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Minutes of the WADA Foundation Board virtual meeting, 29 May 2025

The meeting began at 13.00 p.m. CEST

1. Welcome, roll call and observers

THE DIRECTOR GENERAL welcomed all of the new members. It was a closed Foundation Board meeting, which meant that, for the first part of the meeting, only members or their registered deputies were connected to the Zoom call. The election scrutineer was also present: Ms Ana Tuiketeti from Fiji, who was an independent member of the Independent Ethics Board. The Chair of the Independent Ethics Board, Professor Pascal Borry, was also present as a back-up scrutineer in the event of any technical issues. They were there as observers but would play an important role in the voting process. There was interpretation in French, Chinese and Japanese. A few WADA staff members were on the call to help manage the meeting, including Mr Pisani who was facilitating member participation. The sole purpose of the meeting was the election of WADA's President and Vice-President. On 9 May, a communication outlining the voting process had been sent out, followed by an agenda on 23 May.

The first item was the roll call. It was not necessary to go through each and every attendee because, as at previous meetings, it would be based on the electronic record since it was a virtual meeting.

The members would have the opportunity to ask the two candidates any questions they wished. The members had received the previous week a letter from the candidates outlining their programme for the next three years. After the questions and answers, the voting would take place, firstly for the President and then for the Vice-President. Following the two elections, the floor would again be opened to the members for any remarks. After that, the meeting would be opened for all registered observers, including the media to join. Both candidates would address these participants before closing the meeting and proceeding to the press conference. Any members who wished to follow the press conference could stay logged in. Otherwise, members could disconnect from the meeting.

The following members attended the meeting: Mr Witold Bańka, President of WADA; Ms Yang Yang, Vice-President of WADA; Mr Santiago Lange, Athletes' Commission Member, Argentinean National Olympic Committee (NOC); Mr Michael Vesper, representing Mr Zlatko Matesa, President, Croatian NOC; Mr Benedict Tan, Vice-President, Singaporean NOC; Ms Damaris Young, President, Panamanian NOC, International Olympic Committee (IOC) Member; Mr David Lappartient, President, Union Cycliste Internationale, IOC Member; Mr Jean-Christophe Rolland, President, World Rowing, IOC Member; Mr James Carr, representing Ms Petra Söring, President, International Table Tennis Federation, IOC Member; Ms Paula Belén Pareto, IOC Member, Argentina; Ms Filomena Fortes, IOC Member, President, Cabo Verde NOC; Ms Heike Groesswang, Secretary General, International Bobsleigh and Skeleton Federation; Ms Lydia Nsekera, IOC Member, President, Burundi NOC; Ms Jane Thornton, representing Ms Baklai Temengil, IOC Member, Vice-President, Oceania National Olympic Committees; Ms Maja Wloszczowska, representing Mr Abhinav Bindra, IOC Athletes' Commission Member; Ms Astrid Uhrenholdt Jacobsen, IOC Athletes' Commission Member, IOC Member; Ms Emma Terho, IOC Athletes' Commission Chair, IOC Member; Ms Hong Zhang, IOC Athletes' Commission Member, IOC Member; Ms Miki Matheson, Member, IOC Governing Board; Mr Olle Dahlin, President, International Biathlon Union; Mr Patrick O'Leary, WADA Athlete Council representative; Dr Yuhan Tan, WADA Athlete Council representative; Ms Veronica Commey-Mensah, representing Mr Kofi Iddie Adams, Minister of Sports and Recreation, Ghana; Mr Lincoln Goitseman, representing Mr Jacob Kelebeng, Minister of Sport and Arts, Botswana; Mr Ashraf Sobhy, Minister for Youth and Sports, Egypt; Ms Lourdes Baltodano, representing Mr Franklin Amilcar Cardillo Romero, President, CONCECADE; Ms Olivia Grange, Minister of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sports, Jamaica; Mr Jaime Pizarro Herrera, President, CONSUDE, Chile; Ms Sunghee Choi, representing Ms Mi-ran Jang, 2nd Vice-Minister of Culture, Sports and Tourism, Republic of Korea; Mr Zhiyu Chen, representing Mr Yingchuan Li, former Vice-Minister of the General Administration of Sport, China; Mr Ken Hashiba, representing Mr Arata Takebe, State Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and

Technology, Japan; Mr Abdulaziz Almasaad, representing Mr Abdulaziz bin Turki Al Saud, Minister of Sports, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia; Mr Bjørn Berge, Deputy Secretary General, Council of Europe; Ms Karen Giloyan, Deputy Minister of Education, Science, Culture and Sports, Armenia; Ms Sandra Bergqvist, Minister of Youth, Sport and Physical Activity, Finland; Ms Joanna Żukowska-Easton, representing Mr Sławomir Nitras, Minister of Sport and Tourism, Republic of Poland; Mr Dionysios Karakasis, representing Mr Ioannis Vrotsis, Alternate Minister of Sports, Greece; Mr Peter Miskimmin, Head of Sport Diplomacy, Sport New Zealand, New Zealand; Mr Semi Epati, representing Mr Laumatiamanu Ringo Purcell, Minister of Sports and Recreation, Samoa; Mr Michael Cepic, NADO Expert Advisory Group representative, Austria; Mr Khalid Galant, NADO Expert Advisory Group representative, South Africa.

