

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

Minutes of the WADA Executive Committee virtual meeting, 27 March 2025

The meeting began at 12.00 p.m. CET

1. Welcome, roll call and observers

THE CHAIRMAN welcomed the members, observers, colleagues and all other attendees. He thanked them for their time and participation that day. He recognized that a fully virtual meeting had some constraints but hoped to be able to chair a fruitful meeting that day. He would take the attendance from the system and kindly asked that all members put their cameras on so that the roll call could be captured and recorded. There were three new members that day: Ms Dagmawit Berhane, representing the IOC, who had previously sat on the WADA Foundation Board but had changed roles that year; Minister Matvii Bidnyi from Ukraine, and Her Excellency Amma Twum-Amoah from the African Union, who had formally joined the Board that week. There was one deputy, Mr Luke McCann, representing Minister Anika Wells from Australia. There was an empty seat from the Americas. A new CADE representative had not yet been appointed for the necessary Foundation Board approval. Five of the WADA committee chairs would join during the meeting to provide some updates, and some WADA management members would also present at times. The expected duration of that day's meeting was close to five hours, including a short break at midpoint. The meeting was anticipated to conclude at around 5 p.m. European time.

The following members attended the virtual meeting: Mr Witold Bańka, President and Chairman of WADA; Ms Yang Yang, Vice-President of WADA; Mr Jiří Kejval, President, National Olympic Committee, Czech Republic, IOC Member; Mr Nenad Lalovic, Executive Board Member, ASOIF, UWW President, IOC Member; Mr Ingmar De Vos, President, ASOIF, IOC Member, FEI President; Ms Dagmawit Girmay Berhane, Board Member, Ethiopian National Olympic Committee, IOC Member; Mr Humphrey Kayange Emonyi, IOC Member, IOC Athletes' Commission Member; Ms Amma Twum-Amoah, Commissioner for Health, Humanitarian Affairs and Social Development, African Union, Ghana; Dr Koji Murofushi, Commissioner, Japan Sports Agency, Japan; Mr Matvii Bidnyi, Minister of Youth and Sports, Ukraine; Mr McCann, representing Ms Annika Wells, Minister for Sport and Minister for Aged Care, Australia; Ms Gabriella Battaini-Dragoni, Independent Member, Italy; Ms Venetia Bennett, Independent Member, Australia; Dr Patricia Sengenis, Independent Member, Argentina; and Mr Ryan Pini, Papua New Guinea.

The following permanent special committee and standing committee chairs attended the meeting: Mr Ryan Pini, Chair of the WADA Athlete Council (also a member of the Executive Committee); Mr Henry Gourdji, Chair of the WADA Compliance Review Committee; Professor Lars Engebretsen, Chair of the WADA Health, Medical and Research Committee; and Ms Nathalie Bourque, Chair of the WADA Risk and Audit Committee.

The following WADA management representatives observed the meeting: Mr Olivier Niggli, Director General; Ms Aisha Ayinde, Human Resources Director; Ms Dao Chung, Chief Financial Officer; Mr Sébastien Gillot, European Office and Sport Movement Relations Director; 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 & Development Director; Mr Darren Mullaly, Government Relations 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; Ms Audrey Taillefer, Head of the Strategic Management Office; Mr Rodney Swigelaar, Director of the WADA Africa Office; Dr Alan Vernec, Chief Medical Officer; Mr Ross Wenzel, General Counsel; Ms Shannan Withers, Chief of Staff; Ms Mayumi Yaya Yamamoto, Director of the WADA Asia/Oceania Office; and Mr Günter Younger, Intelligence and Investigations Director.

The following observers joined the meeting: Jane Thornton, Hannah Grossenbacher, Michael Cepic, Jamie Brown, Natalia Radchuk, Sergii Popyk, Satoshi Ogawa, James Carr, Michael Vesper, Yumiko Nakajima, Yuka

Morokoshi, Decius Chipande, Nashiru Abdulai, Jane Mountfort, James Moller, Cameron Boland and Anna Thorstenson.

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 of the previous meeting on 4 December 2024

THE CHAIRMAN recalled that the draft minutes from December 2024 had been circulated to the members as part of the meeting materials shared in early March. No member comments had been received on the Executive Committee minutes in advance of the meeting. If there were none that day, the Executive Committee would proceed to approve the minutes. He asked if there were any comments or questions regarding the minutes of the previous meeting. There were no comments, so the minutes from the December meeting were approved.

DECISION

Minutes of the meeting on 4 December 2024
approved and duly signed.

3. Director General's report

THE DIRECTOR GENERAL welcomed the attendees to the first Executive Committee meeting of 2025. The binder contained his report, which he believed spoke for itself, and he and his colleagues would be happy to take questions on any matter that required clarification.

He would highlight three items that were not in his report: the leak of Executive Committee materials; the Enhanced Games, which were mentioned in the report and which he would like to make a point on; and he would also ask the General Counsel to give an update on a pending case before the European Court of Justice which he thought would be of interest.

Firstly, and unfortunately that was an important point, on 11 March, the entire documentation package for the Executive Committee had been leaked to The New York Times. The members had been informed at the time and he did not need to say how wrong and serious that matter was. First of all, the Executive Committee papers were confidential, containing sensitive information including personal data. As a result of the leak, for example, WADA would have to notify a number of athletes of the possible breach of data protection law, as there were cases set down in the legal report that had been mentioned in the document that were not yet in the public domain as they were still pending. That was just one example of the consequences of that kind of action. At the end of his presentation, he would also ask Mr Younger to say a few words because he wanted to update the members as to what that meant from the investigation perspective. It was serious and unfortunate. It was also clear that the person who had decided to leak the Executive Committee papers had done so knowing that it was a breach of confidentiality and probably also a breach of data protection law. They had been received by The New York Times and given that The New York Times had been engaged in a consistent campaign to undermine WADA and the doping system since the Chinese case, he thought it would come as no surprise that this newspaper was the beneficiary of that leak. Therefore, it was important to take note that the individual who had decided to do that had done so with the express purpose of trying to damage WADA and the anti-doping system. It was very disappointing to see that USADA, for example, had reposted the content of that article on its social media platform, knowing that it was based on documents that had been illegally leaked to The New York Times. To be clear, it was not thought for a second that the leak had been carried out by anybody from the Executive Committee or with the knowledge of anybody from that committee. However, WADA was well aware that the papers were circulated to wider groups of people. For instance, almost 49 countries had received the content through the Secretariat of the Council of Europe. If people were willing to send such documents to the media, as had been the case, measures had to be taken to protect confidentiality. He did not think it was good for the work WADA was doing, nor for holding open discussions and progressing, that such matters ended up in the media, before the Executive Committee even had a chance to look at and discuss them. He had asked WADA's IT Department to look into that and prepare some measures that would be brought back to the Executive Committee at its next meeting. Analysis would be done on a new system with certain security labels on documents. Members would probably be asked to identify a limited number of people who would be given access to the documents, and there would probably also be limits placed on what could be done with the documents in terms of printing, downloading, sharing information, etc. He did not want to enter into technical details at that time, but the members could expect a new system in the future because WADA thought it deserved to be protected.

Before going on, he would ask Mr Younger to briefly give his point of view on the consequences of that from an intelligence and investigations perspective.

MR YOUNGER appreciated the opportunity to briefly address the recent leak to the media, which also unfortunately included contributions from the Intelligence and Investigations Department. It was deeply concerning as, unfortunately, this was not the first time that such an incident had happened. Leaks of that nature inevitably had an impact on the reporting by the Intelligence and Investigations Department of sensitive matters to the Executive Committee, which was disappointing. Given that contributions made by the Intelligence and Investigations Department might become public, it had to be especially cautious about the sensitivity of the information it shared with the Executive Committee. Protecting the integrity of investigations and the confidentiality of the human source operations that were included remained a top priority. As a result, certain ongoing or highly sensitive matters could be disclosed only once the internal processes had been fully completed. He appreciated the understanding and continued commitment of the Executive Committee to safeguarding the integrity of WADA's work.

THE DIRECTOR GENERAL thanked Mr Younger and thought the matter was clear. On the one hand, the aim was to fully inform the Executive Committee of the work WADA was doing, in line with certain requests and remarks, including on the Chinese swimming case, for example, and on the other hand, there were leaks, which was why he had referred to proposing measures that would restrict the availability of those documents for the public at large. That was his first point.

With regard to the Enhanced Games, he wanted to highlight that the issue had been raised by the President at the WADA Annual Symposium held the previous week in Lausanne. It had been repeated during the presentation at the IOC session, also the previous week. He was sure members were very aware that the concept was to create a doping free-for-all and to encourage athletes to take part in a kind of experiment on what happened when they took doping products in unlimited amounts. Needless to say, WADA condemned the Enhanced Games as dangerous and irresponsible, and he thought the members could all agree on that fact. He would be amazed if anyone within the global anti-doping community did not support that position, be they governments, NADOs or athletes. He knew that the Athlete Council members had said some strong words at their meeting about these games, and were ready to speak out publicly about the matter, but he thought it was quite important that it remain on the agenda. The organizers were preparing to announce the venue in the coming weeks, which would most likely be in the USA, so that was something else to bear in mind.

Before concluding, he asked the General Counsel, Mr Ross Wenzel, to give a short update on a pending European Court of Justice case, which did not involve WADA but could potentially be of concern to all and to the entire sport arbitration system, depending on the final decision. He would let Mr Wenzel give a brief summary of the current status and anticipated next steps.

MR WENZEL greeted the members and reiterated that WADA was not a party in that case before the Court of Justice of the European Union. Although nothing could be guaranteed, the decision was expected in the early summer, in June or July perhaps. It was a case that had arisen from a CAS decision involving FIFA, an investment fund and a Belgian club called FC Seraing relating to a potential breach of FIFA's rules on third-party ownership funds and individuals effectively acquiring stakes in players. FIFA had legislated against that. The CAS had delivered its decision, which had gone against the club and the investment fund, called Doyen, and Doyen had taken it to the Belgian courts to seek to reopen the case. Eventually, the case had made its way up to the *Cour de Cassation* in Belgium, which had referred the matter to the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU). One of the main questions that had been referred was whether *res judicata*, effectively meaning the finality of decisions, could be given to arbitral decisions from jurisdictions where there was no review, no purview by a European Union member state court, which of course was the case for CAS arbitration. The CAS awards were reviewed by the Swiss Federal Tribunal but there was no referral to or possibility for European Union courts to review the CAS awards. The Advocate General Ćapita had handed down her opinion, which always preceded the decision of the CJEU, in mid-January, a couple of months previously. The Advocate General's opinion did not have any legal effects but it was often the case that the opinions of the Advocate General were followed by the Court. The Advocate General had effectively opined that, due to the mandatory nature of sport arbitration, unlike commercial arbitration, and also due to what she had called the self-enforcing nature by which typically the implication of state courts was not required in order to enforce sport arbitration decisions, for those reasons, where there was a system with no review by EU member state courts, it was necessary that those that could seek to invoke European law could do so after the final CAS award before the national courts of European Union member states. If the Court of Justice were to follow the Advocate General's opinion, it would effectively mean that a CAS award, potentially including in doping matters, would not be final, even once confirmed by the Swiss Federal Tribunal. In other words, the parties, including athletes or others, would potentially have another bite of the cherry before national courts in the European Union. Even more concretely, without wanting to be alarmist, it might mean that an athlete who had been banned for two or four

years by the Court of Arbitration for Sport would be able to reopen that case before a national court after the CAS award and potentially even seek provisional measures allowing them to compete. That was a point of information. WADA had not been a party and had not been able to intervene in the proceedings. The decision was expected in June or July and might or might not follow the line of reasoning of the Advocate General's opinion; but certainly if it were to, in whole or in part, it could have a big impact on the sport arbitration system in general, including in anti-doping matters.

THE CHAIRMAN opened the floor for questions and comments, welcoming Ms Twum-Amoah to the meeting.

MS TWUM-AMOA greeted the members and apologized for joining late as a result of technical issues. She wanted to take that opportunity to state that she was fully on board. She had read the report and had some comments to make with regard to the so-called Enhanced Games. She wholeheartedly agreed that such events where the health and well-being of athletes would be compromised were not what was needed and should be denounced in the strongest possible terms. It was necessary to support clean and fair games, and there should be no compromises on that issue. It was also necessary to support youth, who were the future. She therefore supported all efforts to vocalize concerns in that regard and assured the President that the African representatives there would be equally vocal and would speak with one voice and raise awareness among stakeholders on the inherent dangers involved in such a project. There was a strong objection to athletes being turned into guinea-pigs for what she believed was an ill-conceived and potentially deadly game of money before health. As that was her first meeting, her intention that day was to do more listening than talking.

MR DE VOS thanked the Director General for his detailed and comprehensive report. He was a bit disappointed to have to meet virtually, and while he fully understood that many other meetings had been taking place, not least the WADA Annual Symposium and then the IOC session, it deprived members of the opportunity to have some informal exchanges of ideas with the public authorities and WADA's leadership. He hoped that it was an exceptional situation.

He also strongly deplored the leaking of confidential documents. It was very disappointing and he believed that appropriate measures should be taken to avoid that in the future. He would also like to know if the department could find out where the leaks were coming from. Perhaps it was also necessary to make sure that the systems had not been hacked. He was not an IT specialist, but he had learned in the media that a lot of hacking was going on. That door should also be closed for the future.

He also wished to reiterate, as in the past, the concerns relating to the missing funds from the USA. It was a very important amount of money, especially since it was also matched by the IOC, which in fact doubled the amount of funds that were missing. A discussion would be held later that day on the potential impact on the functioning of WADA and the fight against doping in sport in general. He hoped that that could be fixed for the future, but the discussion would most probably be on what measures WADA would take to obtain the funding or the necessary measures in the event that the funds were not paid.

He also strongly supported the concerns that the Director General had raised with regard to the Enhanced Games. He did not want to further dwell on it but it was a very important point and a very big concern for the Olympic Movement for the integrity of sport.

With regard to UNESCO, he was very happy to see that the dialogue had resumed with UNESCO but wished to ask the public authorities to continue supporting WADA in that dialogue, ensuring that the organization could effectively conduct its role as an advisor to the Convention and ensuring that the interests of harmonized rules and of clean athletes would be at the forefront of the policy discussions and to avoid conflicts between the UNESCO anti-doping convention and the WADA Code that was under review at that time.

On behalf of One Voice, DR MUROFUSHI sincerely thanked President Bañka, Director General Niggli and the entire WADA team for their leadership and tireless efforts to strengthen the global anti-doping system. On behalf of the public authorities, he had a few comments. Firstly, he thanked the Director General for his comprehensive report. One Voice appreciated the ongoing dialogue between WADA and UNESCO. He welcomed the efforts to explore further cooperation with UNESCO in the fight against doping in sport.

On behalf of Asia, regarding the issue of the USA withholding its contributions, Asia recognized that the new director of the ONDCP had not yet been appointed and continued to monitor that closely. Asia also expressed concern, as others had, over the recent developments related to the Enhanced Games.

MR PINI thanked the Director General for his report. It went without saying that the Athlete Council was firmly opposed to the so-called Enhanced Games and any event that promoted the use of performance-enhancing substances and methods. Those games represented a truly dangerous and reckless concept that disregarded athlete health and well-being. If history had taught people anything, it was that the use of

performance-enhancing substances had taken a devastating and physical mental toll on many athletes around the world, and to encourage such an event was both irresponsible and unacceptable. The Athlete Council had first discussed that issue the previous year at its March meeting, when reports of those games had first surfaced. At the time, it had chosen not to make a public statement to avoid giving further publicity to an event that it hoped would not materialize. However, given the recent publicity and the recent discussions at the meeting the previous week in Lausanne, following renewed announcements that the games could be staged later that year or in 2026, the Athlete Council really reaffirmed its opposition and recognized the need to put its stance on the record. The Athlete Council was an advocate of clean sport. It strongly discouraged any athlete from participating in those games. Instead, it would urge all athletes who believed in fair competition and athlete well-being to make their voices heard. It was more important than ever to stand united in the commitment to protecting clean athletes and ensuring that sport remained a space of integrity, safety and respect.

Lastly, he wanted to share deep concern about the Executive Committee documents being leaked. There were many issues related to that, obviously, but importantly for the athletes, private information that must be protected was at stake.

MS BERHANE appreciated the warm welcome and the chance to join the Executive Committee. She very much looked forward to her new role in the coming days. Like the African Commissioner, that day would be her first official meeting and she would lean more towards learning and hearing more than speaking.

She echoed previous speakers who had congratulated the Director General on his report and underlined and shared the concern of previous speakers regarding the Enhanced Games and the leak of data from the Executive Committee.

