

Government of the Netherlands
Delivered by: Mr Rob de Vries
Director of Sport in the Netherlands, Minister of Sport

Minister Chairman,
Honourable participants
Dear friends

I am happy to make some remarks on behalf of the Government of The Netherlands regarding the reviewed anti-doping code.

At first I want to emphasize that the Code is the most important instrument in the fight against doping in sport. The Code has proved to be an adequate and efficient tool to control the problem of doping. Of course, it is useful to review the Code from time to time. In such a review-process it is important that all stakeholders are involved. That has happened in this review-process in an excellent way. The consultations were broad and extensive. WADA, and in particular the management and the Project team, deserve our appreciation for this.

This does not mean that the Government of The Netherlands is happy with all the parts of the reviewed Code. Especially regarding the criteria of the Doping list we do have objections. The result of these criteria is a list with substances which have nothing to do with doping. By this, we are not only facing unnecessary costs, but – more important – we are also facing sanctions towards sporters who are not cheating other sporters. That's why my government wants to see more limited Doping list; a list with substances which are at least performance enhancing. However, the strength of the Code is that the rules are the same in all the countries and in all the sports. This uniform regulation is the base of the international anti doping policy. This is the reason that we will approve the reviewed Code, in spite of our objections against the Doping list.

I want to mention two other issues of the reviewed Code. The first is the system of Monitoring. Of course it is of the utmost importance to monitor the compliance of sport and anti doping organisations with the Code. This monitoring is an essential task for WADA. It is also important to monitor the compliance of governments with the UNESCO - Convention. The way to conduct that monitoring should be determined by the Conference of Parties of that Convention. Of course, the advice and assistance of WADA in this, are quite important, but the final responsibility belongs to the Conference of Parties. The current wording in the reviewed Code (in article 23) is not too clear in this respect.

My second remark is also referring to the UNESCO Convention. We very much welcome the pre-condition for countries for participating in bid procedures for Olympic Games and other major international sport events.

Governments must have ratified the UNESCO Convention before their country can take part in those bid's.

The Netherlands have put a lot of effort in building that Convention and that was done in a time record for Conventions. But the final strength of the Convention is the number of ratifications. Also in this, we must not loose tempo, and try to break a record again.

That is why, we strongly support this new article, by which governments demonstrate their ongoing commitment to the international fight against Doping in sport.