1.1 Disclosures of conflicts of interest

THE DIRECTOR GENERAL asked the members if they had any conflicts of interest that they wished to disclose at that stage. No hands were raised.

2. Question period for candidates

THE DIRECTOR GENERAL reiterated that the members had received a letter on 23 May. Any members who had any questions or remarks for the candidates could raise their virtual hands at that time and they would be given the floor.

MR HASHIBA expressed his sincere appreciation to President Bańka and Vice-President Yang for their outstanding leadership and significant contribution to the development of WADA and the anti-doping community. They had made unwavering efforts in advancing governance reforms, strengthening the field of science and education and reinforcing the global anti-doping framework, which had greatly enhanced WADA's international presence. Japan also paid tribute to their consistent commitment to the principle of clean sport, even during challenging times, and their dedication to protecting all athletes. Japan wished to thank them for highlighting the importance of collaboration with governments and NADOs in the letter to the Foundation Board members outlining the future priorities that had been shared prior to the election that day. As stated in the WADA strategic plan, building and strengthening an athlete-centred system required close collaboration with all relevant stakeholders. From the perspective of those who supported athletes and clean sport, Japan wanted to share some of the current challenges in the anti-doping system and ask the candidates for their views. Firstly, WADA's budget had been increasing in recent years. However, many governments were facing significant financial challenges in the area beyond sport. At the recent Asian regional finance committee meeting, concerns had been raised that continued increases to contributions could lead to the reallocation of national budgets, potentially reducing funding for their own NADOs and weakening domestic anti-doping programs. In addition, while fully recognizing the importance of compliance with the Code, the rising level of compliance requirements had placed a considerable burden on NADOs whose financial and human resources were already under significant strain in order to meet those requirements. A truly athlete-centred system must be sustainable for those who supported and implemented it. That included not only anti-doping practitioners such as NADOs, but also governments, which provided half of WADA's funding alongside the IOC. Given the current financial and Code compliance pressure on governments and NADOs, Japan believed it was essential to pursue both new funding avenues and greater operational efficiency. That was a realistic and responsible approach to safeguarding the integrity of the anti-doping system for the benefit of athletes. In the light of those challenges, Japan wished to ask both candidates two questions. Firstly, the current anti-doping system was highly complex and entailed significant operational costs. Whilst striving to maintain a clean sporting environment while ensuring the long-term sustainability of the system, greater efficiency and financial sustainability and stability would be essential. In that context, how did the candidates intend to stabilize and optimize WADA's budget while also streamlining its operations to enhance overall efficiency? Secondly, WADA operated under a unique governance model, characterized by joint commitment between the sport movement and the public authorities in both decision-making and financial contributions. As the global anti-doping landscape became increasingly complex, the need for deeper harmonization was more critical than ever. In light of the essential role that governments played in the global anti-doping system, how did the candidates intend to ensure that governmental perspectives and priorities were effectively integrated into WADA's policy and strategic direction?

On behalf of the athletes, MS TERHO thanked President Bańka and Vice-President Yang for making the organization far closer to being a very athlete-centred organization. The collaboration between the WADA Athlete Council and WADA's leadership had been very open, which she much appreciated. Athlete Council members also currently had the possibility of sitting on various WADA governing bodies. In all aspects of WADA's decision-making and work, the athletes had been increasingly in the centre, which she wished to acknowledge and support. She asked the candidates to elaborate on their vision on how WADA and the anti-doping community could further engage with athletes in the future.

MS GROESSWANG echoed the previous speakers in thanking the President and Vice-President for their excellent work and leadership in uniting the Olympic and sport movement as well as the public authorities. There had been good progress and good work in the cooperation and collaboration between all stakeholders, and she believed that road should be continued in the future by the two leaders of WADA. There had been mention of excellent work. There was a lot of work ahead for WADA and a lot needed to be done. With all the challenges that WADA had faced in the past and which had been excellently managed, it was clear that, to continue managing WADA's future work, appropriate financial resources were required, as her colleague from Japan had noted. The funding model was a key aspect of WADA's functionality and efficiency in the future fight against doping, which mattered to all stakeholders. Therefore, she believed that was one of the aspects that must be prioritized in the future. There were high expectations of the elected President and Vice-President but she also wished to express her full support and willingness to contribute to the work of WADA.

THE DIRECTOR GENERAL gave the floor to the President and Vice-President to answer the questions where applicable.