She wanted to focus on the WADA Annual Symposium. She congratulated WADA on a successful WADA Annual Symposium. It was unfortunate that some members of the committee had not managed to attend the Symposium because of overlapping calendars. That brought her to raise a concern on WADA's plan to hold regional symposiums. As the sport movement representative, she took note of WADA's wish to hold an annual symposium in different regions. The sport movement noted the opportunity to increase WADA's engagement with the different regions and to secure additional funds to host such events. However, how did WADA plan to continue fostering engagement across the regions? Also, how did WADA plan to coordinate raising funds for those regions? Furthermore, how would the overlapping calendars be managed in an already overwhelming sport calendar in trying to organize those regional symposiums?

MR EMONYI appreciated the Director General's report and update on the sustainability action plan. The integrity of sport and sustainability did not depend only on strict anti-doping measures, but also on a holistic approach to protect the community's well-being. The emphasis on protecting athletes' health through education and prevention was crucial. Moreover, maintaining a level playing field was not just a regulatory necessity, it was the cornerstone of fairness and respect amongst competitors. The deliberate alignment with the Social Development Goals in the strategic plan went beyond the desire for athletes to play true. That framework would support a sustainable future where sport served as a powerful agent for social change. He welcomed the objective to deliver impact in that area and shift towards establishing a strong, sustainable foundation, marking a milestone towards enhancement of public trust and confidence. That also contributed to continuing to build trust and confidence in the anti-doping system at a global level.

MS BENNETT thanked the Director General for his very comprehensive report. It was good to see everybody online. She had made her thoughts about the Enhanced Games clear to the Executive Committee on a previous occasion and so would not repeat them, although of course she agreed with all that had been said against them.

She similarly echoed her colleagues' comments about the very disappointing leak of Executive Committee documents to a media source.

She had one question for the Director General arising from his report, which was a relatively specific reference on page 22 of the report in relation to testing figures. It was helpful and good to see that there had been an increase in the number of tests conducted, but her question related to the fact that the only information provided was essentially that testing had increased. In order to make use of that data and to drive strategic decision-making, more information was perhaps needed. For example, the percentage of tests that gave rise to adverse analytical findings and additional breakdown of the information by reference to region, age, gender, competition level, etc., and any metric that might be useful for driving decisions, including perhaps even the average cost per test, which could also assist with decision-making. Her question was whether that information was available to WADA on the basis of the data that had been derived, and whether that information could be made available to the Executive Committee in due time.

MR BIDNYI first of all wished to thank the Director General for his very detailed report. He pointed out that Europe supported the statement by Japan on behalf of One Voice. As the new European representative, it was his honour to be there that day. He thanked his predecessor, Ms Roxana Maracineanu of France, for her contribution, and he looked forward to working with all Executive Committee members on important matters of clean sport and anti-doping. He strongly appreciated the approach by WADA to resume and enhance cooperation and coordination with UNESCO, as mentioned by Japan. Also, on behalf of Europe, he asked WADA to provide further information on the strategy and practicalities of organizing five regional symposiums the following year. Europe strongly believed in a good geographical balance and ensuring widespread participation from as many countries as possible at those events, and would like to know what WADA's aims and objectives were in that regard.

Finally, reacting to some points in the report, he would like to give assurance that all efforts were taken by CAHAMA to ensure confidentiality and that only authorized delegations received those documents. It was unlikely that the leak had come from Europe, which supported improved security measures to protect confidentiality and private data.

THE DIRECTOR GENERAL noted that a number of points had recurred in the various questions, so he would address them before trying to answer more specific questions separately.

On the Enhanced Games, the position of the members was very clear. The developments remained to be seen but there might be a need in particular for the public authorities to be ready to make joint statements on the matter and WADA would encourage them to do so. When the time came, further discussion could be held to express the common position of all public authorities on the matter, which he thought was important.

On the leak, the position of the committee was also unanimous and he would therefore return with a concrete proposal to manage documents and the way they were distributed in a better way.

In response to Mr De Vos, he could assure the committee that the cause was not hacking or a WhatsApp group created with a journalist in it. That was not what had happened. The documents were downloaded and then forwarded to a number of people, and trace of them was lost. Could WADA find out the source? Probably not. Therefore, one of the changes sought was to ensure the possibility of tracing the documents, and there were existing ways to do that. Other companies also faced that kind of challenge.

With regard to the US funding, a more detailed discussion would be held later that day, but it was a regrettable matter. In response also to Dr Murofushi, WADA had reached out to the US administration following the arrival of the new administration. A holding letter had been received from the administration because, as mentioned, nobody had been appointed to the new leadership position in the ONDCP. The discussion would certainly continue to see if the US administration was ready to reconsider its position on that matter.

The members' position on UNESCO also seemed fairly united. The dialogue would continue and he hoped, as some participants had mentioned, that it would lead to good collaboration, which would avoid any clash or discrepancy between the Code and the convention and that both of them could be used as intended and in good practice.

On the question of the regional symposiums, he wanted to be very clear. The following year was a special year because of the meeting in December at the World Conference on Doping in Sport in Busan. Given that global gathering where people could meet and exchange with one another in December, holding the usual Annual Symposium in Lausanne in March seemed to be a bit close to that date and people would already have had that networking opportunity. Therefore, given 2026 was going to be a year of preparing for the implementation of the Code and Standards (because the new Code and Standards would be adopted in December 2025), the idea was to hold regional symposiums only next year. That was not something that would necessarily be continued. After that, the normal format would likely be resumed with one symposium a year for everybody, at least that was confirmed for 2027. In 2026, it would help to have the proximity and to take into account cultural differences of the regions because the implementation of the Code required a lot of dialogue, discussions and understanding from the anti-doping organizations. Not everybody was approaching those regulatory changes in the same way. Some had different cultures in terms of legislation versus regulation, etc. The hope was that, by holding the regional symposiums, it would be possible to foster better collaboration in the implementation of the new Code and the Standards. There was full awareness of the difficulty of agendas and WADA was looking to be quite flexible in terms of the dates of the symposia. WADA would work with each region to ascertain the best dates, given that a smaller number of organizations was concerned, in the hope of finding the right balance. A number of offers from various cities or governments that wanted to host the regional symposia had been received. There was also flexibility in the sense of the order, whether a symposium would be held first in Africa or the Americas, for instance. WADA would work with everybody to make it as practical as possible. The goal was to encourage everybody to adopt the Code before it was too late.

DECISION

Director General's report noted.

- 3.1 Update on the voluntary withholding of contributions to WADA's budget by governments

THE CHAIRMAN gave the floor to Mr Sieveking for an update despite the fact that, as far as he understood, not much progress had been made.

MR SIEVEKING said that he would give a brief update to the paper in the files. One Voice had earlier that week provided WADA with the name of a first new representative for the discussion group. Once One Voice had appointed a second representative or informed WADA that one representative was sufficient to join the group, then WADA would reconvene the group as already agreed to discuss the comments received from stakeholders last year and decide on the next steps.

MR KEJVAL thanked Mr Sieveking for his short report. The sport movement believed it was an important matter because it was about the financing of the organization. As there were some new members, it was perhaps worth stressing that every contribution that was paid by the public authorities was matched by the IOC. That was the system under which the agency was financed. He thought it was worth discussing in more depth under agenda item six of the meeting. As WADA was having to implement austerity measures, the sport movement called on the public authorities to protect the solidarity model, which had been established through WADA and the equal partnership. That was in the best interests of the athletes and the sport movement, and it was of particular interest to have heard some of the public authorities encouraging others not to follow in the US' footsteps.

MR PINI recalled that the Athlete Council had consistently expressed concerns regarding the voluntary withholding of contributions by governments. That issue had been discussed at both the December meeting the previous year and the previous week in Lausanne, in addition to at previous Executive Committee meetings and the Foundation Board meeting the previous year. Its position remained clear, stable and predictable. Funding was essential for WADA to fulfil its mandate and uphold the athlete-centred initiatives that educated, supported and protected clean athletes. He recognized that the issue had been raised in multiple forums and welcomed the continued discussions through the discussion group with the stakeholder comments. He thanked WADA for ensuring that the athlete-centred initiatives were continued despite those challenges. He also welcomed any additional funding that might arise through partnerships and public authorities.

DR MUROFUSHI confirmed that One Voice had agreed to nominate Ms Jane Mountfort, from New Zealand, who was one of the two public authority representatives on that discussion group. That was good news. He reported that a second candidate had also been identified, so One Voice would formally submit two nominations in writing as soon as the approval process for a second candidate had been completed. That was the good news. In addition, he recalled the One Voice position stated at the December meeting in Riyadh that it welcomed a UNESCO representative to be in the discussion group.

MR BIDNYI noted that Europe supported the statement by Japan on behalf of One Voice.

Regarding the voluntary withholding of contributions to WADA's budget by governments, Europe had a few comments to make. Firstly, he recalled that WADA had been requested to provide a legal analysis of the possibility of imposing consequences on public authorities. He understood that a limited legal analysis had been provided in 2024, but reiterated the request to provide the analysis to the public authorities. Secondly, he recalled that Europe had also previously emphasized that funding by governments was a complex and sensitive matter, and should be considered in the appropriate governmental forums. Europe was not of the view that funding arrangements could be changed without the appropriate process and in conformity with public international law and the express agreement of states. In that regard, he supported the role of UNESCO in a discussion group as observers, given the importance of the UNESCO Convention in that area. Europe also noted that, in the absence of a comprehensive understanding of the legal dimensions on that topic, the CAHAMA had requested the Council of Europe's committee of legal advisors on public international law to provide a legal opinion. While that process was under way, in the event such an opinion was produced, it would be made publicly available to all interested parties. Finally, Europe reiterated the request for the outcomes of the stakeholders' consultation held in Autumn 2024 to be published and shared with all stakeholders.

MS BATTAINI-DRAGONI noted that she had several points on how to go forward with the working group created three years previously and the question of how to find a solution. She was happy to hear the previous speaker's remarks about a possible Council of Europe report, but she had to admit that it was disappointing to see that efforts had been ongoing for years to come up with conclusions and proposals, and yet a conclusion had not been reached quickly. In the light of comments made that day on the new participants in the working group, she really hoped that a concrete result on that important issue of financing would be achieved.

She had enjoyed what the previous speakers had said and also wished to congratulate the Director General on his report. She also had to admit that the kind of difficulties encountered at that time were unprecedented, but she was absolutely convinced of the need to continue. She had been involved with WADA for many years and had never seen such a difficult situation as the current one. Strong engagement was therefore needed to emerge from that for the future.

THE DIRECTOR GENERAL apologized to Ms Bennett for overlooking her previous question on testing data. He was not sure if WADA had data on costs, for example, because each anti-doping organization had its own agreement with the laboratories. The data obtained came mainly from what was entered into ADAMS by the various anti-doping organizations. It was certainly possible to provide a far more detailed report with different categories and so on, and he would be happy to discuss that and to look at what would be useful to the Executive Committee because the full report had been published but was almost too big to be useful. Regarding costs and so on, it was more difficult because there were many trade secrets between the laboratories and the clients to which WADA did not always have access.

He would give the floor to Mr Sieveking or Mr Wenzel. He could not agree more with Ms Battaini-Dragoni on the fact that that matter had been dragging on for over three years. It was a case of one step forward and two steps backwards on that issue of voluntary withdrawal. However, the US situation provided a clear example and it was possible to understand why there had been some resistance from the US side at the time. On the legal opinion in particular, it was important to reiterate that WADA had never refused to give Europe anything. It simply had not had the elements to obtain anything meaningful.

MR WENZEL added with respect to the legal opinion that he would sound like a broken record, but the legal opinion had been requested some time previously, purely in respect of the financial penalty as a consequence, as it had been at the time. That had been discussed with counsel and not necessarily for legal reasons, but the upshot of those discussions was that it would be more appropriate to revert to interest as opposed to a penalty. Even more recently than that, even the interest payment had been removed from the consequences, so there was no financial element. Therefore, the request for the legal opinion in respect of the financial element had become moot and there was nothing to provide. There had not yet been any specific allegation from anybody that any element of the mechanism, procedure or substance in terms of the consequences breached a law or a treaty. As he had said before, and at the risk of repeating himself, it was simply not practical or feasible to go to a lawyer and ask for an opinion that that mechanism was substantively and procedurally consistent with all laws everywhere in the world. Note had been taken that a legal opinion had been sought through the Council of Europe. Of course, as and when it was received, it would be discussed by the discussion working group, when reconstituted. It sounded as though WADA would be in a position to do that very quickly, which he welcomed.

He would ask Mr Sieveking to address the other points that had been raised.

MR SIEVEKING appreciated the confirmation that the second name would be provided soon, which was very good news to restart the work of the group. However, he had not heard the other questions due to technical issues and so asked Mr Wenzel to respond to them.

MR WENZEL thought that the only other two points were, firstly, the question of the feedback from stakeholders from the consultation. He thought the intention was still to share that with the discussion group when it met again, which would apparently be soon. Then there was the question of to what extent those comments would be shared with stakeholders or made public. That would be one of the issues that would be discussed with the group. He thought that, with respect to contacts with UNESCO again, that was something that would be discussed with the group when it was reconvened and, speaking personally, as and when it was appropriate to coordinate and collaborate with UNESCO on those issues, he thought that there was no reticence to do that but that the discussion group should reconvene first to discuss the current status, take stock, decide on next steps and then decide as and when it would be appropriate to liaise with UNESCO on the withholding of funding issue.

DECISION

Update on the voluntary withholding of contributions to WADA's budget by governments noted.

- 3.2 Strategic key performance indicators (KPIs) update – preliminary results

THE CHAIRMAN gave the floor to Ms Taillefer to give an update on the strategic KPIs developed to measure the impact of activities.

MS TAILLEFER was pleased to present WADA's strategic KPIs to track progress on the new 2025-2029 strategic plan. She reiterated that the approach of combining perception, process and performance indicators

remained relevant to illustrate impact. That year, specific stakeholder groups that interacted with WADA had been surveyed to ensure that reported perceptions reflected the majority of the population being surveyed. On average, 54% of the governance body members and up to 94% of members from specific groups such as the Athlete Council had shared their views, allowing the results to be interpreted as representative.

The cover page and attachment that had been provided as part of the Executive Committee papers provided a comprehensive portrait of the 2025 indicators for each of the strategic priorities. That day, she would focus on highlights but would be happy to answer questions about other indicators. Under the Lead strategic priority, which ensured harmonized standards that elevated the global anti-doping system, 103 contributors from 43 countries had provided over 1,800 comments on the proposed first drafts of the World Anti-Doping Code and International Standards the previous year. Those contributors had been joined by 33 external experts participating in the drafting process and thus illustrating how consultative and participatory the process had been, despite the highly technical nature of the World Anti-Doping Code and the International Standards.

Under the Grow Impact priority, which aimed to maximize the impact of anti-doping programs, there was a specific initiative to provide a robust digital system for the anti-doping system. Her colleagues would provide a detailed update later, but it was worth mentioning that 72% of ADAMS users surveyed had been either satisfied or neutral with that system, which was an 11% improvement on the previous year. That included the fact that the sample size of the survey was twice as large as the previous year. Although much more work had to be done on providing a robust digital system, she was happy to see that efforts were moving in the right direction.

Under the Be Athlete-Centred priority, which aimed to put athletes at the heart of anti-doping efforts, 88% of Athlete Council members felt that WADA cared about what was important to athletes. Initiatives such as ensuring that an athlete representative sat on the majority of WADA's governance bodies contributed to that sentiment. The Athlete Council Chairman would provide a detailed update on activities later that day.

Under the Collaborate and Unite priority, which aimed to engage all stakeholders to protect clean sport, she highlighted collaboration with law enforcement in the European Union. Due to the intelligence and investigation capability and capacity project in the EU, 500 million doses of performance-enhancing drugs had been kept off the global market through more than 100 joint operations between anti-doping organizations and law enforcement.

Under the last strategic priority, which was to Perform, where WADA strove for greater efficiency in the anti-doping system and internal processes, she highlighted that despite receiving 78% of the expected contributions by the end of December 2024, WADA had secured 2.65 million US dollars in additional funding from other public and private sources.

She would conclude the presentation with a line of sight on the evolution of the KPIs for 2025 and beyond. By the end of that year, the aim was to provide additional perception data from other important stakeholders, such as the laboratories and the RADO members, and status updates on a number of topics, including the Athlete Council action plan, the Prevalence and Unintentional Doping Task Force and the WADA strategic project portfolio and the progress of those projects, and finally the sustainability action plan. In 2026 and 2027, the goal would be to present additional indicators such as the employee engagement data, perception data from Code signatories on the updated Code and International Standards support framework, the progress of Anti-Doping Organization (ADO) performance and compliance, and updates on activities with the pharmaceutical industry.

MS BENNETT thanked Ms Taillefer for her comprehensive and clear report and presentation. She was interested in the metric that was in the report rather than what she had spoken about that afternoon as to the perception of WADA. Obviously, 2024 had been a very difficult year for the organization, and she had been interested to see that there was only a marginal reduction in the view of WADA's transparency as an organization, until she had noted the disclaimer that the data was based on a sample size of around 2,200 participants in 2023 and 2024, whereas in 2025, it was from only 115 participants who had been drawn from WADA's governance structure. She wondered whether there would be any way, with the data that WADA had collected thus far, to gauge the general perception as to transparency following the very difficult year in 2024 that the organization had gone through.

