



DOPING AUTORITEIT

Fifth World Conference on Doping in Sport

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We are here not only to discuss the revised version of the World Anti-Doping Code, but also to celebrate it. The 2021 Code will bring us another step further in the fight against doping. Although the number of proposed changes is - again - significant, the 2021 Code will not be fundamentally different from the 2015 Code. Which shows that we have a working and workable set of rules in place. Updating this set of rules every six years is useful and necessary. But the system is solid.

I want to draw your attention to three challenges that we now face.

The first one is: Implementing the revised Code. That work will begin tomorrow, and it will speed up once the final version of the 2021 Code has been distributed. Implementation of each revised Code is a challenge, because it requires a thorough revision of the rules and procedures of most Signatories. And each Signatory will be facing specific questions that need to be answered. A few hundred national and sport specific doping regulations will be revised, a number of countries will adjust their anti-doping legislation, and countless numbers of education texts will be adjusted. A huge task with numerous individual challenges, but based on the Code that we all have in common. In order to assist the anti-doping community in this work, Doping Authority will organize an International Conference on the Implementation of the Code in January 2020 in the Netherlands. I invite all my colleagues to join us!

The second challenge is: Educating athletes and athlete support personnel about the changes in the Code and International Standards. Education is - of

course - one of our most important obligations. Implementation of the Standard for Education must bring this part of our work to a higher level. In an ideal world, no athlete should ever be tested without being educated beforehand. I realize that this goal can never be fully achieved. But we must strive to get as close as possible, and I am sure that this new Standard will be a great help for many Anti-Doping Organizations. Education is an ongoing process, with new talents entering sport every day. But educating athletes about the new rules that will be in place in one year's time is an extra challenge because it concerns *all* athletes, including those who have been educated adequately in the past. And the Code is a complicated set of rules!

The third challenge is the very fact that the Code *is* a large and complicated set of rules. Simplifying the rules was a goal when the 2015 Code was drafted, and it was again so while drafting the 2021 Code. Unfortunately, this goal has not been achieved. On top of that, we will have eight International Standards in place (including two brand new ones) and the number of Guidelines and Technical Documents is still growing. The job of revising the Code has been done as good as it can be done. But notwithstanding the fact that all changes have a logical background, it remains a fact that expanding our set of rules creates a paradox. Experiences in the field lead to new rules because we want to cover all aspects of doping, a complex monster with many faces. But both the implementation of the rules, and educating athletes and athlete support personnel about them, are not getting easier. On the contrary, I fear, it will put even more pressure on anti-doping organizations. This cannot go on forever. So I see it as our challenge for the next couple of years to thoroughly discuss ways to simplify the Code. I know that simplifying the Code may lead to legal challenges in specific, rare cases. But I also know that athletes and athlete support personnel have the right to have a set of rules in place that they can understand. This is especially relevant for all clean athletes, and that is the vast majority!

Herman Ram

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