

**30TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE ANTI-DOPING CONVENTION  
4-5 April 2019, Athens, Greece  
Speech by Olivier Niggli, WADA Director General**

Ministers, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, dear friends. Good morning.

On behalf of the World Anti-Doping Agency, I would like to thank the Council of Europe for giving me this opportunity to speak to you on the occasion of the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Council of Europe Anti-Doping Convention. I also wish to thank our hosts, in particular the Hellenic Republic Ministry of Culture and Sport for their warm welcome in the beautiful city of Athens.

I was asked today to reflect on the past, the present and the future of anti-doping and, in particular, the role that governments have played over the years, that they play today and will continue to play in the evolution of Clean Sport.

Frankly, I cannot think of a more fitting and symbolic location to celebrate this milestone anniversary than in Greece, the country where the Olympic Games were born and where the first Modern Olympic Games were held in 1896.

The fight against doping in sport is essential – essential to preserve the right of athletes to fulfill their dreams and to take part in fair competition. It is essential to safeguarding the integrity of sport and its values of fair play, respect, truth, solidarity, etc. These values are vital, not just for sport, let alone elite sport, but also for our youth and society in general as we all strive to live healthily and peacefully together in an ever-changing world. One simply needs to read the headlines to appreciate the related risks associated with doping, for example: steroid use in gyms; criminal trafficking; unregulated, often unsafe, supply of substances that are readily available via the internet; and, the list goes on...

Thirty years have passed since the Council of Europe Anti-Doping Convention came into effect. It was also twenty years ago that the International Olympic Committee invited governments of the world to Lausanne to propose the creation and establishment of an agency exclusively devoted to fighting doping in sport at a worldwide level. At that time, the principle that prevailed and led to the creation of WADA in 1999 was the requirement that governments and sport work together in defeating the scourge of doping as neither could succeed alone.

In 2005 came the creation of the UNESCO International Convention against Doping in Sport, which is now ratified by 188 State Parties – representing almost all countries of the world.

Without a doubt, these were big milestones that led to major achievements that I would like to highlight.

1. First, I would like to commend governments for the essential role they played in creating, implementing and supporting what we know today as the global anti-doping system. Over the years, governments from all over the world have committed to the values of integrity and fair play – a commitment that has translated into broad base support for anti-doping. Without the involvement of governments, the commitment of politicians and the dedication of civil servants, building the anti-doping system would not have been possible. Whether we speak of the European Anti-Doping Convention, the UNESCO Convention or the World Anti-Doping Code – all were made possible because the governments came to the table.
2. Second, I wish to underline the leading role that Europe has played in protecting Clean Sport. Let's not forget that the European Convention against Doping in Sport, which we celebrate today, was the first convention of its kind to be developed, ratified and implemented anywhere in the world. 47 members of the Council of Europe have proven to be leaders in anti-doping. Throughout history, Europe has understood the importance of the value of sport – clean sport – and what it brings to society; and, by extension, it has understood the associated risks when sport integrity is compromised.

European governments have been at the forefront since WADA's creation and our working relationship has evolved into a close and solid collaboration. Through the Council of Europe, and the committee of experts known as CAHAMA, a significant amount of work has been carried out to advance the anti-doping movement.

Europe is a region rich in anti-doping expertise – an expertise on which WADA continuously relies for advice and, in many cases, for assistance in the development and review of rules and policies.

Over the years, we have been working very closely with the Council of Europe on a range of issues, including matters related to monitoring the compliance of anti-doping programs. This partnership has allowed for a crossover of important expertise, which

benefits both organizations in increasing their respective efficiency while avoiding duplication of resources.

On behalf of WADA, and on behalf of athletes worldwide, I wish to thank Europe for their commitment, their investment and their relentless efforts in protecting clean sport and society.