DR MUROFUSHI thanked Ms Taillefer for the comprehensive report on behalf of One Voice and the public authorities.

MR DE VOS appreciated the update and the report. He had one question with regard to the Perform pages. Was there any reason why the main focus was on financial matters? With regard to the 78% of contributions that had been received by the end of December, was that seen as positive or negative? He also requested more detail about the 2.65 million US dollars in incremental funding from public and private sources, and about the other parameters taken into account to measure performance.

MR MCCANN thought that the public authority participation in the survey of 54% versus athletes at over 90% was a disappointment. Ms Taillefer had commented that it was pleasing, but he thought more representation and more views from the public authorities were needed.

MS TAILLEFER responded to Ms Bennett that, indeed, that year an interim solution or different approach to surveys had been used because the challenge of sample sizing was that it was difficult to get a representative portion of the population that had been targeted in previous years. That was one of the reasons why the decision had been made to focus on stakeholders who were directly interacting with WADA, starting with the governance body members. One of the matrices that could be looked into, which was not at that time in the report as a proxy in terms of perception, would be the general sentiment that could be analysed from media perception. However, until improvements were made to the distribution strategy in terms of the survey, there was not necessarily a perception measure of the stakeholders that went beyond the governance body members because of the difficulty of reaching out or ensuring understanding of the representativeness of the population being surveyed. She duly noted the interest in seeing the evolution of perception.

In response to Mr McCann's comment regarding public authorities and numbers, she apologized if the way she had presented the numbers was confusing. The 54% response rate was overall, including all of the governance member groups from standing committees, special committees, Athlete Council, Executive Committee and Foundation Board members and so on. Therefore, the 54% was not to be compared against the 94%. The 94% was part of the overall response rate. The attachment in the Executive Committee papers showed the average response rate by type of group. She fully agreed that the higher the number the better in terms of the ability to capture the views of stakeholders. The survey had been distributed with kind reminders sent to all stakeholders. She would be glad to see a higher response rate from all of the stakeholders invited to participate in the survey.

She thanked Dr Murofushi for his comment.

In response to Mr De Vos, regarding the Perform strategic priority, there was indeed more than only the financial highlights as indicators. Regarding the other measures of the performance of WADA beyond financial health, there was also the ability to deliver on specific projects, such as the Prevalence and Unintentional Doping Task Force, which were indicators that would be reported on by the end of the year, as well as employee engagement. On the specific matter of the financial highlights and whether 78% was positive or negative, that percentage would be deemed more negative, as the aim was to receive 100% of the contributions year on year for the stability of the financial situation. On the question regarding the 2.65 million US dollars in additional funding from private and public sources, that included around 700,000 US dollars from public sources, which came from a number of partnerships, notably with Erasmus and the Canton de Vaud, from additional grants from specific public authorities, the City of Lausanne and the Canton de Vaud for specific projects, such as the Annual Symposium and projects with the EU, whereas the private sources amounted to 1.9 million US dollars, from the partnerships with Sword and SuperSport.

DECISION

Strategic key performance indicators update noted.

- **3.3 ADAMS update**

THE CHAIRMAN gave the floor to Mr Matton to present the update.

MR MATTON said that he was pleased to provide the latest IT news and update on the ADAMS development. Since the last report in December 2024, steady progress had continued across key projects, maintaining alignment with the 2025 roadmap and the Cottier report recommendations. With regard to the report, he was pleased to mention that the mapping of the compliance review process for the Result Management Unit had been completed. In addition, interim alerts in ADAMS, an important recommendation from the Cottier report, had been developed. Those interim alerts had been implemented in production earlier that month and would notify in a timely manner the result management authority and WADA Result Management Unit if a pending case involving adverse analytical findings was created.

The key ADAMS projects or major ADAMS initiatives remained on schedule. The development of the identity access management was progressing well, with major milestones achieved. Simultaneously, work continued on the TUE module.

Regarding Athlete Central, in partnership with Sword, the first round of athlete interviews had been completed to gather valuable feedback to refine the user experience. Based on that feedback, an initial interface was being designed for validation by the same group of athletes and a second version for the future was being

created. In parallel, work was being done on the technical requirements and development of a detailed project plan. However, budget constraints might require a reassessment of the project scope or timeline.

On the Athlete Biological Passport, work continued to enhance both the Next Gen Athlete Biological Passport and the classic version, strengthening the monitoring capabilities. Recent improvements, including the updated APMU dashboard, had been increased system performance and responsiveness.

Regarding the doping control form application programming interface (API), as mentioned during the last report in December, the API pricing structure had been revised in response to stakeholder feedback. Again, the objective was to operate as close to cost neutral as possible to support ongoing API development and its evolution, and to cover WADA expenses related to development, security and support. The stakeholder feedback had been carefully considered, and adjustments had been made to the pricing strategy to better align with expectations. As shown in the presentation, the strategy fees were based on three main scenarios. The first scenario was a platform owner that was also a sample collection agency, such as PwC, IDTM or Clearidium, which would pay 20,000 US dollars plus 10,000 US dollars. Organizations working with these agencies would not pay an API fee to WADA. The second scenario was organizations with a license or a right to use of MODOC or COMPASS and collecting their own samples, which would pay 10,000 US dollars only, since the annual platform owner covered the core fees. The third scenario was the group of organizations that had created a paperless system together, and each collected their own samples. They would pay as a group an annual fee of 20,000 US dollars plus 10,000 US dollars per organization. The pricing structure would be reassessed at multiple stages, and a tailored fee model for organizations with lower transaction volumes was also under consideration. That revised model and a balanced approach made it possible to recover operational costs and allowed for an evolution of the service for stakeholders. The plan was to distribute contracts to interested organizations by the end of Q3.

WADA's commitment to cybersecurity remained a priority. Over 75% of the millions of documents stored in the ecosystem had been encrypted and work was ongoing on protecting the remaining files. These measures aligned with global best practices and enhanced the security of data. He welcomed any questions the members might have.

MR PINI thanked Mr Matton and merely wished to acknowledge the progress on the development of the new whereabouts app under Athlete Central and the efforts to incorporate the athlete feedback into that process. It was very encouraging to see that the first round of athlete reviews had been completed, and that their input was being used to refine the user experience and interface. He wanted to emphasize the importance of ensuring that that development remained truly athlete-centred, not only in the design phase, but throughout the implementation and the future updates. Whereabouts obligations were one of the most demanding aspects of an athlete's anti-doping responsibilities. Any improvements that enhanced usability, reliability and efficiency would have a direct impact on compliance and overall athlete experience. He looked forward to that progressing.

MR LALOVIC appreciated the presentation and welcomed the update, which showed that work was progressing in a good direction. The sport movement reiterated the importance for WADA to be ambitious and to leverage the newest technology when it came to ADAMS. ADAMS had always been a service free of charge, on the one hand to support ADOs, and on the other hand to support WADA's access to information that was vital for compliance and advancing the anti-doping system. International Federations had noted WADA's wish to invoice the costs for allowing use of APIs, and he would welcome further information on WADA's vision and strategy in relation to invoicing ADAMS services. APIs entailed many efficiencies, not only for ADOs but also for WADA. With that strategy, was WADA not risking slowing down innovation supporting the community's work, and was WADA moving away from one of its core activities by starting to invoice for APIs?

MR EMONYI wanted to reiterate and support the collaborative work on the athlete-centred design of ADAMS. Indeed, the user-friendly experience for athletes had been constant feedback from athletes. It was encouraging to note the advancement in terms of analytics and algorithms. An important aspect would be tightening the security measures that ensured the protection of sensitive information while improving the efficiency of the system.

DR MUROFUSHI noted that One Voice did not have a unanimous position on that issue, but on behalf of Asia, he would like to reiterate his point made at the meeting in Riyadh in December. WADA enhanced the functionalities of ADAMS, as Asia had requested WADA to consider feedback from athletes, but also from the NADOs. Additionally, Asia was concerned about the potential inefficiency of WADA's investment for developing and enhancing the ADAMS system. Furthermore, money that came from governments was from the taxpayers, so it should be used efficiently.

MR BIDNYI commented that Europe supported Asia's position, and would like to request a financial analysis of the cost estimates related to the licence for the ADAMS application programme interface and its correlation with WADA's actual operational costs.

Regarding the future update of ADAMS, MS YANG asked if there were any plans to incorporate AI into ADAMS.

MR MATTON responded to Mr Pini that the idea was always to factor in the athletes views to the development.

He thanked Mr Lalovic and replied that the main reason regarding the invoice of API costs was to make sure that the main development of ADAMS could continue cost-free.

In response to Mr Emonyi, as he had mentioned in his presentation, security measures were a main core business as well, and daily efforts were made to try to strengthen the system.

In answer to Dr Murofushi, a digital insight group had been created to help prioritize and ensure alignment with the budget and timeline.

API costs were set out in his presentation, so he hoped that they would answer Mr Bidnyi's question.

He replied to Ms Yang that there were some initial ideas with regard to AI, but it was still early in the process. The main idea regarding AI was mostly to use machine learning to help build some concepts, but at that time the work was on evaluating the efficiency of those systems to help the anti-doping community.

THE DIRECTOR GENERAL wanted to make a comment on the API cost because it seemed that there was some misunderstanding. First of all, it had been clearly explained that it was not an operation to try to make money, but merely entailed a cost-recovery element. It was important to understand that it concerned only a limited number of stakeholders, because those who were using ADAMS directly did not need to transfer data from their own system to ADAMS and did not need an API. The goal was to make the life of other organizations easier. It might also increase efficiency for WADA, but that was not the main purpose. The purpose was to facilitate that exchange. The maths were very simple: either the costs were recovered, or WADA had to pay the money to do it, and then did not invest that money into the global system. Hence, either it favoured a few organizations that needed to have an API at the cost of the whole development for everybody, or accepted that those who wanted to use an API partook in the effort solely on a cost-recovery basis and WADA continued to invest money in the system that served the whole community, which it was necessary to understand. The intention was not to change the philosophy that ADAMS was free of charge, but to be fair in the model implemented.

DECISION

ADAMS update noted.

- **3.4 Intelligence and investigations update**

THE CHAIRMAN stated that the item was a continuation of the discussion held in camera in Riyadh and he would give the floor to Mr Younger to conclude on the matter.

MR YOUNGER recalled the decision made in camera by the Executive Committee members in December of the previous year to propose an anonymized summary of the investigation in question. He briefly reminded the members that the decision had been prompted by a letter from an ADO expressing concerns about potential security risks to its source if the full report was made public. While the risk might have been deemed minor, it was WADA's duty to carefully assess the implications. He believed a balance had been struck between transparency, ensuring the public had insight into the investigation, and the ethical responsibility to protect individuals from potential harm. Since the investigation had not substantiated any allegations, the decision had been taken not to publish the full report, but instead to release a summary statement. He thought it was very safe at that time and, with the approval of the Executive Committee, WADA would move forward with its publication and notify the relevant parties accordingly.

On behalf of the public authorities, DR MUROFUSHI confirmed support for the publication of the summary report on the investigation.

MR DE VOS spoke on behalf of the sport movement to reiterate support for the approach that had been taken. He agreed with the statement but, for the avoidance of any doubt, asked if the text in italics on the second page of the annexes was the statement.

THE CHAIRMAN confirmed and thanked members for approving the statement.

DECISION

Intelligence and investigations update noted and proposed statement approved.

4. Executive Committee Working Group on the Cottier Report Implementation

- 4.1 Progress report against roadmap

THE CHAIRMAN gave the floor to Mr Kemp to provide an overview of the operational improvements under way.

MR KEMP said that he would provide an update on the current operational status with respect to the recommendations emanating from the Cottier report. He recalled that the final Cottier report had been presented to the Executive Committee in September of the previous year. Shortly thereafter, it had been decided by the Executive Committee that a smaller working group should be established which would look at the recommendations and see what might be implemented and how that might be accomplished. The purpose of that day's report was to provide an update on those recommendations and what was being done within the agency to put those recommendations into practice. Ultimately, it was WADA management that was responsible for the implementation of those recommendations. He wanted to provide an overview of these technical elements and where these improvements were being made. He also recalled that the Cottier report had confirmed that the matter was neither a case of favouritism towards the Chinese authorities nor a cover-up. However, like any type of crisis or challenge for the agency, it had been deemed an opportunity to reflect and to strengthen the processes already in place, and to consider what more might be done to ultimately improve on the delivery of the World Anti-Doping Program. To that end, there were four main categories where recommendations from the Cottier report had provided opportunities for operational improvements, and he would try to provide a very high-level summary of the improvements being made in four areas.

Firstly, there were improvements related to the Legal Department process, and in particular how results were managed, in particular with what was called the Result Management Centre, which was the software application for monitoring cases and overseeing case management. Secondly, there was the work conducted by Mr Younger's team in the Intelligence and Investigations Department in terms of how it triaged cases that might be multifaceted and have an impact on other WADA departments in order to adequately ensure coordination across departments without jeopardizing the independence of the Intelligence and Investigations Department's efforts. Thirdly, as Mr Matton had alluded to, there were recommendations related to what improvements could be made in ADAMS to ensure that the WADA Legal Department and to some extent the Intelligence and Investigations Department were aware of high-risk cases for the agency in order to monitor them very carefully. Finally, the recommendations from the report afforded the opportunity to consider changes to the actual World Anti-Doping Code and related International Standards. Given the ongoing update process to the Code and standards, it was an opportune moment to reflect on what changes could be made there.

There were two additional elements under consideration related both to the Cottier report and the report of the Aquatics Integrity Unit that he would not go into detail on, but asked the Executive Committee to consider as being related to the aforementioned four categories, given that they related to the independence of NADOs and contaminations. More detail would be provided in the forthcoming two agenda items by Mr May and Professor Rabin. With respect to the actual detailed improvements, he would try to provide a very high-level summary. The paper went into much more detail, and he would be happy to take any sort of technical questions with the assistance of his technical colleagues as necessary. With respect to the Legal Department and the result management follow-up that he had mentioned, efforts had focused on addressing the recommendations from the Cottier report through better standardizing and harmonizing the approach to case management internally. It should be noted that many of the recommendations set out in the Cottier report had actually been addressed by WADA's Legal Department before the report had come out, which demonstrated ongoing learning through day-to-day activities where opportunities for improvement were seen. It was pleasing to know that the Cottier recommendations had been consistent with internal findings. To that end, a number had already been identified and implemented. Specifically, efforts had been made to improve the standardization of documentation, labelling and communication protocols internally, and to automate that process to obtain a better line of sight on all case management in real time.

With respect to the intelligence and investigations improvements, Mr Younger would elaborate on those if required, but essentially the aim was for the intelligence and investigations team to be aware of the sensitivity of particular cases they came across and how they might relate to other activities within the agency. He reiterated that that was done in such a way as to not jeopardize the independence of the intelligence and investigations efforts internally. If necessary, when that new triage and prioritizing framework had been finalized

by the Intelligence and Investigations Department, he would be happy to provide more detail to the Executive Committee on the process.

Coming back to ADAMS, there had been a clear recommendation in the Cottier report that there needed to be some sort of alarm system to bring to WADA's attention cases that were exceptional, that perhaps warranted more attention and were not necessarily following the routine practice. It had been a challenge to establish the criteria of what an exceptional case might look like, given that there were more than 3,000 cases a year. However, in the interim, an alarm system had been implemented that raised a red flag to the Legal Department when there was a potential disconnect between an adverse analytical finding for a prohibited substance, where the appropriate update had not been provided by the result management authority in ADAMS, so that there was no undue delay. The Digital Insights Department was currently working closely with the Legal Department to see what more could be done, which might entail refining the result management process in ADAMS or potentially working with additional software that connected to ADAMS to help to improve that alarm-type system in ADAMS.

Finally, it was worth noting within the Code update process itself that the Code Drafting Team had already drafted provisions that essentially built in an additional layer of scrutiny to cases before they were dismissed. In other words, subject to approval by the stakeholders, the Executive Committee and the Foundation Board, the concept of an independent review expert would be added to the Code. That proposal would require that all athletes be notified of their cases, that provisional suspensions be imposed as required under the Code, but ultimately that an independent review expert look at a case before it was dismissed by an anti-doping organization and provide a written opinion to both the anti-doping organization and to WADA as to whether or not it was appropriate that that case be dismissed, because there had been a departure from the International Standards, because there had been a TUE, or because of any reason why it might be dismissed, and then WADA would be copied on that decision. Perhaps most importantly as well, should an anti-doping organization not follow that process, it could be a matter of compliance addressed by the appropriate international standard.

He hoped that was helpful in terms of a very high-level update on the status of the various implementation matters, but would be happy to address any of the more technical questions as they related to the detailed points in the report.

Lastly, he wished to give the floor to Mr Wenzel because, at the meeting in Riyadh, questions had been asked on the publication of the Cottier annexes and it seemed like an opportune moment for an update on that matter.

