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**Speech by Dr. Jacques Rogge
President, International Olympic Committee
to
World Conference on Doping in Sport
Madrid, Spain
15 November 2007**

Minister,

Distinguished Authorities, my fellow delegates, honoured guests:

Before I begin my formal remarks, I would like to thank the World Anti-Doping Agency, the Government of Spain, the Ministry of Education and Science, and the Spanish Sports Council for organising this important conference.

Minister, I thank you and your colleagues for your support. For your tough anti-doping legislation passed in the last year. And for your ongoing attention to the Operation Puerto case, which I am confident will be resolved soon. We respect the separation of power and the independence of the justice and do hope that Spanish justice will take a decision in the Puerto case as a matter of priority. I hope that the sports organisations will then soon be authorised to use the information contained in the Puerto Report to take the necessary disciplinary sanctions against the guilty athletes.

It is a great pleasure to be with you today...

To reflect on the importance of our anti-doping efforts. To review the successes we have achieved so far. To explore the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead. And to reaffirm our joint commitment to eliminate doping in sport.



The importance of our efforts

Doping is one of the most serious threats the Olympic Movement has ever seen. It undermines all we stand for. It endangers the health of athletes. It undermines the credibility of results. It risks drying out the recruitment of sport, as, one day, parents might refuse to send their children to sports clubs.

The fight against doping involves however much more than elite sport alone. It is not only about testing and sanctioning well-known athletes, it is about the health and future of our population. It is therefore a public health problem. Recent studies indicate the same dynamics that exist in professional sports are emerging in high school and university sport programmes around the world. These studies indicate that hundreds of thousands of teenagers and even pre-teenagers are in danger.

Doping also affects the general sporting public - namely the millions of so called "weekend athletes," runners and fitness club members who want to incorporate sport and exercise into their lives for the purpose of maintaining or improving their health, boosting their muscle mass or bolstering their body image. A European Union report estimates that the incidence of doping among recreational athletes in the European Union has risen during the past two decades from approximately 5% to more than 20%. And let us not forget about the enormous amounts of anabolic steroids and Ecstasy pills that are seized by the authorities in many countries. They are sold to much more people than athletes alone.

As an advocate for sport and athletes around the world, the International Olympic Committee is unwavering in its commitment to combat doping in sport. This fight is our number one priority.

Successes

The IOC has been a leader in the fight against doping for more than 40 years. We established a Medical Commission in 1967. We developed the first list of prohibited drugs and worked out methods for their detection. We also established a system of sanctions. We accredited drug-testing laboratories. All these measures were adopted by the Olympic Movement. We established the Court of Arbitration for Sport, introduced out-of-competition testing and funded early research into doping trends and detection methods. And we also funded the WADA budget for the first two years.

After the Festina scandal and the Tour de France in 1998, we realised more was needed. In 1999, we organised a World Conference on Doping in Lausanne to



harmonise anti-doping rules across the world of sport, and we called for the support of governments. This led to the creation of WADA. Today, the IOC continues to be a leader in the fight against doping. In response to the seriousness of the threat, we have championed a policy of zero tolerance.

We enforce this policy through a comprehensive programme of testing during each edition of the Olympic Games. Next year in Beijing, we plan to conduct 4,500 in- and out-of-competition tests. This is roughly 25 per cent more than were carried out during the 2004 Games in Athens. And 90 per cent more than the number of tests carried out in Sydney in 2000.

We have also recently proposed a series of measures to strengthen our zero tolerance policy. These measures include the denial of participation in the next Olympic Games for athletes and their entourage who have been sanctioned for more than six months. We will impose automatic suspensions after a positive A sample, we will impose stronger financial penalties for National Olympic Committees and athletes and implement stricter interpretations related to Therapeutic Use Exemptions.

Our effort to eliminate doping among athletes during the 16 days of the Olympic Games is of course a necessary component of an effective, international anti-doping agenda. But it is by no means sufficient. We rely on other stakeholders within the Olympic Movement to help. The Olympic Movement adopted the WADA code by the Opening of the Athens Games in July 2004. A number of International Federations and National Olympic Committees still need to implement some aspects of the WADA Code to be fully compliant. I urge the International Federations and National Olympic Committees to accelerate their efforts to achieve full compliance with WADA's guidelines by 1 January 2009.

Opportunities and Challenges

The impact of doping, of course, extends far beyond the boundaries of the Olympic Movement. No one is unaffected. For this reason, we must work harder to establish a unified voice for fair play. Collaboration among the sports community and governments is necessary if we are to make a lasting difference.

It is through our combined efforts that we will educate young people to make the right decisions. The value of the governments' support was made clear in 2006. That year, the Spanish Civil Guard launched the Operation Puerto investigation. The same year the IOC asked for the support of the Italian authorities to pursue those involved in a complex doping operation during the Turin Games. Recently, the operation "Raw Deal", conducted by the US authorities and with the collaboration of many governments, unveiled a huge doping network.



While government responsibility has received much press lately, the truth is that many governments have always been important players in the anti-doping movement. Many governments have passed anti-doping legislation. In 1989, the Council of Europe was a key player, along with the IOC, in preparing the International Charter Against Doping in Sport. This paved the way for the Copenhagen Declaration and the UNESCO International Convention against Doping in Sport.

As we meet now to open the next chapter in our unified fight against doping, I respectfully urge all governments to assume their full responsibility by ratifying the UNESCO Convention. I hope that the governments will accelerate the ratification process. Just as we must finalise the compliance of some International Federations and National Olympic Committees by 1 January 2009.

WADA will only have a full credibility when the governments and the Olympic Movement are compliant. Both partners of WADA, the governments and the sports movement, have to do a lot and have to do it fast.

Further challenges remain.

Spectators and public opinion are unfortunately still too complacent. This makes our task difficult. This means we must be even more active in promoting education through sport. We are challenged by new forms of unfair practices and the prospect of gene doping. We must work with researchers, laboratories and the pharmaceutical industry for better science.

Much of WADA's success over the past eight years is due to the great efforts of its outgoing Chairman, Richard Pound. On behalf of the Olympic Movement I would like to extend my warmest thanks to Richard Pound for all the good work he has done.

Joint Commitment

Over the next few days, we will discuss the new anti-doping code. Representatives from the Olympic Movement will offer suggestions to improve the draft. We will also elect a new Chairman of WADA from the government sector. The Olympic Movement will support WADA wholeheartedly.

We remain committed to our course of zero tolerance. And we look forward to working with all of you to create an environment of clean sport for generations to come.

The third World Conference on Doping in Sport, marks a milestone in our fight against doping. It will shape the next phase of our fight. As we move forward, let



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us build on our past success to promote cleaner sports. Let us tackle the challenges and opportunities we face with conviction and a unified voice. Above all, let us never lose sight of why we are here...To give athletes at all levels the fair chance they deserve. To create an environment that allows champions to shine as role models for children, parents and fans alike. To preserve the integrity - and the very future - of sport.

Thank you.

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