THE PRESIDENT thanked the Director General. He thanked the members for the comments and questions. In response to Mr Hashiba, he was grateful for the comment and strong support from the Japanese Government and the Japanese authorities, as he really valued the close collaboration. Regarding the budget, he had heard the concerns and understood the budgetary problems that governments and NADOs faced. That was why new opportunities were being sought, as he had said many months previously, for WADA to seek partnerships with private sponsors. He thought a lot had been achieved in that regard. The first sponsors had been found and that strategy of looking for new partners would certainly continue. A few days previously, he had had the honour of announcing the new partnership with the Qatari Government, with an additional contribution of 1.5 million US dollars for science. Other governments had indicated that they were very keen to increase their contribution. He wished to use that opportunity to thank Japan for its additional contributions to build capacity in the region. That was the way that WADA would continue. It was working very hard to find new partners and additional contributions from both the private sector and the governmental sector to make sure that the budget was fit for purpose and WADA was able to fulfil all requirements and demands from the stakeholders' perspective. Mr Hashiba had mentioned the role of governments. The uniqueness of WADA was that it was the only existing organization in the world with a structure comprising 50% sport movement and 50% governments, and that equal partnership built the power of WADA. That was why WADA was very unique and powerful. Anti-doping was all about collaboration. As President, he gave his assurance that he would continue working hard to meet the representatives of governments to make sure that national anti-doping systems were fit for purpose and ready to be credible for the athletes. Everything WADA was doing was for the athletes. It was an athlete-centred organization.

He thanked Ms Terho for her contribution to WADA and her comments regarding the role of the athletes. The Athlete Council Ombuds and many other initiatives for athletes were clear evidence that WADA was an athlete-centred organization. It would continue working in all areas to engage more athlete voices. He was very happy that, after the governance reforms, athletes were represented in the governing bodies of the Executive Committee and Foundation Board and on many committees. That was clear evidence that WADA had changed its strategy to engage more independent voices and more athletes. That approach would definitely continue.

He appreciated Ms Groesswang's positive comments and the support from the sport movement. As he had said, anti-doping was all about collaboration. He was grateful for the comments about the achievements but had to say, humbly, that those achievements were the achievements of the Foundation Board because it was the most important body, together with the Executive Committee, that took final decisions about the direction of WADA. As WADA's President, he served WADA, but the Foundation Board members were the authors of the success of the global anti-doping movement. As President, he gave his assurance that he would continue that approach. The anti-doping landscape was very difficult but he believed that, together, thanks to good collaboration with all stakeholders and treating all stakeholders equally, it would be possible to address the difficulties, serve the athletes and strengthen the system. Sometimes, difficult decisions were required. Sometimes, difficult actions were required. However, he could guarantee that all employees and all members of WADA's Foundation Board and Executive Committee were dedicated to the fight against doping and to serving the athletes and building a level playing field for the athletes.

As he had written in his letter to the members, the past five-and-a-half years as WADA's President had been a long and difficult journey. He thought that the Vice-President shared that view. However, they had emerged from that stronger, which he believed was only because of the support, commitment and collaboration of the Foundation Board members. Together, they would navigate the system to lead it to be stronger.

THE VICE-PRESIDENT thanked the President and thanked the members for all of their comments and support. The President had already answered the questions raised, but she would like to add some more details.

For example, on the financial and budget issues, there were still many opportunities to work on raising more financing for WADA. For example, the previous year, a meeting had been held with major medicine companies in Greece. There had been very good feedback from them and WADA would therefore continue working closely with them. Looking to the future, in three years, the goal was to get them to come and work with WADA.

Regarding the athlete experience, she had had a meeting with the Athlete Council on setting up a very specific program that was designed to make a research program for mapping the athletes' anti-doping experience, seeking athlete feedback and improving their anti-doping experience, which was very positive. She was very excited about the future of that, as it was going to be a very good program for engaging with athletes.

She thanked the Foundation Board members. It would not be an easy journey in the coming years; but, as an athlete, she highly appreciated that opportunity to learn, grow and bring together amazing people to do something good for sport, which she loved and in which she believed.

3. Outline of election process

THE DIRECTOR GENERAL thanked the members for the questions. He would briefly outline the election process before starting the election. The first vote would be for the President and the second vote would be for the Vice-President. The voting process would be overseen by the scrutineer. Ms Ana Tuiketei had been appointed by the Independent Ethics Board to perform that role and was a member of that board. In the event of any technical issues, the Chair of the Ethics Board, Professor Borry, was also there as a backup. Ms Tuiketei would receive the results of the electronic vote and would inform him of the results or of any issues she had observed. He thanked them both for their presence, especially Ms Tuiketei, who was in Fiji, where it was very late, as well as Professor Borry, as it was a public holiday in Europe. The Simply Voting electronic platform would be used, which some members had perhaps used before. It had been approved by the scrutineer. Once the election had started, members would receive an e-mail sent to the address they had provided. The address should have been tested so the mail did not go to spam; but, if the e-mail was not received, he advised members to check their spam. Next, they could either click on the link in the e-mail, or use the password and username to log in on the homepage, but the hyperlink was probably easier. If members had any problems, they could notify the staff, whose contact details could be found at the bottom of the communication received. There would be three voting options: support the reappointment of the candidates, vote against the reappointment of the candidates, or abstain. Abstentions would not be taken into account in the calculation of the majority, as per WADA's Statutes. The system was completely anonymous. Neither the scrutineer nor any WADA staff would know who had voted for each option, as only the results of the vote would be received. When the vote was opened, sufficient time would be given for everybody to receive the e-mail and he would check that everybody had had the chance to vote before closing. He would then announce the results. As the members had no questions at that stage, he suggested starting the voting.