MR WENZEL recalled the recommendation made in September 2024 from WADA's external data protection counsel that, whereas it was necessary, given the public interest to publish the Cottier report, the same justification was not there for the annexes. It was the view of that data protection counsel that there would be both legal and non-legal risks in publishing the annexes, including personal information, data protection, confidential information, third parties, but also the disclosure of investigation techniques. The opinion that had been received in September 2024 had also drawn attention to the fact that the disclosure of these annexes, which included reports of interviews conducted with third parties, might also dissuade third parties from cooperating with WADA investigations in the future. Also, importantly, the opinion had mentioned the risk that a publication of very technical annexes might be used by outside actors, either intentionally or unintentionally, to misinterpret or mischaracterize the information contained in the annexes. The report was clear that those risks could be mitigated to some extent by redaction but that there would be residual risk. It would not be eliminated. Further to what had been discussed at the Executive Committee meeting in Riyadh, he had gone back to the data protection counsel to seek a quote for the work that would be necessary in order to assess and redact, as necessary, the annexes. The external counsel had been clear that that would be a substantial amount of work. It would involve meeting and discussions with Mr Cottier himself to understand some of the risks, but also with some of the third parties mentioned, including those who had been interviewed and who featured in the annexes. The quote that had been received to conduct that work was between 40,000 and 75,000 euros. As he had said before, in his view and the view of WADA management, the annexes were not necessary in order to understand the Cottier report. Indeed, much of the annexes was even quoted directly in the report. He thought WADA had been clear recently, including at the symposium ten days prior, about the importance of moving forward. That did not mean that it would not implement the lessons and learnings from the Cottier report which Mr Kemp had just explained. However, the view was that it was not necessary or helpful at that stage to publish the annexes. With or without redaction, there would be both a legal and non-legal risk in doing so, in addition, of course, to the not insubstantial cost of performing that exercise of redaction.

MR LALOVIC thanked WADA, especially Messrs Kemp and Wenzel, for the detailed report. He was very pleased that some of the initiatives had already been completed. As a member of that working group, he had to say that Ms Battaini-Dragoni's leadership had been exceptional, and he was encouraged to see how seriously

WADA was taking the recommendations and following them through. He encouraged WADA to have a clear communication strategy on the implementation of the different recommendations. The athletes and the anti-doping community at large needed to hear and see that WADA took crises as an opportunity to learn and make the system even more effective. There would always be opportunities to improve how work was done, and it was important for WADA to show athletes that it continued to move forward and to explain the concrete steps that were being implemented. On behalf of the Olympic Movement, he further encouraged WADA to continue its due diligence and looked forward to future updates.

DR MUROFUSHI noted that One Voice did not have a unanimous position; however, on behalf of Asia, he acknowledged the effort and progress made implementing the recommendations by the working group.

Regarding the independent review expert, Asia requested clarification on whether the mechanism would be in place to inform the Executive Committee about the cases referred to the independent review expert. On page eight, there was a reference to the notification to the athlete with a copy sent to WADA. He wished to know to which level of WADA that would be sent to. Also, in some socially significant cases, how much further would they be shared?

MR DE VOS asked when the activities of the Working Group on the Cottier Report would be finalized. Secondly, what were the costs of implementing the actions that had been identified and that were in the course of implementation? With regard to what Mr Wenzel had said, he thought it was fully agreed that it was time to turn that page. That had been said on several occasions. The report itself was, he believed, more than sufficient. Additional funds should certainly not be invested in the annexes, which ultimately only supported the conclusions of the independent prosecutor.

MR KEMP noted Mr Lalovic's comments and fully agreed that some form of communication strategy would be required to convey what was being done internally to act on the recommendations of the working group.

He would leave the response to Dr Murofushi's question last because he would require the assistance of Mr Wenzel with respect to the independent review expert, and he would ask Mr Wenzel to provide more details on the status of that provision as it related to the Code update.

In response to Mr De Vos, with regard to the working group, essentially its activities were over, but there was an obligation to report back to the Executive Committee, as was being done that day, in the event that more activity was required from the working group. The costs were relatively negligible at that time but might increase depending on the IT solutions put in place. On the work being carried out with respect to intelligence and investigations, the costs were also negligible but it was more a matter of human power in terms of the hours spent by Mr Younger and his team on building a framework, with no associated costs. Related to the legal processes, again, it was the time of the staff in developing those protocols, but that was very much seen as an important investment that did not come with a huge financial cost. But of course, like all IT solutions, there was a cost. The costs to date were very limited because they were part of the ADAMS development roadmap that had already been budgeted for. However, if a decision were taken to utilize any additional software, there might be additional costs, which were not yet determined. He thought that would be an important element to add to future updates to the Executive Committee on the working group recommendations, i.e. the associated cost of any new developments.

He would give the floor to Mr Wenzel to provide more details on the independent review expert.

MR WENZEL appreciated Dr Murofushi's question. He did not have a final answer because he thought it was one that would probably merit further discussion with the Code team and with other members of WADA's leadership. It was an interesting question and, to be candid, one he had not thought about before. As an initial reaction to the question, he noted that the provision envisaged that where an ADO was thinking about closing a case where there was an AAF without going further, then it had to consult the independent review expert. He supposed the real issue arose where either an ADO did not do that and merely ignored the obligation to go to the independent review expert, or did not follow the recommendation of the independent review expert. It was perhaps less sensitive where the ADO would consult with the independent review expert and then follow the recommendation, including if that were to move forward or it was agreed that it was not a case for public policy reasons, for instance, that should not move forward. In any event, cases where an adverse analytical finding did not move forward were very rare, exceptional cases, and the cases where an ADO would either circumvent or not follow the independent review expert procedure or ignore the recommendation of the independent review expert would be even rarer. In those cases, he thought it was highly likely, if not inevitable, that WADA would appeal those cases itself. When WADA appealed, those appeal cases and the results thereof were included in the papers circulated to the Executive Committee. In particular where the process had been circumvented or where a recommendation had been ignored, whether or not there would be notification to the Executive Committee before an appeal had been lodged was certainly something that merited discussion. Obviously,

those would in principle at that stage be non-public cases that had not gone through results management, let alone reached a decision. Therefore, certainly if there were to be any reporting, it would have to be done in a way that respected the confidentiality of that process and data protection. It was a very interesting question on which more thought would be given.

DECISION

Progress report against roadmap noted.

- 4.2 Creation of the WADA Working Group on Contaminations

THE CHAIRMAN recalled that the item was for decision. The implementation of the Cottier report continued, and the Working Group on Contaminations was to be established to respond to recommendations from that report. He also recalled that some changes to the document had been requested by One Voice, and the updated version had been shared with everyone on Wednesday. He gave the floor to Professor Rabin.

PROFESSOR RABIN recalled that, at the Executive Committee meeting held the previous December in Riyadh, WADA management had been tasked with establishing a working group on contaminations. As previously mentioned, the objective had been to establish a working group composed of experts from various relevant fields to take a holistic approach to contamination situations and derive some high-level recommendations to be presented to the Executive Committee, hopefully within a year or so. It was important to clarify that this working group would work in coordination with the Contaminants Working Group, established in 2018, and the Task Force on Unintentional Doping, established the previous year. Although these two groups were essentially scientific and educational, in essence, the Working Group on Contaminations would benefit from the technical analysis as needed in the course of its discussions, and would have full access to reports and documents developed by these two groups. As indicated in the terms of reference of the Working Group on Contaminations, some of the key objectives of the group would be to identify the various situations at the origin of individual and collective contamination cases in sport that led to adverse analytical findings and anti-doping rule violations under the current anti-doping rules and also to compile the relevant metrics to assess the overall assessment associated with contamination and reflect upon past, present and future trends of contamination issues affecting anti-doping in sport. It would also make recommendations to the WADA Executive Committee on how best to address contamination situations, including any adjustments to anti-doping rules and policies if required, and finally, assess the consequences of anti-doping and other policies on their eventual impact outside of the anti-doping sphere. This included in particular the food industry and applicable regulations for the food industry, and veterinary treatment of cattle or dietary supplement regulations, to name but a few.

A request had been received the previous day from Japan and Oceania to slightly amend the terms of reference by adding the following text: "The working group on contaminations must take into account the need to ensure an anti-doping system that can adequately distinguish between cases of genuine contamination and intentional doping, is fair and proportionate and transparent, promotes trust and confidence in the system for athletes and all stakeholders and finally, is sustainable from a practical and financial perspective". Such an amendment, of course, was welcomed and he thanked Japan and Oceania for providing that slight amendment. There were two points he wanted to raise. Firstly, he would recommend replacing "must take into account" with "should take into account", to better reflect the intention of the Working Group on Contaminations to address such points, but not necessarily make them binding, as the group would only make recommendations to the Executive Committee. His second recommendation would be to ask the representatives from Japan and Oceania to clarify what was understood by "transparent", to ensure that that did not impose, for example, systematic public disclosure of contamination cases.

The composition of the working group reflected the holistic approach of the task to be accomplished with a good balance of experienced people in the field of anti-doping, and people who were members of organizations that had had to deal in the past with the contamination issue at the national level and from an anti-doping perspective. The task would obviously be challenging; but, as contamination was a growing field and created some interference with anti-doping practices, the decision had been made to establish a small group with high reactivity to ensure that it could maintain a robust momentum and produce recommendations, hopefully in a rather short time frame. Finally, he warmly welcomed and thanked the members who had kindly agreed to participate in the working group.

DR MUROFUSHI noted that One Voice supported the establishment of the Working Group on Contaminations and thanked Professor Rabin. Also, One Voice had proposed an amendment, as stated, or an addition to the terms of reference for the Executive Committee's consideration. That proposal had originally been put forward by Oceania and Asia to One Voice members, and had been agreed upon to submit as a One Voice proposal. The request was to expand the terms of reference objectives to include four perspectives that

were essential for maintaining an efficient and stable anti-doping system: firstly, to adequately distinguish between cases of genuine contamination and intentional doping. Second, to be fair, proportionate and transparent. Third, to promote trust and confidence in the system among athletes and other stakeholders. Four, to be sustainable from the practical and financial perspective. Mr McCann from Oceania would explain the reasoning behind those four points.

MR MCCANN firstly wished to thank Professor Rabin for the extensive conversation held in Lausanne the previous week, which had clarified a number of aspects in terms of those working groups and the various work that was going on within WADA regarding contamination and contamination matters. In terms of those particular additions, they were deemed to reflect the fact that the broader work must consider the implications for contamination cases more broadly as it was doing its work, and ensure that it connected with those other working groups where possible.

On behalf of the sport movement, MR DE VOS also supported the creation, the composition and the terms of reference of the working group, including the amendments proposed by One Voice and clearly explained by Dr Murofushi, whom he thanked. He looked forward to the recommendations of the working group, which could have a big impact on the concept or the future concept of contamination. It was important, especially given the increasing number of contamination cases, but a bit confusing in the sense that the working group was supposed to conclude its activities in March 2026, which was after the approval of the new WADA Code. He asked how the working group would be in time for some or all of its recommendations to be taken on board in December if necessary.

MR BIDNYI thanked Professor Rabin for the detailed presentation. It was very important for Europe to have clarification on the relationship between the proposed working group and the current Contaminants Working Group, and on the respective responsibilities and boundaries. Also, Europe asked WADA to consider amending the terms of reference to include the participation of an expert in food and medicine safety, as well as an expert in laboratories. Furthermore, Europe would like to be precise in asking WADA if it would consider amending the terms of reference of the working group to allow for ADOs/NADOs to be called upon on an ad hoc basis for contributions.

PROFESSOR RABIN appreciated the comments and stated that he would try to be brief. First of all, as mentioned before, he welcomed the additions from Japan and Oceania, which would be included in the terms of reference. The only point, as he had mentioned, was the recommendation from the WADA side to replace the “must” with a “should”, for the reasons he had explained.

In response to Mr De Vos, he welcomed the support from the sport movement for the creation of the working group. In terms of the dynamic vis-à-vis the other activities, namely the Code and the International Standards and related documents, if anything arose in the near future, and that was why the goal was to activate that group as quickly as possible, if there was anything major that could affect the Code, there was always the possibility of referring that point to the Code Project Team in the very short term. However, it was anticipated that, if there were any technical adjustments, they would be mainly for the technical documents, as had been seen with the work of the Contaminants Working Group.

He thanked Mr Bidnyi for his comment and clarified that, as he had indicated in his short introduction, the Contaminants Working Group was very technical in essence. Its work was when a contaminant had been identified to try to find technical solutions, in particular with modification of the technical documents that were included in the laboratory practice, to practically address that point, so he was not too concerned about that. Regarding the involvement of other experts, that was what was being done in the Contaminants Working Group, which had experts in food residue and laboratory experts, and it was deemed appropriate to keep those technical discussions within the Contaminants Working Group. Nonetheless, if the Working Group on Contaminations were to require technical input, it would be absolutely encouraged to listen to or connect with external experts. That was the approach usually taken at WADA, and there was no reason why the Working Group on Contaminations would operate differently. He hoped that answered the question.

THE CHAIRMAN asked if the Executive Committee was in agreement to approve the creation of the WADA Working Group on Contaminations, including its proposed terms of reference and composition, and including the amendments that had been circulated the previous day.

DECISION

Proposal to establish the WADA Working Group on Contaminations approved.

- 4.3 Creation of the WADA Working Group on the Operational Independence of NADOs

THE CHAIRMAN recalled that the item was for discussion, as determined on 17 March, when the draft terms of reference and composition had been circulated; its approval would be requested post meeting.

MR MAY noted that he would provide a quick update on the proposed creation of the working group related to NADO operational independence and would be happy to take any comments or questions after the presentation. As already mentioned by Mr Kemp, at the December 2024 Executive Committee meeting in Riyadh, the Working Group on the Cottier Report Implementation had been approved by the Executive Committee. Recommendation 6.2 thereof asked and recommended that the WADA Executive Committee establish a working group to explore the issues related to the structure of various national anti-doping organizations and the impact of good governance. Based on that recommendation, WADA had drafted proposed terms of reference and a composition structure of the new working group. As the President had indicated, that draft had been circulated to the Executive Committee members on 17 March for consultation and discussion. A circulatory vote would be held in the coming weeks to seek formal approval on the creation and composition of that group.

With regard to the proposed terms of reference, the original mandate for the working group would be as of March or possibly April, as it was already the end of March, to December 2025. It would report to the WADA Executive Committee. The chair of the group would be the official rapporteur and was to be responsible for ensuring coordination with WADA management and providing the relevant reports to the WADA Executive Committee and he, as the Director of Engagement and Development, as well as Mr Tim Ricketts, the Director of Testing, would act as the liaisons between WADA and the proposed working group.

In relation to the proposed key objectives and key activities of the working group, which could be found in the terms of reference of which the members had received a draft version of, the first objective would be to review the findings related to NADO operational independence in the independent prosecutor Mr Eric Cottier's interim and final reports, as well as the findings of the anti-doping audit review committee of the World Aquatics bureau, published in July 2024. The second objective would be to consider current NADO practices and develop specific recommendations to address recommendation 6.2 in the report of the Working Group on the Cottier Report Implementation. That would include reviewing the proposed changes to the operational independence of NADOs that were part of the 2027 Code and International Standards update process, and to assess whether any adjustments could be recommended. He noted, in response also to a question put to Professor Rabin, that the timing of the Code and standards update process was quite tight. Once the working group had been approved and established, the timelines would definitely be taken into account to ensure that any potential changes could be incorporated into the current process. In addition, the group would identify any additional considerations that might require further assessment and possible consideration for inclusion in future revisions of the International Standards. There was a current guide on NADO operational independence, and that would be part of the review process as well. Finally, the working group proposed to discuss overall potential improvements and best practices that could be considered by anti-doping organizations and WADA to address the perception that some athletes might have regarding a possible conflict of interest when NADOs were in charge of supervising their own athletes, in particular those who were due to take part in international sport events. The last objective or proposed objective of the working group would be to provide an overall roadmap of the recommendations, and any considerations that should be taken into consideration related to their potential timeline for implementation.

The proposed composition of the working group was six members. Informal contact had been made with the various proposed groups to receive recommendations on who might be the best nominee to be part of that group. Confirmation had been received that an independent member of the WADA Executive Committee, Ms Venetia Bennett, would chair the proposed working group. The Athlete Council and One Voice for the public authorities had been asked to nominate a representative. Mr Michael Vesper was the proposal from the International Olympic Committee and the sport movement. A discussion was pending with the WADA NADO Expert Advisory Group for one representative and Mr Olivier Banuls would represent the WADA Strategic Testing Expert Advisory Group, if accepted by the Executive Committee.

THE CHAIRMAN thanked the members of the Executive Committee for accepting the proposal, especially Ms Bennett for accepting the proposal to be the independent chairman of the group.

DR MUROFUSHI confirmed on behalf of public authorities that One Voice would submit a nomination to the working group as soon as possible. With regard to the composition of the group, he requested advice on the most appropriate field of expertise for the government nominee.

