

Dear President Duda, Dear President Reddie, Dear President Bach,
Dear Ministers, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to warmly welcome you all in Katowice, the heart of Upper Silesia. I am very pleased because this is my home region. This is where I grew up. Here I took my first steps into sport. And later, I started my career here.

This is the region where tradition meets modernity. People living here are very proud of their history, culture and heritage.

Today, my home region is going down into the history of sport. Katowice has joined the group of cities that have hosted the subsequent editions of the World Conference. Among them are Lausanne, Copenhagen, Madrid and Johannesburg. Here, over the next few days, we will debate the future of the fight against doping in sport. Important decisions will be taken. We will adopt the revised Code as well as the international standards. Some of them for the first time, like the one regarding education and information. I believe that during these few days, and then over the next years, focused on our discussions, we will not forget about the most important ones. About those whom our work should serve – the athletes.

If confidence in the anti-doping system, which we've been building together for years, is lost even by a single athlete, it means that we have failed. That all our work was wasted. It means we have failed not as WADA, as an organization. We have failed as the sports community: together and each of us individually. Because it is us who make up WADA, and we should feel responsible for it. WADA is not only about management. It is about all its stakeholders, including public authorities and the sports movement. Athletes have trusted us and we must not fail them. We have a difficult task before us. And only together we will be able to do it.

Sport is a beautiful idea. The world's last one with the power to unite people no matter what their political views, religion, skin colour or age. This idea must be protected. We have to prevent corrupting it. If we allow it, this will be the end of sport. People will turn their back against it. They will not want to watch competitions in which *faster, higher, stronger* will be possible only through cheating. I am afraid that we are already looking into the abyss. Another step forward and we will fall down. We must therefore do everything we can to save this idea.

To this end, we will sometimes have to take difficult decisions. Yet, I am convinced we will be able to make them. We must not let anyone be above the law, be it a single athlete, a coach or a country. Regardless of who they are, if they violate the rules and act against the idea of clean sport, they should be severely punished.

I am pleased that at present WADA has new tools to help it better monitor compliance with the Code and the standards. I am convinced that this gives us a greater chance to avoid serious anti-doping crises. Yet, for this to happen, in the future WADA should more frequently use the available tools, including audits, investigation activities and, finally, declarations of non-compliance with the Code. WADA should impose penalties more often, not just wag a finger. I am convinced that in certain cases, only the pressure relating to non-compliance with the Code can lead to major reforms. I speak from my own experience as I am aware of the way the Polish anti-doping system has developed since 2016.

However, for this and many other activities to be possible, WADA needs a considerable budget. Each of us who have taken a careful look at WADA's budget knows that it is not in proportion with the expectations raised for the organization. If WADA is to safeguard clean sport, in a bold and courageous way, a sufficient budget must be secured for it. It is ridiculous that an organization with the status of a global regulator has a budget of less than 40 million dollars. An average football club has a bigger budget. We must not passively accept the situation. Therefore, I call upon global sports leaders, but also my colleagues who represent governments, as well as private companies: if you want sport to be clean, you need to increase your financial support for the fight against doping in sport. I would also like to make this appeal through the media that are present here. WADA needs you and your support, just like you need WADA.

Today I would like to send a very strong message to all of us from this place, from Katowice. I will never tolerate cheating in sport. I will never tolerate dopers. I will never tolerate manipulations. I will do my best to protect clean athletes and enhance the anti-doping system. The new future of anti-doping starts today.