



Speech by Professor Arne Ljungqvist

Transcription of the Closing Ceremony of the World Conference on Doping in Sport

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Mr Secretary of State, Representatives of the United Nations, Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen and, in particular, dear Mr President of WADA, dear Dick. You are about to leave the chairmanship and presidency of WADA, and that is why we are standing here. It is a sort of emotional moment. You mentioned yourself that WADA is a unique organisation; what you did not say was that a unique organisation requires a unique chairman and president. The question, of course, is, were you the right, unique president? The answer was given right now, and I can tell you why. You showed the right commitment and the right understanding of the problems that we face. For me, it was a particular pleasure to note your understanding of the need for research. Your legal background was helpful, because sort of unfortunately, you could say, anti-doping activities have moved and are moving slowly from the laboratories to the courtroom. You usually say when I state this that "Well, I am just a tax lawyer", but your legal mind has been very helpful; I am sure about that. I can also reveal to the audience that Mr Pound is an enormously efficient chairman at WADA meetings. The norm is that one can take the early plane home. The agenda is always fulfilled within less than foreseen hours. You do not want unnecessary talk; straight to the point please and then make decisions. Many people have to learn from that type of leadership.

This leads me to the fourth reason as to why I feel you are unique. You are a strong leader, and that is what WADA needed. You dared to speak out on behalf of WADA. Not everybody has loved that; some have not loved it at all. Even I have told you sometimes not to talk about things in the way you did. We had these conversations in a friendly way, but I understand that it has not always been friendly with others. But I think that is the strong leadership that was required over these eight years, and it is the result that counted. It is my privilege, on behalf of the Olympic Movement, to thank you for this strong leadership over these eight years and the way in which you have shown the way forward for those who will now take over the WADA leadership. You were unique, you were the right person at the right time, and the Olympic Movement is extremely grateful to you for the commitment you have shown over these eight years. Thank you Dick.