On behalf of Europe, MR BIDNYI wished to comment on the proposed Working Group on NADO Operational Independence. Firstly, Europe called on WADA to ensure that the outcomes of the working group could be

incorporated into the 2027 Code and International Standards, if the group itself considered that necessary. As such, Europe would ask for the timeline set out in the terms of reference to be drafted in a way that took this into account. Europe would also like to make sure that the WADA NADO Expert Advisory Group was duly allowed to consider and appoint its own expert representative to the working group. Similarly to the Working Group on Contaminations, Europe wanted to make sure that the timelines and potential impact to the Code and the Standards were properly taken into account. Finally, he noted that NADO operational independence had long been a concern within Europe. In that regard, the Council of Europe's monitoring group of the anti-doping convention had produced a recommendation on operational independence in 2018, which could serve as a key document with important principles that could be useful for the new working group. Given that experience, Europe stood ready to support that activity and contribute as needed.

MS BENNETT thanked WADA for offering her the opportunity to participate in the working group, which was one of the working groups being created by WADA and through the direction of the Executive Committee following the very constructive discussions of the working group assembled after the receipt of the Cottier report and led by Ms Battaini-Dragoni. She wanted to confirm that she was aware of the importance of ensuring operational independence for NADOs and the impact that failing to do so could have on WADA's ultimate purpose, which was, of course, to provide a level playing field for athletes. She particularly wanted to thank Minister Bidnyi for his comments and direction in relation to the 2018 report and the offer of assistance from Europe. She was pleased to accept the role of chair of the working group, and looked forward to working with colleagues when the full group was appointed to achieve the working group's terms of reference.

MR EMONYI thanked Mr May for the update. It was imperative that NADOs remain free from any real or perceived conflicts in the interest of objective and unbiased testing. Athletes had expressed continuous concern that, without more independent testing, especially at international level, there was a risk of NADOs potentially favouring their own athletes over impartial enforcement of the rules. He believed that having the working group in place would address some of those concerns, which were crucial in building and maintaining confidence in the system.

MR PINI thanked Mr May and supported Mr Emonyi's intervention. The Athlete Council fully supported the establishment of the Working Group on NADO Operational Independence. Athletes needed confidence that their NADO was independent, transparent and free from any external influence, following all best practices in good governance. The working group was a step in the right direction, and he welcomed the focus on governance and compliance to strengthen anti-doping structures. He looked forward to contributing and ensuring that athletes' voices remained central in that process, and would confirm an athlete representative hopefully in the following week.

MR MAY thanked the members for their comments. In response to Dr Murofushi, he thought some recommendations could be made after the meeting to One Voice on the type of representation and experience being sought from public authorities. Generally speaking, because the working group would be looking at the governance of NADOs and how they were structured, seeking to understand the legal landscape and the ability to look at different regions of the world, working with the rest of the group could be one area that would be useful.

In response to Minister Bidnyi, Ms Bennett had reacted to his comments and offer of support. He would take on board the other comments, including ensuring or proposing that the working group take into consideration the timelines related to the 2027 Code and International Standard update and looking at what was at that time proposed in the documents and if there was a need to propose changes or recommendations to engage with the relevant drafting teams as well as the stakeholders as needed. He believed that that would be built into the work plan but, as the chair, Ms Bennett would have to determine that, although it was definitely on the radar of the working group.

The NADO Expert Advisory Group would be asked to appoint its expert to the group. That was also noted.

In response to Mr Emonyi, he agreed that having members from the Strategic Testing Expert Advisory Group, as well as the Director of Testing advising or being a WADA liaison to that group, would allow analysis of the issues related to testing and independent testing when it came to athletes, particularly in the lead-up to international events. There were or there might be some things already in the International Standard for Testing or being proposed that would also strengthen that, and it could be just a matter of having it further implemented or monitored in terms of being implemented by anti-doping organizations. That would definitely be part of the process.

He thanked Mr Pini and the Athlete Council for their support of the group and looked forward to receiving the recommended expert for the group in the near future.

He thanked Ms Bennett for accepting the challenge and hoped that he and the team could support her as much as needed for the entire process.

MS BERHANE echoed her colleagues on behalf of the sport movement in thanking both of the independent members for taking and accepting that role, as their voices were valued. It was very important for the governance structure for their voices to be heard.

DECISION

Creation of the WADA Working Group on NADO
Operational Independence noted.

5. Governance

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

THE DIRECTOR GENERAL noted for information only that the process, which had started on 2 December with the publication of an open call for interest, had proceeded. Every file received had been sent on 4 February to the Nominations Committee, which would inform the Foundation Board of the result of the assessment the following day. On Monday, there would be public information about the candidates, and the election was still planned for 29 May. He simply wished to confirm that the process was following its course.

DECISION

2025 WADA president and vice-president
election update noted.

- 5.2 Nominations Committee independent member and sport movement member term renewals

THE DIRECTOR GENERAL recalled that the matter had been discussed at the previous meeting. The members had been given the two names of the proposed members to be renewed. One was an independent member and the other was from the sport movement: Ms Regine Buettner from Germany and Mr Kelly Fairweather from South Africa respectively. The Executive Committee was asked to formally renew their appointment to the Nominations Committee.

On behalf of One Voice, DR MUROFUSHI approved the reappointment of Ms Buettner and Mr Fairweather.

MR DE VOS said that he was pleased to again be agreeing with the public authorities. On behalf of the sport movement, he confirmed support for the reappointment of Ms Buettner and Mr Fairweather.

THE CHAIRMAN asked the Executive Committee if it was in agreement to formally reappoint the following members of the WADA Nominations Committee: Ms Regine Buettner of Germany, an independent member, and Mr Kelly Fairweather of South Africa, a sport movement member, for three-year terms commencing on 15 May 2025 and ending on 14 May 2028.

DECISION

Proposed Nominations Committee member term
renewals approved.

- 5.3 Risk and Audit Committee update

THE CHAIRMAN gave the floor to Ms Nathalie Bourque, the Chair of the Risk and Audit Committee, to present that item.

MS BOURQUE appreciated the opportunity to present as it was the first time. Her committee was a good one, with Mr Kemp and Ms Chung making a big difference.

She would start with the audit side of things. Ms Chung did a great job and ensured that the financials were very good. One of the objectives was to make sure that every dollar was very well invested and that was the case. In the past year, checks had been performed on research grants which showed that more than 95% of the money was well invested. There had been a couple of cases where it had stopped, but that was life. Overall, performance was very good.

On the risk side, which she thought was the biggest side of the mandate, the biggest part of risk was obviously reputation. Without a great reputation, there would be no WADA. To date, WADA had always had a very good reputation. As with any other organization, the greatest concern was to secure enough money to achieve its mission for athletes around the world. Many discussions had been held with Mr Kemp about the idea of adding some revenue from other sources. She realized the importance of avoiding any type of conflict of

interest, but perhaps it might be possible to include certain drug companies. Some ideas on that had been proposed.

The committee remained active on all other matters, although it was still in its infancy. Together with Mr Kejval and Mr Farooq (the Executive Committee members had not met the latter) they were very productive with the support of Mr Kemp, and their work would continue. The good reputation was being upheld, although it always remained a concern.

DR MUROFUSHI thanked the Risk and Audit Committee members on behalf of public authorities for their efforts and informative reports. One Voice did not have a unanimous position on that issue. However, some regions in Oceania also had some comments.

On behalf of the Olympic Movement, MS BERTHANE was very grateful to the committee, which was in its infancy. Her question was whether the committee had the necessary resources and support from internal control because dealing with risks was quite important. The report underlined the important role that it played in upholding the reputation of WADA. She wanted to understand if the committee members were happy with the support of the administration and if they had the necessary resources and support.

MR MCCANN reiterated the request made by Oceania in Saudi Arabia to provide visibility to either the Executive Committee or the Foundation Board on the work plan of the Risk and Audit Committee in order to assess or even provide input into risks that were being considered for audit or review.

MS BOURQUE responded to Ms Berhane that the committee did have the necessary resources. Like many other organizations around the world, for obvious reasons, WADA was facing a dire financial situation. Mr Kemp and his team, together with Ms Chung, were doing a good job to address that. The possibility of incorporating an internal audit person was being considered, which she would welcome. That would be enough because it was important to control the budget tightly.

She asked Mr McCann to repeat his question.

MR MCCANN noted that, from the perspective of Oceania, it was quite normal for an audit committee to report to a board regarding its formal work plan over a period of time, and for the board to comment on that. In the case of WADA, that might be the Foundation Board.

MS BOURQUE explained that she had sat on audit committees of publicly listed companies on various stock exchanges. She agreed that the chairman reported to the board and sought approval of the audit results and all other matters. She did not know what the rule was at WADA so would defer to Mr Kemp.

MR KEMP thanked Mr McCann for the question. Briefly, the Risk and Audit Committee would devise a work plan setting out what it wanted to look at and what mitigating measures it might wish to put in place or to recommend to WADA's management. The committee was still in its relative infancy, so members were still coming to grips not only with WADA's finances, but also with the general anti-doping ecosystem. The members were picking up on those points very quickly, but he thought that the forecast additional resource of an internal auditor would be required to help to advance a work plan. Ultimately, the Risk and Audit Committee was comprised of only three volunteers, whose time was precious to WADA. Therefore, he thought that the heavy lifting needed to be done by the WADA management and in particular by a new internal auditor position, to bring the data to the Risk and Audit Committee to help to formulate a plan. He thought that would be an important addition. By the next meeting, if all went well, a full-time internal auditor should have been hired or would be close to being hired to support the Risk and Audit Committee, which would then be in a much better position to develop a work plan collaboratively with the WADA management.

DECISION

Risk and Audit Committee update noted.

- **5.4 Amendments to the WADA NADO Expert Advisory Group election procedure**

THE CHAIRMAN noted that the item was for decision. The revised version of the WADA NADO Expert Advisory Group election procedure had been submitted for the approval of the Executive Committee in advance of the NADO Expert Advisory Group election scheduled for later in 2025, for the 2026-2028 term. He gave the floor to Mr May to explain the proposed amendments.

MR MAY stated that he would give the members a very brief overview of the proposed amendments to the NADO Expert Advisory Group election procedure. He recalled that the NADO Expert Advisory Group had been reformed in 2023 following the recent governance reforms. Prior to 2023, the group had been appointed by WADA but, as a result of those governance reforms, it had become an elected body with 10 members elected by NADOs on a regional basis. Two NADO representatives were elected per region for a three-year term. The

terms of reference could be found on the WADA website. The chair and vice-chair of the NADO Expert Advisory Group sat as independent NADO representatives on the WADA Foundation Board.

At its meeting in May 2022, the Executive Committee had approved the election procedure for the NADO Expert Advisory Group inaugural election. The term of the first inaugural group had been from 2023 to 2025, which was nearing completion. The following election process for the next term would be launched in July of that year, with a view to holding the election at the end of October. The election procedure had been reviewed by the current NADO Expert Advisory Group, and changes were being proposed based on the experience gained over the past three years since the first election. If the revised election procedures were approved that day, they would come into effect for the following NADO Expert Advisory Group election for the 2026 to 2028 term.

The Executive Committee had been provided with the document for review and he would merely highlight a couple of the main changes that it would be useful to be aware of. Some formatting and general changes had been made to provide further clarity and to align with wording in related documents. Additional changes had been made to clarify how communications were sent, whether to all NADOs or only eligible NADOs, for example, regarding the voting registration system. A couple of key changes were firstly to provide some clarity on the candidate criteria. The additional or new wording had been highlighted in blue on the screen, and the changes or the deletions had been highlighted in red. For the candidate criteria, it had been clarified that the candidate must be employed as a staff member and at the senior management level or as a member of the oversight body, for example, a chairman of a board. The next main clarification or revision had been to include a clear deadline to become eligible to vote, to ensure that, no later than one week prior to the vote period opening, it was very clear who was eligible to vote and the necessary information was available to ensure a smooth voting process.

There had also been some changes within the NADO Expert Advisory Group over the previous couple of years since the inaugural election. The NADO Expert Advisory Group and WADA had felt it would be important to provide some clarity and legal basis on how an outgoing member might be replaced during an existing term. That legal basis could include having the candidate who had ranked close in a previous election being able to fulfil the term or representative seat in the respective region if there were enough candidates and clear voting results. The NADO Expert Advisory Group had felt strongly about ensuring that the results were made public. Previously, that had been only upon written request by a candidate or a national anti-doping organization. Therefore, a change had been proposed to ensure that the full results after an election were published by WADA to ensure transparency and openness.

Finally, he highlighted the last provision or last article of the election procedure. Previously, there had been an article that outlined how the transitional provisions from the appointed NADO Expert Advisory Group would move into the inaugural elected NADO Expert Advisory Group. That transitional provision article had been removed and replaced with further clarity on how to govern interim elections. Again, if there was a change in representation during a term, it would make it possible to adjust the timelines in consultation with the NADOs to ensure that a timely replacement was found.

MR DE VOS supported the amendments on behalf of the sport movement.

DR MUROFUSHI approved the amendment of the NADO Expert Advisory Group election procedure on behalf of One Voice.

THE CHAIRMAN asked if the Executive Committee agreed to approve the proposed amendments to the National Anti-Doping Organization Expert Advisory Group election procedure.

DECISION

Proposed amendments to the WADA NADO Expert Advisory Group election procedure approved.

- 5.5 2025 athlete member appointments to WADA standing committees

THE CHAIRMAN informed the Executive Committee that the Athlete Council had selected two members to sit as the athlete representatives on the Finance and Administration and Health, Medical and Research Committees, which required the approval of the Executive Committee. He gave the floor to Mr Pini to present the update.

MR PINI stated that he would provide some insight into the selection process for the athlete appointments to the WADA standing committees for 2025 to ensure transparency and alignment with good governance principles. For the Health, Medical and Research Committee, the Athlete Council had conducted an election among the interested candidates and Dr Tan had been duly elected to represent the voice of the athletes in that

important area. For the Finance and Administration Committee, the process had had a different outcome. Initially, only one member had expressed interest, but there had been a conflict with their existing commitments. Given his own experience and background and the timing of that appointment, the Athlete Council had reviewed the situation and had no objections to appointing him to that position. Both decisions had sought to ensure continued athlete representation in the financial and administration governance but also on the Health, Medical and Research Committee, with finance and administration being an area that had a significant impact on WADA's operational priorities, including athlete-focused programmes. For the purpose of that agenda, the Athlete Council had approved the process for the appointments. In the interest of transparency, the entire council had been consulted and engaged. Lastly, he wished to thank the former athlete members of the Finance and Administration Committee, Ms Kit, and the Health, Medical and Research Committee, Dr Dienstbach-Wech.

On behalf of One Voice, DR MUROFUSHI supported the appointments of the selections made by the Athlete Council for the athlete members on the two standing committees.

MR DE VOS thanked Mr Pini for providing the background and confirming that good governance had been applied to that proposal. On behalf of the sport movement, he could confirm support for the appointment of Messrs Pini and Tan.

THE CHAIRMAN asked the Executive Committee if it was in agreement to formally approve the following appointments as per the selection made by the WADA Athlete Council for the athlete members of the following WADA standing committees: WADA Finance and Administration Committee, Mr Ryan Pini of Papua New Guinea, and WADA Health, Medical and Research Committee, Dr Yuhan Tan of Belgium.

DECISION

Proposed 2025 athlete member appointments to
WADA standing committees approved.

- 5.6 Nominations Committee mandate – International Testing Agency foundation board appointments

THE CHAIRMAN noted that the item was for decision. The Nominations Committee required formal approval by the Executive Committee to undertake WADA's role vis-à-vis ITA board appointments, which would take place in either September or December 2025, to be confirmed, and the Executive Committee would receive a recommendation from the Nominations Committee for approval. The same process had been undertaken via a circulatory vote in 2024, and consideration would be given to adjusting the Nominations Committee regulations in the future so as not to require separate approval each time.

THE DIRECTOR GENERAL added that it was merely an administrative formality to mandate the Nominations Committee to do the work set down in the ITA statutes.

DR MUROFUSHI noted that One Voice had not been able to reach a unanimous position, but Asia and Oceania approved the proposal. He invited Europe to make a comment if necessary.

THE CHAIRMAN saw no request from Europe to take the floor so gave the floor to Mr De Vos.

MR DE VOS supported the mandate to the Nominations Committee.

THE CHAIRMAN asked the Executive Committee if it was in agreement to mandate the Nominations Committee to conduct work for the following three new appointments to the Foundation Board of the International Testing Agency for entry into office in January 2026: independent chair to replace Doctor Valérie Fourneyron; independent member to replace Professor Chen, and member representing the international sport federations to replace Mr Francesco Ricci-Bitti.

DECISION

Proposal to mandate the Nominations Committee to
conduct the necessary work for three new
appointments to the ITA Foundation Board approved.

6. Finance

- 6.1 Government/IOC contributions update

THE CHAIRMAN recalled that an updated version of the document on contributions had been provided on 25 March given the recent contributions since 5 March. He gave the floor to Ms Chung to provide the update.