4. Election of the WADA President (for the term 2026-2028)

THE DIRECTOR GENERAL opened the vote for the election of the WADA President and recalled that, if anybody had a problem during that time, they could raise their hand.

He thanked the members and proceeded to open the vote. At the close of it, the scrutineer would provide the result.

[The vote period took approximately 10 minutes, during which time the system was open for voting.]

THE DIRECTOR GENERAL confirmed he had received the results and announced that the election for the President had been completed. There had been 38 valid ballots with 2 abstentions. The required majority was 24. There had been 36 votes in favour, so President Bańka was re-elected for a three-year mandate. He congratulated the President.

5. Election of the WADA Vice-President (for the term 2026-2028)

THE DIRECTOR GENERAL proceeded to open the vote for the election of the Vice-President.

The Director General monitored the virtual meeting room and after several minutes, asked if there was anybody who had yet to vote. As that was not the case, he closed the vote to report the results. There had been 38 ballots, no abstentions, and a majority of 26 required. There had been 38 votes in favour and none against. He congratulated Vice-President Yang and thanked the members. The election had been completed.

He opened the floor for any comments.

MR KARAKASIS was the deputy representing the Minister of Education and Sport from Greece, the Honourable Mr Ioannis Vroutsis, who was otherwise occupied that day dealing with important legislation on

gender equality. He congratulated the President and Vice-President and wished to note some of their accomplishments that were very high on the agenda: the Code of Ethics that had been adopted, the revitalized Athlete Council, the changes to the Foundation Board, the Standing Committees including NADOs and athletes, and the creation of the Risk and Audit Committee, which had proven to be very useful during the difficult years of Covid. He and the minister looked forward to cooperating with the President and Vice-President and to achieving more of the goals shared with WADA.

MS GRANGE congratulated the President and Vice-President on their re-election. She trusted that the work that had been started to improve relationships and support among member states and regions would continue to produce good results. She wished the WADA team every success for the new term as all stakeholders continued to work towards a doping-free environment for sport. It was her hope that true collaboration would be pursued and achieved for the benefit of all stakeholders. Again, as she always loved to say, one love from the country of Bob Marley.

MR BERGE congratulated the President and Vice-President on their re-election for another term of three years. He very much welcomed the continuation and further implementation of the key reforms at WADA, such as the Athlete Council and the Working Group on the Cottier Report Implementation. Those adjustments and processes were essential for WADA to meet upcoming challenges and build further trust with athletes, sport organizations and other stakeholders. The development and implementation of the World Anti-Doping Code and International Standards for 2027 would be a busy and demanding period for WADA and for all anti-doping stakeholders. The leadership of the President and Vice-President and ambition and engagement with stakeholders would be essential to ensuring those new standards were uniformly and fairly applied across the sporting world. Europe was certainly ready to work and enhance relations with WADA to ensure that the common goal of true and clean sport at all levels was met.

On behalf of the NADO Expert Advisory Group, which was representing the NADO community worldwide, MR CEPIC congratulated the President and Vice-President on their re-election. The NADO community was looking forward to continuing the productive cooperation with them.

MS FORTES wanted to take that opportunity to congratulate the President and Vice-President. It was with great gratitude that she took the floor to thank the President and Vice-President of WADA. They had been exemplary and made a huge contribution to the global fight against doping in sport. She wished to commend them on that. They had enabled huge progress and had enhanced the movement towards doping-free sport. Indeed, they were taking WADA along the right lines. Major progress had been made in transforming the landscape of anti-doping education. The ADEL platform had been translated into several languages and had indeed been of great assistance to athletes and all professionals in health and sport around the world. It was not merely about education, but also a question of advocacy and advancement in making people aware of the issue. All anti-doping movements had been encouraged to invest in high-quality education in addition to clear testing. Of course, the idea was to move towards prevention and she mentioned some highlights of the previous term. The World Conference on Education had brought together people who loved sport around the world to share best practices and establish new partnerships with a view to building a common future and vision. The Vice-President had also made huge efforts and achieved great progress in terms of the world anti-doping community. That was essential when it came to advancing clean sport. The work of the President and Vice-President had revolutionized the way in which the world perceived the struggle against doping. It was not a political system but rather a common endeavour based on shared responsibility and awareness. She was deeply grateful for everything they had accomplished and continued to work towards.

MR CHEN spoke on behalf of Mr Li to extend his warmest congratulations on the successful re-election of President Bańka and Vice-President Yang. China would, as always, continue to support WADA and work with the global anti-doping community to push forward the fight against doping to protect the values and integrity of sport in pursuit of the high-quality development of global and doping governance and harmony.

DR TAN congratulated the President and Vice-President on their re-election and thanked them for the letter that had been shared a couple of days ago. It was very comprehensive and it was clear that WADA would be facing headwinds going forward, especially the following year with the Enhanced Games. During that period, there would of course be increased attention on WADA again. He thought that the initiatives mentioned, specifically Vice-President Yang's comments on lowering the barriers to anti-doping compliance for the athletes, would put WADA in good stead. The other important initiative was continued investment in research. He was glad that President Bańka had earmarked 4 million US dollars for that. There had been mention of an additional 1.5 million US dollars from Qatar. He asked if that was on top of the 4 million US dollars or was included therein.