3. The third achievement that I wish to highlight is the important work that we have conducted together to build an incredible anti-doping system over the past 20 years. The World Anti-Doping Code, the numerous International Standards, the Council of Europe Anti-Doping Convention and the UNESCO Convention, are all robust, legal instruments that have enabled us to deal with the scourge of anti-doping in a harmonized and efficient manner. With the expertise that we are able to draw upon from the Council of Europe, we strive to continue developing a system that is fair and efficient, and, as always, within the accepted principles of international law and human rights.

Without a doubt there is much more work to be done and improvements to be made. The fight against doping is not static. It evolves every day and none of us should rest on our laurels. Together, the Council of Europe, Member States, WADA, UNESCO, the Sport Movement and all other players within the anti-doping community must go further by improving our methods, our rules, our science, our monitoring and the list goes on...

So, if you were to ask me what governments should focus on over the coming years, I would say:

1. To ensure that, within their own jurisdiction, they take action through legislation and through financing to strengthen the legal frameworks so that doping substances are restricted and border controls are efficient; that trafficking is vigilantly pursued; and that, early education is put in place to ensure that the youth, the athletes of tomorrow, understand the values of sport and the dangers of doping.
2. I would also ask governments to support their National Anti-Doping Agency in their mission – both financially and politically – while fully respecting their independence; and
3. I would ask that governments continue to support WADA as it develops into an Agency that is fit for the future. As you know, WADA's mission goes well beyond Europe to every corner of the globe. WADA is at the forefront of the fight against

doping, ensuring harmonization of and compliance with rules worldwide; without which, there is no chance of ensuring a level playing field.

Going forward, we need to strengthen our engagement, our communication and our collaboration. We at WADA are here to listen to the needs of Europe and the other four regions of the world to ensure that harmonized solutions can be found. In exchange, we would simply ask that governments continue their support of WADA as the global regulator and ensure consensus positions are respected at the international level.

The next year will be very significant for WADA. In November, we will be celebrating the Agency's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary during the Fifth World Conference on Doping in Sport in Katowice, Poland, during which the 2021 Code and related International Standards will be endorsed. Also this year, we will develop a new five-year strategic plan, and as of 1 January 2020, a new President from the Public Authorities will take the helm of WADA. All of this presents important opportunities for governments to share their views with WADA – to contribute to defining the future goals of the Agency and to determine areas where governments can influence WADA's mission and the global fight against doping in sport.

As you know, WADA is pursuing strategic priorities, which, in addition to what I just referenced, require valuable government involvement to deliver.

1. For example, the Agency requires government support for the increasingly important area of Intelligence and Investigations. This cannot be over-emphasized. Intelligence and Investigations work is most effective when the exchange of information is made possible, whether that is between WADA and law enforcement, between law enforcement and anti-doping organizations, and/or among different anti-doping organizations etc. It's clear that the sharing of information is an important element that governments can facilitate through legislation at the national level, which was clearly illustrated via the International Biathlon Union case in 2017 and again, during the multi-sport operation launched by police raids, which is currently underway in Germany and Austria.
2. A second priority for WADA concerns compliance with the rules by anti-doping organizations. In 2017, WADA launched the most comprehensive review of the anti-doping program that has ever taken place. Beyond regular support, our monitoring

program includes a questionnaire, comprehensive audits and investigations when appropriate. And, on 1 April 2018, WADA's International Standard for Code Compliance by Signatories entered into effect – a legal framework that provides a range of graded, predictable and proportionate sanctions for cases of non-compliance by Signatories and a process for determining non-compliance and consequences. It outlines the ways in which WADA supports Signatories in achieving, maintaining and, where applicable, regaining Code compliance.

The Compliance Standard is proving to be a real game changer and so, governments must ensure that the mechanisms of compliance towards conventions – whether it is the European Convention or the UNESCO Convention – are in place so that meaningful action can be taken at those levels.

In closing, I would simply say that the input of governments is paramount to going further and making a difference. Whether you are a Minister, Ambassador, high-ranking official or delegate, we need you as part of the team. Our athletes make all of us proud every day through their hard efforts, their excellence and their dedication. They act as role models for the youth and make their nations' flag fly on the world stage. We owe them our full commitment – to protect them and the sports that they love.

Thank you very much.