respect to the current pricing structure that was proposed for the API, which was the capacity for other systems to connect to ADAMS, WADA had taken on board that feedback from the NADO community. It was currently taking a step back to try to evaluate whether changes could be made to that pricing structure. The APIs were an additional tool above and beyond the use of ADAMS. He was aware that there were a number of ADOs that would like to employ it, but it was necessary to make sure that the development and costs of those APIs did not exceed WADA's own capacity to address some of the fundamental developments that were required for all users in ADAMS. He would certainly respond to that shortly.

With respect to the second question about changes to the Code that might affect ADAMS, as had been discussed previously, the new Digital Insights Department was very much focused on understanding the business needs of the anti-doping community. That department would be listening closely to the Code drafting team about the changes in order to be well aware of what might need to be done in ADAMS in advance.

MR MORULE noted that it was his first attendance of the WADA Foundation Board meeting, representing the Honourable Minister of Sport and Arts of Botswana. He firstly wished to convey profound thanks for the visit of the WADA President to his country, Botswana, and Zimbabwe earlier that year. The stakeholders back home had truly appreciated the interest in and support for efforts to develop and institutionalize the independent national anti-doping organization. With the help of the WADA management

team and in particular the colleagues at the Africa office, significant strides had been made in realizing that feat. The visit had provided timely encouragement to continue to pursue the goals.

On behalf of the African region, he also thanked WADA for the invaluable support provided to many of the country's athletes and sports institutions through the sponsorship agreement that WADA had entered into with SuperSport, a company that was very well known in the continent as a leader in the sports broadcasting industry. Through its support, he was informed that all of the African countries and even some from outside the region had benefited in one way or the other from the activities associated with the sponsorship. Furthermore, approximately 20,000 athletes, athlete support personnel and others had been reached through the various activities of the project initiatives. That was a significant accomplishment and in particular had ensured, amongst other things, that those athletes who had participated in the Paris Olympic Games and the African Games received support and information. The variety of interventions and the fact that some were innovative and spoke to the African heritage, aspirations and values was also commendable. Through such interventions, anti-doping and WADA in general, some of the mysteries were demystified and furthermore highlighted the fact that collaboration, partnership and engagement were the only way to create the level playing field sought. He thanked SuperSport for its unselfish, positive and timely support. He hoped and believed there would be an extension to that agreement. It augured well for the region, and he hoped that the next phase of the implementation of the sponsorship would be more dynamic, focused and relevant, as the recent experience had been commendable. For that, he thanked the Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN thanked Mr Morule for those comments and thanked him again publicly for the amazing hospitality that he still remembered after his visit to Botswana. The Africa region could certainly count on WADA. He thought that the collaboration with SuperSport, the biggest broadcaster in Africa and one of the biggest in the world, was a great example of how to use the private sector for the good of sport to co-finance education action programmes in Africa. It was a very promising partnership.

MR SÁNCHEZ greeted the Foundation Board on behalf of the Central American region and, on behalf of the Republic of Venezuela, thanked the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. He wished to congratulate WADA's President, Vice-President and Director General on the excellent work performed in 2024 to strengthen the work of WADA. At the same time, the Central America and Caribbean region understood that there might be differences between governments, but those should not affect the sport movement. Sport should not be affected by political differences. The Central America and Caribbean region, and specifically Venezuela, believed in a multicultural world that would fight doping. Despite any differences, convergence must be found, and that was through a common love and passion for sports. He therefore called upon WADA to work as a family for sport and for the athletes.

## **11. Other business/future meetings**

THE CHAIRMAN opened the floor for any other business before concluding that day's meeting.

MS YANG firstly wished to express her sincere thanks to the hosts, His Royal Highness and the Saudi Vice-Minister for Sports for their wonderful hospitality. She was very encouraged to have learnt in only a couple of days how much society there had changed, especially with regard to women's sport, which she welcomed. She believed all those present loved sport because it had a true impact on society. She wished to congratulate the hosts in person on that. The only problem was that they had eaten too much. They would have to work out when they went home!

She felt that members had heard and discussed a lot, such as reports and recommendations regarding the Code update, etc. She was very passionate about the issue of the athlete entourage and so it was very encouraging to see that it was going to be in the Code. Of course, there were challenges and risks ahead, but also the common understanding that sport and especially anti-doping could not be politicized. She welcomed those comments. As the Director General always said, and as she had learnt from him, WADA had been growing through the crisis. That meant that crises or challenges could make WADA stronger if everybody worked together. She thanked the members of the Foundation Board for their input, which was very important in order to move forward.

THE CHAIRMAN thanked the Vice-President for her intervention and kind words and summary.

Before concluding the meeting, he wanted to acknowledge the outgoing members that day: Mr Mustapha Ussif from Ghana, Mr Mehmet Kasapoğlu from Turkey, and Mr Ádám Schmidt from Hungary. He thanked all of them for their contributions. There were two Foundation Board members who would be taking a seat on the Executive Committee in 2025: Ms Dagmawit Berhane from the IOC and Minister Anika Wells from Australia. He looked forward to seeing them around that table the following year.

The following Foundation Board meeting, an extraordinary one, would be held virtually on 29 May, specifically for the election of the president and vice-president, and the next in-person meeting would be held in Busan at the same time of early December the following year. He urged the members to reserve the full week of 5 December in their diaries. The World Conference on Doping in Sport, which was held only every six years and was the most important event in the anti-doping community, would bring all of the community together in the beautiful city of Busan.

Lastly, he wished to take the opportunity on behalf of all of WADA to express his most sincere gratitude to the hosts, especially His Royal Highness and the Saudi team. He thanked Minister Abdulaziz for his support, amazing hospitality and exceptional professionalism. He also thanked the interpreters, technical staff, the WADA team and all of the volunteers for ensuring the preparations for what had been a very full and engaging meeting. It had been a long meeting and he thanked the Foundation Board members for their patience, engagement, constructive remarks and very good discussions. It was very encouraging.

#### DECISION

Executive Committee – 27 March 2025, virtual meeting;  
WADA Annual Symposium – 18 and 19 March 2025,  
Lausanne, Switzerland;  
Foundation Board – 29 May 2025, virtual meeting;  
Executive Committee – week of 15 September 2025,  
location TBC;  
World Conference on Doping in Sport and governance  
meetings – 1-5 December 2025, Busan, Republic of Korea;  
Executive Committee – 1 or 2 December 2025, Busan,  
Republic of Korea;  
Foundation Board – 5 December 2025, Busan, Republic of  
Korea.

The meeting adjourned at 4.50 p.m. GMT +3.

#### FOR APPROVAL

MR WITOLD BAŃKA  
PRESIDENT AND CHAIRMAN OF WADA

#### FOR APPROVAL

MR OLIVIER NIGGLI  
DIRECTOR GENERAL AND RECORDING SECRETARY