MS CHUNG reiterated that an updated version had been circulated on 25 March and there had been no further change in the previous two days. WADA had received 4.1 million US dollars of contributions from public

authorities, which represented 15.3% of its full budget. The figure had been at 37% the same time the previous year. Some 22.4 million US dollars were outstanding from public authorities, including many countries from four of the five all regions. Since the initial papers had been circulated, Oceania had fully remitted its contributions. Asia and Europe were at about the same range of 19.2% and 18.2% respectively. Africa was at 11.7% and America was at less than 1%. As for additional contributions, WADA had received about 41,000 US dollars from Saudi Arabia and Australia, specifically for intelligence and investigation workshops planned in Asia that year. WADA was very grateful for all the contributions received from its stakeholders, including the payment of outstanding dues. If not already done, she encouraged stakeholders to make their payment contributions.

DECISION

Government/IOC contributions update noted.

- **6.2 Finance status update**

MS CHUNG said that she would expand more on the finance updates in a few areas, starting with the background of the 2025 budget that had been approved and a quick note on the 2024 key financials; how the year had ended; the mitigation measures to face in 2025; and the outlook for 2026, 2027 and 2028. Starting with the background to the 2025 budget, she recalled that two versions of the budget had been prepared and presented for approval by the Foundation Board in December 2024. The first budget had been presented as status quo, meaning that all contributions would be received. The second budget had been in response to the Executive Committee recommendation to prepare a budget excluding Russia's contribution of 2.8 million US dollars. Since the Foundation Board meeting in December, WADA had received confirmation from the USA that its 2024 contribution would not be released to WADA. Russia had been seemingly more forthcoming with its 2023 contributions, claiming that the funds had been transferred at the end of December and in early January. Based on recent exchanges with Russia, and due to ongoing and complicated banking sanctions, the funds transferred might at that time be frozen or in holding mode by an intermediary bank in Luxembourg. WADA was endeavouring to resolve the issue, which still might take some time. Nevertheless, WADA remained hopeful of a positive outcome. It continued to follow up on the matter and would report back in due time.

In light of the withholding of the 2024 contributions from the USA and other uncertainties surrounding 2025, WADA had undertaken to reassess and reduce expenses that had yet to be committed in the last quarter of 2024 and to rework the 2025 operating budget, calling for further austerity measures. Hence, the second cut amounted to a further 1.4 million US dollars, in addition to the 2.8 million US dollars excluded from one of the two budget versions that were approved. Therefore, WADA was operating with the reworked, twice-reduced 2025 budget.

Before explaining the cuts further, she would give some key highlights on the status at the end of 2024. The year-end audit was currently under way with PricewaterhouseCoopers and the final draft of the 2024 financial statements would be available for the Risk and Audit Committee to review in early May, the Executive Committee in late May, and then the Foundation Board in early to mid-June. It was therefore important to bear in mind that the figures were subject to the final audited financial statements from the auditor. On the positive side for 2024, about 80% of the total contribution budget of 50 million US dollars had been received from both the IOC and the public authorities. WADA had recorded for the year a deficit of about 3.1 million US dollars and further cash depletions of over 4.7 million US dollars due to capital expenditure and research commitments. Considering the significant contributions outstanding from the USA and Russia, the level of spending from activities and resources had nonetheless been largely contained and reduced due to postponing and replacement or even eliminating some activities. Travel and in-person meetings had been reduced in favour of more virtual meetings; activities had been reduced and hiring not replaced and/or delayed in 2024. Even though 2024 had been an Olympic year, travel expenses had decreased by over 400,000 US dollars compared to the previous year. However, litigation costs had risen due to the high-profile case of the Chinese swimmers, which had required extensive and specialized resources. Over 650,000 US dollars had been spent directly on that case. On the upside, the strong US currency towards the end of 2024 had helped appreciably to alleviate the gain in operating costs. Of course, the interest rate in 2024 had also helped, as the interest income generated had been over 650,000 US dollars more than the year before. The US dollar remained strong, which was evidently favourable. That concluded the highlights of 2024, which she recalled were preliminary until PricewaterhouseCoopers finished the audit.

She would proceed with the highlights of where the two cuts to the 2025 budget had been made. As mentioned previously, a budget had been presented with one cut. That budget had since been reworked to include further reductions, while ensuring that the core and critical activities, projects and research, athlete engagement, ADAMS developments and Code updates remained priorities and were not affected by the cuts (of course, including the work stemming from the Cottier report). It was a challenge, as the cost structure relied largely on human resources to deliver mandatory activities and stakeholders' requirements. The reworked

budget was estimated to have a deficit budgeted at 3.2 million US dollars. Although cash depletion had improved from 2024, it was situated at 4.1 million US dollars. Even in the worst-case scenario, there would be enough in reserve to cover that, but for a balance or break-even budget, or an acceptable cash depletion, some 3.5 million US dollars would have to be sought in additional contributions from other partners, and other scenarios had been explored. It was a work in progress and would be reported on in due course. If required, a limited amount of the unallocated fund or reserve could be put in use on a temporary basis to continue through those turbulent times.

As mentioned previously, other mitigation measures had also been put in place to face 2025, striving for operational efficiencies through various process improvements, looking to streamline the business, working with smarter tools for better ways of working and to help to be more efficient and hence reduce costs in the long run. Costs continued to be reduced. Travel to the WADA Annual Symposium recently held in March, for example, had been with premium economy fares because it entailed a larger group, while further in-person meetings had been limited, reducing overall travel and accommodation costs. That Executive Committee meeting was also being held virtually. WADA was opting for strategic partnerships and sponsorship in key activities and events, and converting to virtual meetings as much as possible. It also encouraged stakeholders to increase their contributions and/or funding for specific projects. Nevertheless, it had been possible to increase the litigation reserve from 2 to 2.5 million US dollars and the operations reserve to an equivalent of close to six months based on the current operations level. WADA continued to invest in bonds and to look into short-term durations to preserve cash readily available and continued to manage human resources planning. That concluded the high-level view of work in terms of the mitigation measures.

With regard to the budget planning for 2026, 2027 and 2028, as per the usual process, the detailed 2026 budget would be prepared and presented to the Finance and Administration Committee in July, along with the budget plan for 2027 and 2028 with the strategic plan as the guiding principle. The plan was to present a few scenarios, but most importantly, to establish an appropriate base for the budget on which future activities or projects could be built. One of the challenges in coming years, in addition to the contribution situation, was the uncertainty around inflation. Also, in Canada, the exchange rate would have an impact on budget planning. Budget planning was certainly important, but it was also necessary to bear in mind that circumstances might change, so WADA would continue to be agile in its planning to be able to turn things around when needed and quickly enough.

MR KEJVAL thanked Ms Chung for her excellent report, especially given that it was not an easy situation for everybody. He understood the current situation for 2024, with the deficit of more than 10 million US dollars, which represented 20% of the original budget, as well as the arrangements made which were necessary for the 2025 budget. The sport movement welcomed WADA's austerity measures, which allowed for 4.2 million US dollars in savings while protecting the core activities of the organization. The sport movement reiterated its concerns in relation to governments contributing their share to WADA's budget, and called on governments to ensure no gaps remained in the 2025 contributions. As there were rising concerns in relation to WADA's budget, the sport movement requested an update on WADA's strategy to attract private funds, as had been discussed in the past.

DR MUROFUSHI noted that One Voice did not have a unanimous position. The Asia region was concerned about the current situation in which WADA's operations and global anti-doping activities were facing challenges due to the current financial constraints. Additionally, Asia emphasized the importance of governments reaffirming and respecting the principle of co-funding WADA's budget by governments and the sport movement. Having said that, Asia recognized that optimized budget allocation was beneficial and a necessary practice for WADA, especially given the recent increase in the budget that had added financial pressure on governments. Asia strongly encouraged WADA to maintain that practice even in normal circumstances.

MS BENNETT thanked Ms Chung and apologized because she had been unable to raise her virtual hand under item 6.1 on government contributions, which her question related to. She was sure it was not a discussion that was unique to WADA to be having to reassess a budget, and suspected that a number of international organizations were experiencing similar issues in the first quarter of 2025. However, she noted that the numbers were clearly lower than the same time the previous year, and not simply in the Americas due to the lack of the US contribution. She wondered whether there was any sense of a contagion of the US position, and whether WADA had had any discussions with other countries that indicated that contributions other than solely from the USA might be at risk.

MR BIDNYI thanked Ms Chung for the very detailed report. On behalf of Europe, he had some concerns about the information provided by WADA on the discussions with the Russian Federation regarding its contributions for 2024 and 2025. Europe wished to be clear that WADA should seek the exact amount owed by the Russian Federation in accordance with its obligations. The amount owed was not based on Russia's

membership of the Council of Europe, and there should be no room for Russia to escape its dues. Finally, he asked WADA whether any progress had been made concerning the search for private funding or other external sources.

THE DIRECTOR GENERAL noted that he would respond to some of the questions and give the floor to Ms Chung for those more technical ones.

In response to Mr Kejval, he thought it was indeed extremely concerning that one government in particular had decided not to pay. He recalled, as Dr Murofushi had stated, that in 1999, when WADA had been created, the agreement with the public authorities had been to co-fund the agency. The USA had unilaterally decided to withdraw from its commitments. He hoped that the public authorities would go to their US colleagues and highlight the fact that that was not what had been agreed upon at the time and call upon them to remedy that situation. That being said, it was what it was and he was not sure that WADA would be treated differently to other international organizations.

Apart from the USA, there had been no indication that other countries would not meet their responsibilities. On the contrary, confirmation had been received from a number of countries that they intended to fulfil their dues. The deadline for countries was the end of the year, of course, but until 30 June, he thought nothing was indicative of any trends, as that was the period in which they could contribute.

WADA was trying to pursue its efforts for private funding. There was need to say that it was not easy, especially after a difficult year in terms of image and issues. It was not the most fertile period to encourage sponsors. However, discussions had been held with some and would continue. Efforts would continue with the pharmaceutical industry in particular, seeking to build on collaboration because it was deemed to be a win-win situation and they had a responsibility. He hoped that that would continue progressing, but it was not easy. WADA did not have a lot of exposure to offer sponsors and therefore had to appeal to their social responsibility. However, efforts would continue and the President was certainly doing that.

Regarding Russia, several matters had to be clarified. First of all, the indication received from Russia was that it wanted to pay and the signal received was that it would pay. As Ms Chung had said, the bank transfer proof of the 2023 contribution had been provided, even though the funds had not reached WADA's account for banking sanction reasons, not because Russia was not paying. For 2024 and 2025, it was clear that Russia considered it was no longer part of the Council of Europe split. However, it had not argued that it should be paying less and no discussion had been held about paying less. Actually, there had been more discussion with Russia on it perhaps paying more, although it was not clearly stating that at that time. His point was that it would be an ongoing discussion, and there were many ongoing discussions that might change the landscape in the coming months. The approach taken with Russia was that, even though it was no longer part of the Council of Europe split, WADA would take the amount that had been agreed to in 2023 and apply to it the budget increase that had been applied across the board so that its share followed the trend from all the other governments' contributions.

Discussions would of course continue with the sport movement on the matching payment principle, which WADA totally understood and respected. As mentioned earlier, WADA had also received from public authorities, i.e. from taxpayers' money, a number of extra contributions for various projects, which it hoped could be matched by the sport movement.

DECISION

Finance status update noted.

7. World Anti-Doping Program

- 7.1 2027 Code and International Standards update

MR HAYNES said that he was pleased to provide a brief update on the 2027 Code and International Standards update project since the presentations provided in Riyadh in December. Following the meetings in Riyadh and the supportive feedback provided, the Code had not required further amendments and was currently available for the final stakeholder consultation phase, together with all the International Standards. That consultation phase, which had started in February, would run until 30 May. Stakeholders had also been able to interact with some of the drafting teams the previous week at the WADA Annual Symposium in Lausanne. There had been two sessions dedicated to the Code and International Standards and another session on preparing for the 2027 Code through the Code Implementation Support Program. In addition, a session had also been held at the iNADO workshop with the lead drafter Mr Richard Young and WADA's Director of Legal Affairs, Mr Julien Sieveking. Once the final consultation phase closed, the drafting teams would conduct their final reviews and the final or near-final drafts could be presented at the September Executive Committee meeting. As had

been stated that day, some flexibility would need to be factored in as amendments might be required after that time to incorporate some recommendations from the various working groups that had been proposed that day. Alongside that, drafting would begin on model anti-doping rules to assist signatories in adopting the revised Code and International Standards into their legal framework. There would also be the Code Implementation Support Programme actively identifying key resources, checklists and guidelines to further assist signatories in implementing the changes. On the Athlete Engagement front, the Athlete Engagement Impact Area and the Athlete Council would also launch a tailored athlete consultation process in the coming days. The idea was to gather feedback on key areas affecting athletes the most, such as whereabouts testing, TUEs, sanctions, and to provide a more athlete-friendly platform to encourage athletes to participate in the consultation process.

Overall, the project was at that time on track and in line with the timeframes published on the WADA website. That concluded his update and Mr Sieveking was also available if there were any specific questions on the Code.

MR BIDNYI firstly wanted to mention that he had spent the previous week in Lausanne and participated in the WADA Annual Symposium, an opportunity he had appreciated. There had been fruitful discussion. Regarding the 2027 Code and International Standards, Europe was very grateful to WADA for its work on producing the revised documents. Europe reiterated its call for an impact assessment on the legislative, regulatory, human and financial resource aspects of the new Code. While understanding that there were many consultations and opportunities for Code signatories and stakeholders to provide feedback, an impact assessment would provide much needed clarity on the proposed changes. That was important, as the Code revision process had expanded beyond the original intention to perform a more limited update. In terms of substance, Europe emphasized the centrality of athletes' rights, particularly regarding fair trial rights in the Code. Furthermore, Europe drew attention to the need for clear and well-defined responsibilities for NADOs, particularly in the context of the work on operational independence and the accountability of NADOs for compliance-related issues for which they were not responsible or were otherwise unable to influence. Finally, Europe requested a meeting with the Code drafting teams in the coming period to maintain an open dialogue on the proposals.

MR MCCANN commended WADA on the presentations given at the symposium. Oceania's teams had found them exceptional in terms of providing clarity on the Code and the proposed updates. The additional working group that had been proposed would face some time constraints. He wished to make sure that the Working Group on NADO Operational Independence was activated in time for the finalization of the Code at the end of the year.

MR HAYNES appreciated the questions and would answer some of them before asking Mr Sieveking to contribute. Regarding impact assessments, that issue had been raised from WADA's perspective a number of times in terms of the challenge it would be for WADA to provide anything that was meaningful because each signatory had to work through its own assessment to see how it would implement the different changes. As discussed in Riyadh, the stakeholder consultation exercise would provide the most feedback and that was where signatories could provide their own impact assessments. When signatories were reviewing the major summary of changes documents, they could conduct their own assessment and provide that feedback through the consultation window.

In terms of NADO operational independence, there was a new definition in the Code. Feedback would be sought from signatories on whether that definition was effective and covered what was needed from a compliance perspective, as well as being easy to implement within each country.

In answer to Mr McCann, some flexibility would be built in, possibly after the September Executive Committee meeting, to allow the working groups to fulfil their mandates and then be able to feed their feedback into the documents before they were submitted for approval in Busan at the end of the year.

In terms of athlete rights and the possible meeting with the Code team, he would defer to Mr Sieveking.

MR SIEVEKING thanked Mr Bidnyi for the question on athletes' rights. He could only guarantee that athletes' rights were absolutely always taken into account and the protection of athletes was one of the key principles in all discussions with the Code team. He underlined that two human rights experts were reviewing the work to ensure that the principles of human rights and the rights of athletes were respected at all times. Both of these human rights experts would report in Busan. Contact would be made with the European representative and, if there was an agenda and only one delegation from Europe, that would simplify the process, but a meeting with the Code team was absolutely feasible and welcomed.

DECISION

2027 Code and International Standards update noted.

8. Athletes

- 8.1 Athlete Council Chairman's update

THE CHAIRMAN gave the floor to Mr Pini to present that item.

MR PINI said that he would take his report as read but would note a few key points and additional items since that report. The Athlete Council had officially and excitedly welcomed eight new members to group two following the election in December. There were four new members and four had been re-elected. A new IPC athlete representative had also been welcomed to group one, and it was exciting to have these new perspectives on board as WADA continued to further strengthen athlete representation. He had joined the Director General in an onboarding session, which had been held to ensure that the new members could ask questions and be best informed to hit the ground running.

