

WORLD CONFERENCE ON DOPING IN SPORT

Address by Kenshiro MATSUNAMI

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Japanese Senior Vice-Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology

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Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

Honorable Guests,

Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Please allow me to begin by offering my heartfelt congratulations on the opening of the 2007 World Conference on Doping in Sport. I also would like to extend my sincere thanks for all those who contributed to the organization of this significant event.

Japan, as a representative of the Asian region on the WADA Executive Board, has taken the lead in the fight against doping by adopting a wide range of policies.

As the world's anti-doping authorities, government and sports representatives gather here today, I wish to avail myself of this unique opportunity to present Japan's anti-doping activities to this day, followed by our views on the future landscape of the fight against performance-enhancing drugs.

On August 27 of this year, Japan hosted the meeting of Asian Sports Ministers on the sidelines of the 11th IAAF World Championships in Athletics Osaka 2007. Participants engaged in substantial debate on the promotion and development of anti-doping activities in the Asian region, and committed themselves to the adoption of more specific measures on the issue. This meeting produced substantial results, even though it was the first of its kind in Asia.

A few days earlier, on August 22, Japan sent a letter to all Asian countries that have not yet signed the International Convention Against Doping in Sport, encouraging them to join this framework. I hope that our call will be answered with sincere efforts in this direction.

This was my report on our active and diverse efforts to promote anti-doping activities in the Asian region.

And now, please let me turn to the future evolution of anti-doping activities. The first important issue I wish to underline is the training of officials who, on the frontline of sports, are in charge of battling doping. Providing these officials with the knowledge and experience they need is a primary

issue when considering the future of anti-doping in sport. Training human resources is an urgent task, in parallel with the promotion of international anti-doping standards and efforts to ensure the development of a comprehensive framework.

In cooperation with WADA's Asia and Oceania regional office, Japan has set up and is developing a framework to provide training to anti-doping officials from other Asian countries. RADOs, organizations involved in the promotion of anti-doping activities through international cooperation at the regional level, are gradually being established across the world. Japan is considering measures to actively contribute to the formation of RADOs throughout Asia, for example by training and dispatching doping control officers.

The second point I wish to raise today is the need to educate the athletes and their support personnel ceaselessly. The eradication of doping is not limited to the implementation of anti-doping controls. The mission of those of us concerned is to implement education programs to a broad range of generations, including young people. Through them, we can get them to accurately understand the purport and objectives of interdictions on doping so as not to destroy the unique value of sport. For its part, Japan is also extending the application of such programs beyond the athletes and their support personnel, in order to educate doctors and pharmacists.

My third point regards the importance of respect for the rules. This is only natural for us in carrying out anti-doping activities but we have come across situations lacking thoroughness. Therefore, I want to call for attention to such matters again today. We must absolutely ensure that our future activities are based on total respect for the new WADA Code and other international standards to be adopted in the course of this international conference.

Obviously, this will not only be an obligation for the signatories, but also for the rest of the anti-doping community. Each country must steadily implement the Code, take steps to ensure proper cooperation, and actively engage in anti-doping activities.

Next year, as China becomes the first Asian country in 20 years to host the Summer Olympic Games, the world's attention will be focused on the activities of Asian countries as never before. Japan will do its utmost to ensure the success of anti-doping activities, in Asia as well as the rest of the world.

Thank you for your kind attention.