MINISTER SOBHY congratulated the President and Vice-President and hoped that their efforts would continue to be successful.

On behalf of the winter IFs, MR DAHLIN congratulated the President and Vice-President on their re-election. He welcomed their vision and focus on anti-doping activities according to the new strategic plan. As they had said, there were many challenges and he was convinced they would turn them into opportunities. Once again, he reiterated his full support.

On behalf of the honourable minister, Mr Jacob Kelebeg, who was on an international trip for an official engagement, MR GOITSEMANG congratulated the President and Vice-President. Southern Africa was very grateful to them and looked forward to working with them. President Bańka had visited the region, which had been appreciated. Botswana was aligning its anti-doping legislation with the Code and he congratulated the President and Vice-President for showing leadership in the anti-doping journey. Botswana would continue to support WADA.

MR ROLLAND thanked and expressed his gratitude to the President and Vice-President, firstly, for their leadership and hard work during the previous term that had just ended. He congratulated them on their re-election and wished them all the very best in their upcoming mandates. WADA had to navigate through very tough waters and it was a challenging time indeed, not only for WADA but also for the anti-doping community globally. He echoed the comments that had already been made on how that period had been handled. There had been mention of finance, as WADA was struggling with its budget. He welcomed the President's good news on the additional revenue. However, finance remained a challenge. Significant governance reforms had been implemented in recent years. While necessary, they had required substantial resources, both human and financial. Looking ahead, it was obviously necessary to refocus all resources on the core mission of WADA, which was the fight against doping, at every stage, ensuring a doping-free environment for the athletes. Those stages included regulation, through the Code and rules, but also education and prevention, as well as research, which was essential to invest in to lead that fight. The summer sport IFs gave their full support to the President and Vice-President.

THE DIRECTOR GENERAL thanked the members of the Foundation Board. The President and Vice-President would address the meeting forthwith, but it would first be opened to the observers and members of the media. To note, he would not reopen the floor after the speeches by the President and Vice-President. They would be followed by the press conference. Members could stay connected at the end of that meeting to listen to the press conference, or simply disconnect at the end.

6. Candidates' address

The following observers joined the meeting at this time: Yuka Morokoshi, Artem Kuznetsov, Hazem Khamis, Ryan Pini, Venetia Bennett, Cameron Boland, Chika Hirai, Luke McCann, James Moller, Go Sato, Satoshi Ogawa, Koji Murofushi, Yumiko Nakajima, Dagmawit Girmay Berhane, Satu Heikkinen, Nataliia Radchuk, Irène Kitsou-Milonas, Patricia Sangenis, Iman Gomaa, Humphrey Kayange Emonyi, Jamie Brown, Allison Wagner, Hannah Grossenbacher, Gabriella Battaini-Dragoni, Soichiro Sano, Sergii Popyk, Natanya Potoi and Matvii Bidnyi.

THE DIRECTOR GENERAL welcomed the observers and members of the media. He was pleased to say that the President and Vice-President had been overwhelmingly re-elected for a three-year mandate. The President had been elected with 36 votes in favour and 2 abstentions, and the Vice-President had been unanimously elected with 38 votes in favour. He would start the second part of that meeting in which both would address that assembly after projecting a short video.

THE PRESIDENT thanked the distinguished members of the Foundation Board, colleagues and friends. He was deeply honoured by their continued trust in him and the leadership team of the World Anti-Doping Agency. Their vote of confidence that day reaffirmed the shared mission and the shared values. He accepted that final three-year term as President of WADA with humility, purpose and a deep sense of responsibility. He wanted to take a moment to express his gratitude to Vice-President Yang, who had been an exceptional partner on that journey. Her vision, integrity and unwavering commitment to clean sport had played a vital role in every major success that had been achieved together. It had been five-and-a-half years of challenges, but also of transformation, resilience and undeniable progress. At that time, with three-and-a-half years ahead, he looked forward to building on that momentum and driving even greater success for WADA and the global anti-doping community.

He wished first to take a moment to look back, not to rest on the achievements, but to recall the journey undertaken together. When he had become President in 2019, nobody could have predicted that a global pandemic would soon disrupt the entire world. Covid-19 had tested the resilience of every institution, and WADA had been no exception. In a matter of weeks, global testing programs had been halted and major sporting events cancelled or postponed. The world had entered uncharted territory. But WADA and the anti-doping community had responded quickly and decisively, developing emergency guidelines to help anti-doping

organizations adapt to the realities of lockdown while maintaining a level of effective testing. WADA had supported ADOs as they continued with sample collection as best as possible, and introduced virtual education tools that had kept athletes informed and engaged. It had been a moment that demanded innovation and leadership, and WADA had delivered.