The first in-person meeting of the year had been held in Lausanne in March. It had been a valuable opportunity for strategic discussions, including welcoming the President, Vice-President and Director General to provide updates on current affairs and take any questions from the Athlete Council members. Additionally, a number of WADA teams had addressed the meeting on issues including whereabouts in the ADAMS update, the Code and International Standards revisions, which had been a significant action item as heard in the previous agenda item. He looked forward to updating the Executive Committee on the progress of the new Athlete Engagement area, as there had been a number of Athlete Engagement initiatives throughout the year. There had been a very full agenda for the WADA Annual Symposium. He congratulated WADA, the staff and everybody involved in that wonderful event. It had been a great opportunity for the Athlete Council members who had stayed on for the two days following their meeting to attend the event. The key highlight for the Athlete Council had been such involvement from them. There had been an athlete-led session at the symposium with nearly 1,000 attendees at the various groups. The session led by the Athlete Council had been on building a stronger athlete voice inside and outside of WADA, which reinforced WADA's athlete-centred priority. Athlete Council members had also served as presenters and panellists in critical sessions, which included managing whistleblowers in anti-doping, protecting the rights of athletes in the 2027 Code framework, minors and their entourage and protected persons, and contamination in anti-doping. He sincerely thanked all of the Athlete Council members for the immense work done to take part in that symposium. It had been very important for the Athlete Council to be able to take part and to make sure that WADA was fully applying the athlete-centred approach.

There was a big year ahead. Briefly, there would be some Athlete Engagement areas with the ANOC Athlete Forum, Asian Athlete Forum, the Pan American Junior Games, Asian Youth Games, the African Youth Games and the IOC International Athlete Forum as well as the IPC Athlete Forum. The key priorities and topics included the final Code consultation phase, the Athlete Engagement initiatives and upcoming appointments for group three. The Athlete Council would continue advocating for meaningful athlete involvement in anti-doping governance, which was identified in its action plan.

THE CHAIRMAN thanked Mr Pini for his work and thanked all of the athletes and congratulated those who had been elected. It was a very good group and the meeting in Lausanne had been pleasant and fruitful with a very comprehensive discussion about the future of anti-doping.

DECISION

Athlete Council Chair's update noted.

- 8.2 Athletes' Anti-Doping Ombuds Program update

THE CHAIRMAN gave the floor to Ms Henrie to provide an update on the Ombuds program.

MS HENRIE was pleased to provide a very brief update with respect to the Ombuds program. The Athlete Ombuds, Ms Thorstenson, was also present and they would be happy to take questions at the end.

She recalled that, at the September 2024 Executive Committee meeting, the continuation of the Athletes' Anti-Doping Ombuds Program had been approved as an ongoing WADA program subject to yearly planning, budgeting and review. The members had received the submission paper in advance of that meeting and she would provide a very brief verbal progress update and focus on four key highlights that had taken place since the September meeting. The first was that the Ombuds Advisory Committee had been reconstituted. The terms

of reference had been drafted and finalized to guide the work of that committee. The intention of that group was to act more as an informal committee that would meet virtually four times per year to exchange ideas.

The second key highlight was that the 2025 Ombuds program operational plan had been finalized in the last quarter of 2024. The operational plan was the roadmap to guide work for that year. Some key objectives had been identified as well as key activities with very specific timelines for implementation, and key performance indicators that went along with the budget. The plan should provide a very clear roadmap for that year, making it possible to report on the success of the Ombuds program and the achievements of the KPIs at the end of that year or very early in 2026. She thought it worth noting that the plan had been reviewed by the Ombuds Advisory Committee, and it had also been reviewed as part of WADA's internal planning review and approvals process. Assessment of that program would continue on a yearly basis.

She was pleased to report that, in December 2024, a new contract for the Ombuds had been signed for that year for a 12-month period. Ms Thorstenson continued to be the Ombuds and worked on a part-time basis.

Finally, on the fourth point, the 2024 annual report, she recalled that in September a very comprehensive approach had been presented for the Ombuds program. The Executive Committee had been told that an annual report intended for the public would be presented and then published on the Ombuds' website. The Executive Committee had received a copy of that annual report, which had been prepared by Ms Thorstenson under separate cover. She wished to make two points on the report. Since the Executive Committee had received a very comprehensive report from Ms Thorstenson in September, the content of the 2024 annual report might seem familiar. However, to ensure delivery on the commitment of producing an annual report that would be available for the public and for athletes which reflected the work done in 2024, the aim had been to provide that more succinct, more visual report to the Executive Committee before making some final tweaks to the visuals and publishing it on the website so that, as she had said, athletes had a good line of sight as to what was being accomplished.

Finally, as she had mentioned, the Executive Committee had received a comprehensive submission and presentation of the Ombuds programme in September that reflected most of the work done for 2024. Therefore, more details would not be given that day but, in the future, the committee could expect to continue to receive comprehensive updates on that program at least once a year and on the independent services that were provided by Ms Thorstenson.

MR EMONYI thanked Ms Thorstenson for the report and noted that, indeed, from the point of view of the Athlete Council and athletes, the initial pilot program with the annual report showed potential. He was very excited that direct athlete engagement activities had been planned for that year to further that engagement. He was especially happy that Ms Thorstenson would be coming to the ANOCA Athlete Forum the following month, which would further that engagement, as it was an excellent service to roll out and to see the potential of feedback from Africa. Also, the guidelines to help ombuds offices at local and regional levels demonstrated a long-term vision to be more athlete-centred in their environments. That tailor-made support could be more specifically aligned with cultural, legal and regional needs, understanding that the legislation was different across all regions. That would bring fairness closer to the athlete community. He looked forward to 2025 and the activities that would be targeted in terms of the Ombuds program.

MR PINI thanked Ms Henrie and Ms Thorstenson. The Athlete Council welcomed the report on the Athletes' Anti-Doping Ombuds Program. He acknowledged the significant work that had gone into making that initiative a valuable resource for athletes. The commitment to providing independent, impartial and confidential support had helped athletes navigate the complexities of the anti-doping system. The work was really essential in promoting fairness, transparency and respect for athletes' rights. He also wanted to take that opportunity to thank the Ombuds Advisory Group for its contributions, ensuring that athletes' voices remained central to the development of the program. He strongly supported the continuation of the Ombuds programme and looked forward to seeing its impact grow as an independent and trusted resource for athletes worldwide, as well as strengthening the athlete and anti-doping ombuds community.

DR MUROFUSHI welcomed the progress made on that programme on behalf of One Voice. One Voice did not have a unanimous position on that. In order to further enhance the Ombuds programme, Asia encouraged the Ombuds to collaborate with NOCs and NPCs to collect athletes' voices, because he saw that there was athlete feedback in NOCs and NPCs. He thought it would be a good step to have a survey or a connection with them to improve quality.

MS BENNETT thanked Ms Thorstenson for her written report and Ms Henrie for the presentation. She had no questions but would make one comment on Ms Thorstenson's report, regarding the extract in that report that referred to athlete success stories. If WADA was ever looking to justify the need for the athlete Ombuds, the brief summaries of some real-life scenarios where the Ombuds had provided invaluable support to athletes was

where it should look, because that demonstrated just how valuable that service was to athletes and it embodied the strategic objective of putting athletes front and centre. She also thanked WADA for having established the Ombuds and seeing the value of that, which had been demonstrated.

MS BERTHANE echoed Mr Emonyi's thanks on behalf of the sport movement for the update. The sport movement would welcome clarifications on a few of the points. More than 50% of cases had come from the UK, USA, Canada and Australia together. Considering that the USA had an athlete ombuds, was WADA redistributing the cases to the local ombuds? Secondly, how did WADA analyse the data? How could WADA see that investment also benefiting regions where less resources were available for the athletes? Respecting due process and the violation of athletes' rights were in the top five issues brought forward by the athletes, along with presence of substances, and the use of or attempted use of substances. What were the priority areas identified to prevent those types of issue from occurring?

MR DE VOS echoed the previous mention of 50% of cases coming from English-speaking countries. He wished to know if language was an issue and how requests in languages that were not available in the portfolio of the Ombuds were dealt with.

MS YANG noted that Mr Emonyi's question had touched upon cultural differences and there were some cultural differences in that topic. She firstly thanked Ms Thorstenson and Ms Henrie for the report. Secondly, she was also encouraged by Mr Pini's comments that it was a great program for the athletes. Her personal experience was that she had also received a lot of positive feedback and she wished to provide encouragement. Regarding cultural or language barriers in the future, she would like to see some promotion of that kind of great job, which could really help the athletes.

MS HENRIE said that she would answer the questions in order and at least acknowledge everybody before handing over to Ms Thorstenson. She duly noted Mr Emonyi's comments. She thanked Mr Pini for his comments and support as always. As he knew, the support of the Athlete Council was appreciated, particularly the support of Ms Ahrens, who was part of the Athlete Council and on the advisory committee she had mentioned. She responded to Dr Murofushi that there would certainly be collaboration with the NOCs and the NPCs and some of the promotion and awareness-raising efforts would focus on the Asian region as well. Work was ongoing with the regional director in that region to promote that service. She thanked Ms Bennett for her support and comments and would certainly focus on success stories to promote the programme. She would ask Ms Thorstenson to respond to Ms BERTHANE on some of the statistics, but could say that the reference to the USA, Canada and Australia in the report might not be representative of the athletes who were using the service as it was not necessarily mandatory to choose the country, and some of those countries appeared at the top and might have been the first selection. She thought that was noted in the report but, if not, it would certainly be added. In terms of promoting the service to other regions, it was a goal for that year to make sure that the service could be promoted in all regions. Regarding lessons learned and questions that Ms Thorstenson received, the trends and questions that the Ombuds received were reviewed to ensure continuous improvement of processes and programs. Mr De Vos's question was also on the statistics. She thanked Ms Yang for her support and positive feedback. Again, work would focus on awareness-raising and promotion in all of the regions.

MS THORSTENSON thanked the members for the positive feedback, which was fantastic to hear from all sides of the anti-doping community. She had a few clarifications to make. First and foremost, of course the statistics were perhaps not always completely correct and there was awareness of that. She highlighted that athletes sometimes stated a country that they did not live in. In terms of the language issue that Mr De Vos had mentioned, that was, of course, a challenge. She did not speak all the languages in the world and that was always a challenge in terms of trying to help the athletes in their local language. The platform featured a translation tool, which worked quite well. If an athlete sent a message in another language, it would translate it into English and, when she sent a message back, it would be translated into that language.

In terms of cooperating with similar local and regional ombuds services, that was also something she was looking forward to doing in the future, as there were not that many local ombuds offices out there. The service was looking into creating model rules for establishing local and regional ombuds services, because it was also important to protect the specific role of an ombuds, who needed to be independent, keep information confidential and work independently from the anti-doping organization, for example. There was a strong need to work with stakeholders around the world. She looked forward to addressing athletes and athletes forums as a focus for that coming year and reiterated her appreciation for the support.

THE CHAIRMAN thanked Ms Thorstenson and Ms Henrie for the great work on what was a very important project from the athletes' perspective.

DECISION

Athletes' Anti-Doping Ombuds Program update noted.

9. Compliance

- 9.1 Compliance Review Committee Chair's update

THE CHAIRMAN gave the floor to Mr Gourdji to present that item.

MR GOURDJI stated that he would provide a summary of the main activities undertaken by the Compliance Review Committee since the December 2024 Executive Committee meeting as reflected in item 9.1 on the agenda and then he would move straight on to item 9.2, the non-compliance cases for decision.

The Compliance Review Committee continued to be quite busy in its interactions with WADA, providing independent advice and guidance on compliance matters. Since the meeting the previous December, it had been continuously kept abreast of WADA's monitoring activities and the support provided to signatories. The new year had begun providing induction training to the two new members of the Compliance Review Committee, who were one independent member and one representing the sport movement. At the same time, the Compliance Review Committee had been quite active reviewing a number of compliance cases presented by WADA management. The watchlist cases of the national anti-doping organizations of Namibia, Samoa and Senegal had been closed, and most recently, although not reflected in the written report, Spain had been closed during its watchlist period. Additionally, the Pakistan case had been closed after it had disputed non-compliance but had managed to solve the non-compliance in the meantime. The same went for Venezuela. Finally, the El Salvador NADO had managed to complete its issue just prior to the Executive Committee meeting. Therefore, the procedure had been closed.

The Compliance Review Committee had held its first meeting of 2025 on 19 and 20 February to discuss new cases of non-compliance, which were detailed in item 9.2 and which he would introduce momentarily. Firstly, he would summarize the compliance activities that had been specifically reviewed at the last meeting, because they differed from one meeting to the next. They had included the signatories at that time on the watchlist; current non-compliant signatories; the signatories whose cases had been referred to the Court of Arbitration for Sport; and other signatories that the Compliance Review Committee had an interest in getting updates on.

With regard to guidance and oversight, the Compliance Review Committee continued to provide that guidance and oversight on WADA's compliance program. Thus far, all work was satisfactory. At the last meeting, it had focused on the analysis of the 2024 compliance activities that would make their way into the annual report, as well as the task force activities. More details on that could be found in the documents under item 9.1.

DECISION

Compliance Review Committee Chairman's update noted.

- 9.2 Non-compliance cases

MR GOURDJI stated that he would proceed to report on the non-compliance cases referred to in agenda item 9.2, which were for the decision of the Executive Committee. As stated in the documentation, the report had been revised and the latest version was dated a couple of days prior, on 25 March. The update to the document had been for the purpose of withdrawing the Compliance Review Committee recommendation to watchlist the El Salvador NADO following the adoption of national legislation in line with the Code. A one-page slide had been prepared to give information on the two cases in question.

With regard to the new non-compliance cases, there was one legislation case and one Code Compliance Questionnaire case. In the legislation case, Sri Lanka was being recommended for the watchlist with automatic non-compliance of up to four months if the non-conformity was not resolved. The Code compliance case concerned the Iran NADO.

He would start by summarizing the rules-related case. Paragraph two of page two of the document referred to the WADA management and Compliance Review Committee position on cases related to legislation. In that context, there was one rules-related case in question that day. Page four of the document addressed the new case concerning the Sri Lanka NADO with the details. Essentially, that NADO had made good progress and draft amendments in line with the Code had been finalized, including providing a calendar for adoption within four months of the Executive Committee meeting. Therefore, the Compliance Review Committee recommended to the Executive Committee to watchlist the Sri Lanka NADO with consequences and conditions of reinstatement

as reflected in paragraph four, which ran from pages 6 to 8 of the document, to be applied at the expiration of the four-month deadline if the non-conformity was still pending.

With regard to the Code Compliance Questionnaire case, the details for that case were found in paragraph three, which started on page five of the document. For the Iran NADO, by the time that case had come before the Compliance Review Committee, the Iran NADO had still not implemented three critical corrective actions in the area of testing. The Compliance Review Committee had discussed that case and decided to recommend to the Executive Committee to approve sending a notice to the Iran NADO, alleging that it was non-compliant with the Code and proposing the consequences and the conditions of reinstatement as listed on pages 9 to 11 of the document.

The decisions for the Executive Committee were summarized in paragraph one of the paper, which was on page two, and also summarized on the slide.

On behalf of One Voice, DR MUROFUSHI supported the recommendation from the Compliance Review Committee and noted that some regions might also have feedback.

MR DE VOS thanked the Compliance Review Committee for the report and the work it had done. On behalf of the sport movement, he supported the recommendation of the Compliance Review Committee to put the Sri Lanka NADO on the watch list and the recommendation to send a formal notice to the Iran NADO.

THE CHAIRMAN asked the Executive Committee if, in relation to the implementation of the Code into the legal framework, it was in agreement to provide a four-month watchlist starting from 27 March 2025 to correct the outstanding non-conformities, failing which WADA would automatically send the following signatory a formal notice alleging non-compliance and proposing the consequences and reinstatement conditions recommended by the Compliance Review Committee, as detailed in the Executive Committee paper: the Sri Lanka Anti-Doping Agency/Sri Lanka NADO. In relation to the implementation of anti-doping programs monitored through the Code Compliance Questionnaire, he asked the Executive Committee if it was in agreement to send a formal notice alleging non-compliance with the Code and or the International Standards, and imposing the consequences and conditions of restatement detailed in the Executive Committee paper to the following signatory: the Iran National Anti-Doping Organization.

DECISION

Proposed action regarding Sri Lanka and Iran NADO
non-compliance cases approved.

10. Education

- 10.1 Education Committee Chair's update

THE CHAIRMAN noted that Ms Tounkara was unable to participate in the meeting due to technical issues so gave the floor to Ms Hudson to present the item.

MS HUDSON apologized on behalf of Ms Tounkara, who was unable to attend due to unforeseen circumstances. In her absence, she would provide an update on the recent meeting held by the committee in January, where the members had welcomed the newest member, Ms Juliana Soares, who had expertise in the education of Paralympic athletes and those with intellectual impairments.

In summary, as the detail of Ms Tounkara's report was in the binders, the committee had a varied agenda, with a number of robust discussions, largely regarding the draft text to be proposed to the Code Drafting Team on matters relating to education, research and values, supporting the Code review process and the development of the 2027 International Standard for Education. The Education Committee had also wanted to provide input to the department on any potential future global education conferences, reviewing previous events as well as the Social Science Research Symposium that had been a successful attachment to the 2024 edition. It had provided ongoing support and refinement to the creation of a global network of universities, clean sport academies, post work that had been ongoing for two years monitored by the committee looking both at the feasibility study and operating models as part of its work, and an extremely valuable session had been led by an industry expert, Dr Melita Moore, who was working very extensively in the esports community, enabling the committee to learn from her experience regarding those new disciplines that would be upcoming in the Olympic Esports Games, as well as trying to understand who were those new athletes with whom, to date, the WADA community had not had the opportunity to engage.

