



**VIRTUAL ENGAGEMENT BY WADA VICE-PRESIDENT YANG YANG
WITH MINISTERS RESPONSIBLE FOR SPORT AND SENIOR
GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS OF THE AFRICAN REGION**

13 OCTOBER 2021

Honorable Ministers and representatives of Governments from the African region, WADA Executive and Foundation Board Members, ladies and gentlemen.

Hello dear colleagues! Greetings from Jiamusi in northern China. Just like the WADA President Witold Bańka, I am delighted to be able to address you today in this forum where you as the Ministers responsible for sport can reflect on your role as leaders of the anti-doping movement in your region. This is a good opportunity for me to discuss anti-doping with the representatives of so many Governments and other interested parties in Africa. And of course...to hear from you.



My role as WADA Vice-President is to serve sports alongside Witold Bańka and I am honored to do so. I think we complement each other well. His experience in government and as an athlete makes him an excellent President and I, as a former athlete as well, am happy to work with him, particularly when it comes to discussing the perspective of athletes. The experience I have gained from my involvement with a National Federation, International Federation and National Olympic Committee has helped in my understanding of the anti-doping system, what works and what needs improvement. Although I retired from elite level speed skating a few years ago, like President Banka, I still think like an athlete. My first priority is to the athletes, and it always will be.

But there are many different perspectives we must consider. In 1999, WADA was set up as a collaboration between the public authorities and sport. It is unique in that sense. What other aspect of life relies on a global cooperation between Governments and the Sport Movement? For 22 years, this model has operated very well. But this collaborative model is only as strong as the various stakeholders allow it to be. The public



authorities, that you represent, are crucial to maintaining and strengthening the balance and spirit of cooperation that exists today.

To that end, this kind of forum is extremely important to building a strong global anti-doping community. WADA is here to help but also to be assisted in our commitment to clean sport. WADA cannot do it all alone. Neither can the public authorities nor the Sport Movement. It is only by working together that we will make progress. That is true, not just for WADA, but for the Governments, Anti-Doping Organizations, National Olympic Committees, and other regional sporting bodies in Africa.

For Africa to play its part in strengthening the global anti-doping movement, African Governments and African sports federations must also work together. Governments and sport must stand shoulder-to-shoulder in pursuit of protecting the health and well-being of African athletes; sing with one voice in protecting national pride in the performances of athletes; jointly uphold athletes rights and responsibilities; and collaboratively create a conducive environment for the development and implementation of strong and sustainable anti-doping programs.



It is this same philosophy that led to WADA's creation 22 years ago, and it remains true today. "Hakuna matata, Africa" ...if we work together as one, we can achieve anything.

To set the stage, it is now my privilege to invite WADA's Director General, Olivier Niggli, to provide you with a brief overview of the history of WADA, the challenges that WADA is confronting and the plans in place to ensure that going forward, WADA is well placed to deal with these challenges and make the most of the opportunities that will arise.

Olivier, over to you.