Another cornerstone of the progress was WADA's governance reforms. For several years, there had been calls for WADA to modernize its structures, to ensure greater independence and to elevate the athletes' voices. WADA had listened and acted. Since 2018, comprehensive and wide-ranging reforms had been implemented that had reshaped the governance model. The positive results were clear. At that time, the Executive Committee and Foundation Board boasted diverse representation, including athletes and independent members, and oversight had been strengthened through bodies such as the Audit and Risk Committee and the Nominations Committee. Almost half of the members of the Foundation Board and Executive Committee were current or former elite-level athletes, and the formation of a 20-person Athlete Council was ensuring that all those important voices were brought to the fore. That representation had led to the delivery of such initiatives as the Athletes' Anti-Doping Ombuds program and the Human Rights Impact Assessment. Those governance reforms were therefore not merely cosmetic, but systemic. They were about building a model organization that reflected the world in which it operated.

Since the election in 2019, significant financial growth within WADA had also been achieved. When Vice-President Yang and he had started, the annual budget had stood at approximately 37 million US dollars. In 2025, that budget currently stood at more than 57 million US dollars. That increased investment had allowed WADA to expand programmes, reinforce the scientific and legal teams, and increase support for developing countries. It also signalled growing global confidence in WADA's work and mission. Another transformative development had been the elevation of education to be a central pillar of the anti-doping system. He knew that the Vice-President would speak about that shortly, so he would not repeat it.

In addition to education, another area where WADA was making impactful progress was the Intelligence and Investigations Department. Indeed, it was fair to say that, in that area, new heights had been reached. Since its creation in 2017, that department had been a game-changer. It had uncovered complex doping networks. It had supported brave whistleblowers, and it had upheld the integrity of the global system through the launch of successful investigations. Efforts had expanded significantly. Since 2022, a capability- and capacity-building project had been running in Europe, which had led to developing the intelligence and investigations capacity in 48 countries. WADA had worked closely with national anti-doping organizations and key law enforcement partners, such as EUROPOL and INTERPOL, to smash the supply chain of illegal performance- and image-enhancing drugs. It had led to the initiation of more than 100 joint operations involving law enforcement and national anti-doping organizations. Overall, those operations had dismantled 25 illicit laboratories and resulted in the seizure of 25 tonnes of drugs, an incredible half-a-billion doses. That was good for athletes who might be preyed upon or put under pressure by members of their entourage. It was also good for society at large. It was known that athletes were sometimes tempted to use substances that could seriously harm their health. For clean athletes, WADA was making it harder for their competitors to cheat. From Europe, a broader global intelligence network was being built. That was a shared effort and one that depended on trust and collaboration. That project had already been launched in Asia and Oceania. Representatives from more than 60 countries in those regions would take the in-person training, and the intention was to continue to expand the capability- and capacity-building project globally. It would be taken to the Americas in 2026 and 2027, and to Africa in 2028 and 2029. The success of that investigation sent a clear message that working together led to far more effectiveness. It was recognized that no organization, including WADA, could win on its own. However, united with the support of governments, sport organizations and the anti-doping community, it was strong, aligned and achieving the desired result.

Another area was science, which was surely ground zero for the protection of clean sport. In recent years, WADA had continued to invest in the research that underpinned all of its work. Scientific research was the foundation of detection, deterrence and innovation. From enhancing existing testing methods to funding studies on emerging substances, WADA was investing more in understanding and staying ahead of the evolving threat landscape. That area was obviously a priority for many of those present too. The previous week, an additional contribution of 1.5 million US dollars from the Ministry of Sports and Youth of Qatar had been announced. That extra funding would go towards scientific research both within Qatar and internationally. In the weeks and months ahead, other contributions were expected to support WADA's efforts in further developing the anti-doping research programme. It was a sign of both the need to focus on research and the confidence that governments continued to have in WADA to deliver on that most important element of anti-doping.

That concluded his comments about the past. WADA had come a long way in five-and-a-half years, building on the success of visionary predecessors such as Messrs Richard Pound, John Fahey and Craig Reedie. But where did it go from there? With three years remaining in that presidency, Vice-President Yang and he intended

to work as hard as possible with as much urgency as on day one, because there was still much left to be done. Looking ahead, WADA was beginning a new chapter, guided by the 2025-2029 strategic plan. That plan was rooted in three central priorities: elevating the athlete experience, strengthening the global anti-doping system and expanding the impact of the science, education and intelligence work. One of the key milestones during that period would be the 2027 World Anti-Doping Code update. That update was the opportunity to ensure that the rules evolved with the landscape of sport and science, especially in areas such as contamination, a growing concern that was already being addressed through targeted research and collaboration. The Code belonged to all. The feedback, ideas and experience of the Foundation Board members would shape it. That year, WADA had also implemented an athlete-centred consultation to ensure that athletes were encouraged to participate in that important process. To date, more than 400 responses had been received from athletes. Information about that athlete-friendly consultation could be found on WADA's website. The aim was to encourage more athletes to contribute. Also with regard to the website, it was important to consider the means of engaging with information technology. The digital age brought extraordinary opportunities, but also new risks. That was why one of the top priorities was enhancing cybersecurity. Athletes entrusted WADA with their most sensitive information, and it had to be protected. The collaboration with Sword had already delivered critical upgrades to ADAMS, the anti-doping administration and management system, but the work would not stop there. WADA would continue to work with IT partners to enhance usability, fortify security and support all stakeholders in managing their programmes more efficiently.