The committee had also met with the Social Science Research Expert Advisory Group to discuss and improve the new strategy, which she would return to. Also, in order to hold the typical validating process on

grant funding for that year, it had discussed emerging research themes and also welcomed the draft text to support the Code review process on advancing article 19 as it related to research.

The committee and the Social Science Research Expert Advisory Group had spent significant time discussing the ongoing work of the unintentional doping research project, in particular, the progress being made by the task force specifically on the engagement phase. A call for contributions would be launched in the near future by the task force, which would seek input from athletes, the media, academics, NADOs and sport organizations to input into that information and experience-gathering phase as it related to unintentional doping. There was a lack of evidence and academic literature on that subject. Hence, the call for contributions was the way for the task force to encourage submissions from those in the community to support the information-gathering phase of the task force. Any support from the members to encourage people to share their views and opinions would be welcomed.

Finally, the committee wanted to acknowledge one of its members, Ms Dora Hegyi, who was also a member of the Athlete Council. She had been gracious enough to share her experience as it related to unintentional doping at the recent WADA Annual Symposium. She was also a member of the task force. Athletes willing to communicate their experience were not taken lightly so the committee wanted to acknowledge her efforts in that space. The committee would next meet on 10 April to continue its work.

DECISION

Education Committee Chairwoman's update noted.

- **10.2 2025 social science research projects**

MS HUDSON noted that the meeting papers contained the detail on the social science research grant program. There was a robust process to review and allocate grants for social science research, including making sure that some core principles were adopted in terms of recommendations for funding. Was it in line with the published research priorities? Would it have an impact on clean sport or make a contribution thereto? Was the scientific methodology valid and therefore deemed fundable? And did it fit the general criteria for the three tiers of funding that tended to be allocated? There was a number of independent reviews at each stage. Over 170 had been conducted to date, leading to a very heightened discussion with the Social Science Research Expert Advisory Group, which then put forward recommendations for funding to the Education Committee. Those recommendations were then presented to the Executive Committee to seek approval for that funding.

In summary, the Education Committee was requesting to allocate grant funding of just under 485,000 US dollars in investment to support 10 social science research projects. She recalled the first social science research strategy, which had sought to ensure that applications from all regions were received, and she was pleased to say that the goal had also been achieved that year.

She would proceed to give a quick high-level summary of the proposed projects. The first was the second phase of an independent global policy and program evaluation study. Boardley had been the principal investigator in phase one, looking at conducting a policy impact study on the introduction of the 2021 International Standard for Education. What benefits did that bring? What were the challenges? That work had underpinned the development of the 2027 version of the standard. Building on that research, the committee and the Social Science Research Expert Advisory Group were keen to ensure that the support programs, largely the Global Learning and Development Framework and the Code Implementation Support Program that had both been launched in 2020, were at that time independently assessed in terms of their impact and support to the community and were fit for purpose as a new Code cycle commenced.

The second project on mapping of clean sport behaviours was an extension of research co-funded by WADA and the PCC. It focused on underpinning efforts to shift the community from knowledge-based education programs to behavioural-focused programs and identified athlete behaviours known as clean sport behaviours. That research would undertake a review of those that were published, their application, adoption and the capacity to reassess and update them as required at the start of the new phase of the International Standard for Education. It would also seek to update the published curriculum frameworks that were available to stakeholders to use to support the development of their programs, as well as providing an early version of an impact assessment tool that could be used by ADOs to further enhance efforts to monitor and evaluate their education programs. That was a mandatory requirement in the International Standard for Education.

The final two tier-one projects focused more on advancing the anti-doping system, reaffirming anti-doping efforts to the values that underpinned clean sport. One sought to build on work already undertaken in collaboration with the Education Committee, the Ethics Expert Advisory Group, the Athlete Council, and the Social Science Research Expert Advisory Group on being able to modernize the values that were associated

with WADA's work, including updating of the spirit of sport in the currently published version of the Code. That research would seek to enhance that, working with those groups and wider athlete groups so that it could be modernized and be more meaningful for athletes, also supporting signatories' efforts in values-based education, which had not really moved on in the previous five years. Hence, that work would seek to support stakeholders in these values-based education efforts.

Finally, there was a proposal to fund a study that looked at athlete sentiment in a variety of psychosocial constructs, such as athletes' views on the legitimacy of the system, its credibility, doping intentions and morality, to give some examples. The production of validated survey instruments had already been funded, and these constructs were at that time being tested in five countries which would inform the monitoring mechanisms regarding the global clean sport education agenda. The goal was to enhance how these metrics could inform data sharing on global progress in education programs and athlete sentiment in those psychosocial constructs.

Regarding tier two, there were three projects. One looked at supporting ADOs in their efforts to educate athletes who had specific needs, which was also a requirement of the International Standard for Education. That study would be conducted in collaboration with Virtus as the supporting partner.

Secondly, an advancement on research previously conducted on the complexity of the anti-doping system and how complex system models from other industries such as workplace accidents and public health settings could be applied to better understand the incidents of doping in order to prevent it.

And regarding the third, there was a research project to be conducted in collaboration with the ADOs to help assess the effectiveness of their education programs, reviewing the methods used to monitor and evaluate education programs. Again, that was a requirement for signatories and note had been taken from the Code Compliance Questionnaire data that ADOs struggled in that regard. That researcher aimed to undertake and test an evaluation framework that could then be applied to or adopted by other signatories.

Finally, for tier three, those were very local-level early career research pilot test phase type projects. There were three projects. First, an assessment of the role and influence of coaches in Brazil on anti-doping and doping attitudes. That team was well supported by both the Brazilian NADO and the National Olympic Committee. It was a really great example of an effective collaboration between an academic and practitioner communities. Second, an investigation into understanding doping intentions in recreational athletes in specific sports, with the aim of helping to inform and improve the prevention strategies that were at that time being deployed.

And thirdly, a research study looking into the opportunities and challenges of implementing the Code in a large or complex country. In essence, the study would look at how anti-doping programs could be adapted and localized, particularly where countries or territories took a provincial or regional approach, and identify any best practices and lessons that could be learned and shared with other countries in similar scenarios.

To conclude, she requested the Executive Committee's approval of the recommendations by the WADA Education Committee upon expert review by the Social Science Research Expert Advisory Group to allocate just under 485,000 US dollars to support 10 social science research projects.

On behalf of One Voice, DR MUROFUSHI supported the recommendation of the Education Committee on the allocated grants for the 10 proposed projects.

MR DE VOS spoke on behalf of the sport movement to support those research projects. He had a question that was maybe also related to the next point regarding the strategy. As far as he knew, and he apologized if he had omitted to see it, not a lot of feedback had been received on the outcome of these social science projects. What reporting was there afterwards? Was an evaluation carried out into whether the research project commissioned had really contributed to the goal and improvement in that specific case with regard to the education of the athlete community or the work of WADA in general? In short, what were the reporting mechanisms and could the Executive Committee, which in the end approved all of those projects, receive regular updates on the outcome of the projects and whether they were useful or an efficient use of the WADA budget?

THE CHAIRMAN proposed addressing Mr De Vos's question under the following item regarding strategy. He asked the Executive Committee if it was in agreement to approve the recommendation of the Education Committee for the social science research grants.

DECISION

Recommended social science research projects approved.

- **10.3 2025-2029 social science research strategy**

THE CHAIRMAN recalled that the item was for decision. He gave the floor to Ms Hudson to present the item and answer Mr De Vos's questions.

MS HUDSON noted for the benefit of new members that social science research sought to understand why people did what they did. To correctly frame that for the purposes of WADA, doping was a people problem that was impacted by human factors. It was classed as a wicked problem in the social science world, meaning no single solution would fix it. She recalled the presentation given in December reporting on the first social science research strategy and its achievements, and the areas that had not quite been achieved and how they would be brought into the next strategy.

With regard to the new strategy, which was the second edition, the aim was to focus on two core themes that formed the bedrock of social science research: people and systems. Under these two themes, there were six strategic priorities that had been created which outlined a specific focus. In addition, the strategy endeavoured to convene some of the highlights of the research in recent years as well as set out the principles upon which the social science research community would aim to work. Under the people theme, the aim was to focus on efforts that truly impacted athletes and their experiences with the anti-doping system, in addition to bringing people together for constructive exchanges to advance and generate new knowledge complemented by investing in the next generation of researchers, support personnel and practitioners on a global scale, and finally taking time to connect to wider research in sport integrity, public health, youth culture to improve WADA's efforts in the prevention space.

From a systems perspective, understanding that people operated in a complex maze of systems, systems-level thinking was a critical component to advance those solutions to complex, wicked problems. That strategy would focus on advancing, at a system level, understanding of global anti-doping efforts and their effectiveness, and find better ways to disseminate research findings in a way that made sense.

One of the achievements of the first strategy had been the creation of a research database, where all of the research projects could be found in terms of their publications and final reports. In some instances, there was a summary and even an infographic that sought to translate the research findings in a more meaningful way that could be adopted, or at least read and understood, by the anti-doping community. In answer to the question that had been raised by Mr De Vos, that database was available and could be searched by country, researcher and theme, and it highlighted the outcomes of the research. She was sure that other ways could be explored to disseminate that to the Executive Committee as part of the annual update and progress report.

The overall aim of the social science research was to untangle that ball of wool, which was the complexity around doping. The ideal state would be to understand the behavioural insights that determined whether athletes doped or did not dope. However, the next stage in the social science research endeavours was probably to get to a more organized multicoloured ball of string. The new strategy built on the foundation set down in the first strategy and would enable an amplification of social science research efforts that could be more impactful to the system.

Therefore, she would simply request the approval of the Executive Committee on two matters: the second edition of the social science research strategy, and willingness to accept the same reporting mechanisms as for the first strategy, which was an annual progress report followed by a concluding report card produced in more detail at the end of the strategy period.

DR MUROFUSHI spoke on behalf of public authorities to commend the Education Committee and Social Science Research Expert Advisory Group for successfully developing the strategy for 2025 to 2029 which One Voice was pleased to endorse.

MR DE VOS also supported the proposal on behalf of the sport movement and thanked Ms Hudson for the reply. He wondered if a link to the aforementioned table could be found in the presentation and, if not, whether it could be sent.

MS HUDSON confirmed that she would follow up on that request.

THE CHAIRMAN asked if the Executive Committee was in agreement to approve the 2025-2029 social science research strategy.

DECISION

Proposed 2025-2029 social science research strategy approved.

11. Science and medicine

THE CHAIRMAN stated that he would give the floor to Professor Olivier Rabin before commencing item 11 to brief the Executive Committee about some laboratory issues that would be brought before it in the following few weeks.

PROFESSOR RABIN apologized in advance for starting the science and medicine section of the agenda that day with not good news. He recalled that the Bloemfontein laboratory in South Africa had been suspended for almost a year, comprising six months plus an extension of six months, which was the maximum time allowed under the International Standard for Laboratories. During that time, there had been extensive exchanges with the Bloemfontein laboratory to address the quality and management issues faced by the laboratory. An on-site audit had even been conducted which had identified further issues at the laboratory level. The update was that the Bloemfontein laboratory did not satisfactorily address four major non-conformities that had been identified during the audit, and there were an additional 16 technical points that had been unanswered to date. No feedback had been received from the laboratory within the deadline, which was also of concern. The end of the maximum suspension period allowed was approaching and the experts of the Laboratory Expert Advisory Group had concluded the previous week that WADA should activate the revocation process of the Bloemfontein laboratory. The laboratory had therefore been notified of that decision and might accept or reject it. If the laboratory rejected the decision, it could be heard by a technical panel according to the International Standard for Laboratories. That was the update on the ongoing process. No decision was required at that point, but the final recommendation to revoke the Bloemfontein laboratory would soon be communicated, as the process of activating that revocation was currently under way.

- 11.1 2025 scientific research projects – cycle 1

THE CHAIRMAN gave the floor to Professor Engebretsen and Professor Rabin to present the funding recommendations.

PROFESSOR ENGBRETSSEN stated that it was the first cycle of the new system of three cycles a year of research applications. Reviews had been carried out on 28 expressions of interest, of which four were recommended for funding. There was one project to improve anabolic agent detection, one on dried blood spots and EPO, and two projects on the detection of autologous blood transfusion. Those were the recommended projects for the approval of the Executive Committee that day.

With regard to 2025, the total budget was about 4.5 million US dollars before potential cuts. The funds for the remainder of the year covered cycles two and three, in which some 50 applications altogether were expected to be received throughout the year, and also for research targeted projects and contaminants, glucocorticoids and so forth. There was also the follow-up of advanced ongoing research projects, in addition to annual additional expenses. Those were the areas to which the remaining money would be allocated.

He sought the Executive Committee's approval of the four proposed projects.

MS BERHANE thanked Professor Engebretsen for the presentation and recommendations. On behalf of the sport movement, she fully supported the approval of the research projects submitted. Going forward, it would perhaps be beneficial for WADA to look into the mechanisms where it would be possible to analyse not only the relevance but also the impact and the reporting mechanism to which those research projects were contributing, and ascertain the extent to which the end results made a meaningful contribution.

On behalf of One Voice, DR MUROFUSHI supported the recommended cycle-one research projects for 2025.

THE CHAIRMAN asked the Executive Committee if it was in agreement to approve the funding recommendations for research proposals for the 2025 (cycle one) call for grants as presented.

PROFESSOR ENGBRETSSEN noted in answer to the question raised that once a year, usually in September, there was a review of the impact of all of the studies, looking at where they had been published, what they had led to, and the overall impact. He wished it were possible to report on that to the Executive Committee but it would take half an hour. Perhaps every four years or so a report could be presented to show what the money was being spent on.

DECISION

Proposed 2025 scientific research projects (cycle 1) approved.

12. Other business/future meetings

THE CHAIRMAN asked if the members had any other issues to raise before concluding that day's meeting. There were no requests for the floor. With regard to future meetings, on 12 March, the members would hopefully have seen a call for interest to host the 2026 and 2027 meetings. He asked the members to make contact if they were interested or knew of any regional colleagues who might be by the end of May. In addition, there was also a call open to host a series of regional symposiums the following year. He recalled the decision not to hold the WADA Annual Symposium for reasons already explained. However, there were plans to organize four regional symposiums, for which hosts were being sought. He knew that a few countries were very interested and recalled that the closing date for expressions of interest was the following week, on 4 April. A meeting would be held with Mr Kejval and his team in Prague in September. WADA was very grateful to the Czech NADO and NOC for their hospitality and the WADA team would be in touch in the near future to prepare for on-site participation in Prague. The big event that year, of course, would take place in early December in Busan. The Executive Committee would meet on 2 December to deal with the normal agenda, as well as on 5 December to approve the International Standards. There was an expectation that the Executive Committee members, as well as the Foundation Board members, would be present in Korea for the duration of that week. The WADA team would soon be in touch to start logistical arrangements for attendance.

In closing, he thanked the interpreters, the WADA staff and, of course, the members for their participation that day. Virtual meetings had some limitations, but he believed that the meeting had been quite productive. Nonetheless, he agreed with Mr De Vos's remark at the beginning of the meeting that in-person meetings were definitely the best option. He believed this meeting was to be exceptional and that in-person meetings would hopefully ensue.

MR BIDNYI thanked WADA for its return to in-person CAHAMA meetings. He also wanted to sincerely thank the members of the Executive Committee for the meeting of that day, and for the valuable discussions. It had been a great opportunity to exchange views, share insights and deepen understanding of the important work ahead. He truly appreciated the time, effort and dedication that each member brought to that process. Constructive dialogue and collaboration were key to achieving meaningful progress and that day's discussions had been a testament to that. He wished everybody the best in their work and looked forward to future meetings.

THE CHAIRMAN thanked Minister Bidnyi for his comment and thanked the Executive Committee members again for their participation. He looked forward to seeing them again soon in person.

NEXT MEETINGS

Foundation Board – 29 May 2025, virtual meeting;
Executive Committee – 11 September 2025, Prague, Czech Republic;
World Conference on Doping in Sport – 3-5 December 2025, Busan, Republic of Korea;
Executive Committee – 2 December 2025, Busan, Republic of Korea;
Foundation Board – 5 December 2025, Busan, Republic of Korea;
Executive Committee – March 2026, TBC;
Executive Committee – September 2026, TBC;
Executive Committee – November 2026, TBC;
Foundation Board – November 2026, TBC.

The meeting adjourned at 4.40 p.m. GMT

FOR APPROVAL

MR WITOLD BAŃKA
PRESIDENT AND CHAIRMAN OF WADA

MR OLIVIER NIGGLI
DIRECTOR GENERAL AND RECORDING SECRETARY