On the scientific front, WADA was pushing forward into new territory. Emerging technologies such as dried blood spot testing and artificial intelligence held enormous promise. The dried blood spot technique was making testing easier, faster and more accessible. By developing and harnessing artificial intelligence, it would be possible to process big data and make it work for WADA. Through AI, it would be possible to identify suspicious patterns early and without having to implement laborious manual assessment. He was convinced that innovation in that area would be a game-changer for anti-doping around the world. But innovation required investment. That was why WADA was excited about new partnerships with governments, such as Qatar, as mentioned previously, and with private partners such as Sword and the African broadcaster SuperSport. That was exactly the kind of forward-thinking collaboration needed.

Legal affairs was another area demanding urgent attention. To speak plainly, he was not satisfied with the quality and consistency of decisions emanating from certain anti-doping tribunals. The rules, as laid down in the World Anti-Doping Code and the International Standards, were sound. They were strong. They were fair and fit for purpose. They were always evolving and they were built on decades of experience. But the rules were only as good as the way in which they were applied. It was necessary to ensure fairness and consistency across all sports and all countries. If that required a larger budget for Legal Affairs to monitor cases more closely and to appeal more decisions to the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS), that was what would be provided. It was necessary to be prepared to double or even triple the number of appeals to the CAS that were initiated each year, if that was what it took to protect the integrity of the system.

When it came to monitoring Code compliance, WADA was also raising the bar. It was known that athletes must adhere to a large number of rules and responsibilities in order to avoid a violation. It was absolutely crucial that the anti-doping organizations around the world be held to the same high standards, which was not always the case. For the sake of harmonization and quality control, he believed it was necessary to significantly increase the number of audits, and that more data should be published related to compliance monitoring work, because transparency built trust and accountability. WADA's compliance monitoring programs were all about partnership. WADA would continue to work hand-in-hand with Code signatories to ensure they understood what was expected and that they had the tools to deliver for athletes. It was also vital to take a hard look at the independence of testing. Athletes deserved to be confident that, when they were tested, the process was impartial, professional and free from national or institutional influence. To that end, WADA would explore ways to conduct more independent testing of international-level athletes, particularly in countries and sports where there were testing gaps in that regard. That was not just about perception, but rather about fairness and credibility.

He also wanted to address the growing concern of the so-called Enhanced Games. That initiative sought to normalize potentially dangerous performance-enhancing drugs in sport. It was not merely controversial, but rather irresponsible and shameful. It threatened to erode decades of progress in athlete protection, public health and the very ethos of sport. The event had been launched the previous week in the USA. It had been encouraging to see the rest of the world unite against that misguided experiment. Governments, NADOs, sport and athletes had all come together to reject it, and rightly so. WADA would continue to monitor and respond to that threat with firmness and unity. That included by urging the authorities in the USA to seek ways to prevent it from going ahead as planned.

As he had said at the start, the global anti-doping community continued to face challenges and threats. However, the greatest strength remained collaboration. That was the beating heart of successful anti-doping. Governments, sport organizations, NADOs, laboratories, athletes, law enforcement, scientists – all had to pull together in the same direction. There was no place for politics or turf wars in the fight for clean sport. As he had said before, competition was for those on the field of play, on the track, in the pool or on the court. WADA believed that it was collaboration, not competition, that drove progress. He urged all to stand together and continue to build a harmonized, transparent and athlete-centred system that earned and kept the trust of those it served. WADA was not just an organization but a global movement that was strong, modern, accountable, independent and transparent. It was strong because of the robust and evolving rules that underpinned the global anti-doping system. It was modern thanks to the governance reforms that reflected the current world and placed athletes at the centre. It was accountable through shared governance and oversight from the diverse stakeholders. It was independent because it followed the evidence wherever it led, without fear or favour, and was not influenced by political, national or institutional agendas. And it was transparent because it believed that it built trust and encouraged ethical behaviour while enabling open and honest communication. Five-and-a-half years previously, with unwavering support from the community, Vice-President Yang and he had set out to strengthen the global anti-doping system and to protect clean athletes everywhere. At that time, with three-and-a-half-years remaining and with the continued support of the Foundation Board, the mission continued. They were energized by innovation, collaboration and the unwavering belief that clean sport mattered. He gave full assurance to all present that they would work harder than ever to protect the integrity of sport and the dreams of the most important stakeholders of all: the athletes.

THE DIRECTOR GENERAL gave the floor to the Vice-President.

THE VICE-PRESIDENT wished to begin by expressing her deepest gratitude to the distinguished members of the Foundation Board, colleagues, partners and friends in clean sport for their continued trust and for re-electing her as Vice-President along with her friend Mr Witold Bańka as President of the World Anti-Doping Agency. The vote of confidence in the current leadership was a powerful affirmation of the progress that they had made together with the professional and excellent WADA team, and of the direction in which they were heading. It had been five-and-a-half years of intense, meaningful work. Of course, there had been some bumps on the road, but she was very pleased to see the tangible progress achieved. While there was always more to do, she wanted to take that moment to reflect on how far they had come. She would not go into great detail, but wanted to highlight a couple of things that had meant a lot to her. One of the most significant achievements had been in education. Anti-doping education was no longer a box to tick. For many years, it had been viewed as a supplementary tool; nice to have, but not essential. That had been changed. A stand-alone Education Department had been established. The mandatory International Standard for Education had been introduced. With the anti-doping education and learning platform known as ADEL, with its targeted education programme for athletes, coaches and support staff around the world, WADA was fostering a culture of clean sport from the ground up. It had equipped stakeholders with many education solutions. It had helped many of them to translate resources into multiple languages. That had enabled anti-doping organizations to focus their expertise and resources on more localized approaches to enhance the experience for athletes. Alignment had been achieved with the broader values of fairness, values and health. The ADEL platform had seen continued growth since its launch, with more than 1.4 million education courses completed. WADA had created a global education hub that over 50% of ADOs were using to increase the level of education they could provide for athletes and their entourage. Education was currently fully integrated into anti-doping programs around the world, and athletes learned not only about the rules and responsibilities, but also about ethics, integrity and the importance of making the right choices. Prevention and support were increasingly prevalent, whereas at one time there had only been detection and punishment, and it was key to continue to push a balanced approach in the coming years.

Another area of progress she was very proud to highlight was how far WADA had come in strengthening athlete relations. At that time, WADA was firmly and proudly an athlete-centred organization. The creation and active involvement of the Athlete Council had been crucial to that. The Council, led by Olympic swimmer Mr Ryan Pini, had one representative on the Executive Committee and two on the Foundation Board. It also appointed members to other important WADA committees. Athletes were a permanent fixture around the decision-making table.

WADA had recently appointed a dedicated director of athlete engagement, a senior staff member whose job was to work closely with athletes and to make sure their presence was felt. Of course, WADA continued to send an athlete engagement team to major events, including the Olympic Games and the Paralympic Games. The WADA booth at those events was a very popular spot for competitors, as they could learn more about clean sport in an informal and user-friendly setting. Clearly, WADA's approach to athletes had changed in recent years, and WADA was proactively engaging and seeking feedback from athletes through athlete-centred

consultation regarding the proposed changes to the Code and International Standards. WADA had thus far received more than 400 responses as well as more than 500 submissions following the call for contributions to the unintentional doping project. That level of engagement was unheard of, and she believed it demonstrated that athletes wanted to contribute when they were provided with a specific platform to do so.

Athletes were integral to the system and their voices were being heard. It was recognized that, for athletes, the anti-doping system could be very complex. There were rules, timelines, the Prohibited List, testing procedures, therapeutic use exemptions and feeling worried about information. Most athletes agreed that these things were important and supported WADA's mission, but it could still seem quite daunting. That was why more work than ever was being done to simplify the process. Through clear communications, more accessible education and direct support, athletes were being helped to understand not only the what, but also the why, behind clean sport. A specific example was the Athletes' Anti-Doping Ombuds program. That was a vital initiative ensuring that athletes had independent support and recourse. Whether it was navigating complex procedures, ensuring due process or voicing concerns, WADA was placing athletes' rights and communication at the forefront. Work would continue on ensuring that the athlete anti-doping experience was as optimal as possible. That included a specific project looking at mapping the athletes' anti-doping experience, seeking athlete feedback and improving their anti-doping experience where possible. However, most athletes did not operate on their own. The influence of the entourage, including coaches, doctors, trainers, mentors and parents, was immense. WADA continued to support the crucial work of the IOC entourage commission. Protecting clean sports also meant educating and holding accountable those who were guiding athletes from day-to-day. It was vital to ensure that everyone in an athlete's circle was as committed to integrity as the athlete themselves and, if they were not, they must be held accountable. That would remain a priority for her and for WADA over the coming three-and-a-half years. Looking forward, progress meant constantly adapting to new challenges. In recent times, some high-profile cases had recalled the serious issue of contamination, which was a growing and complex problem in anti-doping. WADA was addressing that issue head-on through science education and increased cooperation with public health and regulatory bodies. Another challenge was the growing politicization of anti-doping, which it was necessary to continue to resist. The mission had to rise above borders and politics. Anti-doping was about fairness, health and the rights of every athlete, no matter where they were from or what sport they played. It was necessary to remain united because strength was in unity. Legitimacy was transparency, and the future was built on trust.

Serving as Vice-President alongside the President had been the privilege of a lifetime. She began the final term with determination and full commitment. She called upon everybody to continue to protect the values that made sport worth playing and worth watching. She wanted to empower the next generation of athletes with knowledge, with fairness and with hope. The work was not yet done, but the path ahead was clear and she looked forward to travelling that path together over the coming three years.

7. Meeting close

THE DIRECTOR GENERAL thanked the President and Vice-President, the Board members, the interpreters, and the staff for their support and commitment to the organization of the meeting; they had been very active that day.. The Foundation Board meeting was adjourned (and a press conference would then follow).

The meeting adjourned at 14.55 p.m. CEST

FOR APPROVAL

MR WITOLD BAŃKA
PRESIDENT AND CHAIRMAN OF WADA

MR OLIVIER NIGGLI
DIRECTOR GENERAL AND RECORDING SECRETARY