

# **IMPROVING THE ROLE OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS THROUGH MORE TRANSPARENT, INCLUSIVE AND EVIDENCE-BASED INTERNATIONAL RULEMAKING**

## **7<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of International Organisations**

3 September 2020

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Statement by Olivier Niggli, Director General, World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA)

Dear Colleagues,

Let me first thank the OECD for organizing this annual meeting and beyond that, for having set up this partnership of “International Organizations for effective international rulemaking”. WADA values very much its participation in this initiative.

When this partnership was established in 2014, the international landscape was already rich with hundreds of international organizations working in their own particular areas of expertise to foster exchanges, regulate, monitor and sometimes sanction. The principle of international coordination seemed an accepted one, even if better applied in some fields than in others, or in some countries than in others.

Today, 6 years later, while in the middle of a global pandemic, international coordination is more important than ever. Nobody can seriously affirm in the current environment that international coordination is useless or inappropriate, let alone counterproductive. Yet, strangely, multilateralism is being questioned more and more. Protectionism and self-interest seem to be the knee-jerk reactions for some - an instinctive response that any entity, or even anybody, tends to adopt when in danger. Well, we all know that the first response is not always the best one.

We, at the World Anti-Doping Agency, are currently experiencing a difficult environment; an environment that is of course made more difficult by COVID 19, but also a difficult political environment, attributable to what we do, which is to set the rules and then monitor how they are implemented.

The World Anti-Doping Agency, or WADA, was founded in 1999, more than 20 years ago on the very principle of international partnership. WADA is a unique model of cooperation between public authorities and private entities: it is co-administered and co-funded by Governments of the world and the Sports Movement through an equal-footing partnership.

Over the years, WADA has come across and dealt with many challenges. The most recent and important one being the revelation of a large-scale, state-sponsored doping scheme in Russia.

While the consequences of this scheme in Russia are still unfolding - the case is now in front of the Court of Arbitration for Sport – WADA has used this crisis as an opportunity to strongly reinforce its sets of rules, including through the adoption of an updated version of the World Anti-Doping Code and a set of new and amended International Standards, which are legally binding on all international sport federations and all national anti-doping agencies. WADA also developed a stronger compliance-monitoring mechanism that now includes gradual and predictable sanctions and an independent compliance review committee.

These developments - which will be described in more details in the Compendium of IO Practices that this partnership is currently drafting - have made WADA a much stronger regulatory agency.

But paradoxically, the Russian crisis, while contributing to making WADA stronger, also awakened in some countries reflexes of protectionism and of giving priority to national interest. For instance, two months ago, the United States Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) filed a report with their U.S. Congress that was highly critical of WADA. The report called for significant changes within WADA and questioned the relevance of the US financial contribution to our organization. Maybe this sounds familiar to some of you...

Like your own organization, WADA was not created to please individual countries or sports. WADA was set up to prevent cheating in sport competitions and ensuring a level playing field for clean athletes.

Like all of you, we are tasked to protect the greater good; the public good.

I know that some of you find your organizations in similar sensitive situations and I believe that this partnership has a clear value in defending the role played by international organizations and the way they operate. We all rely on the engagement of public authorities and each being faithful to their commitment.

On the other hand, we all have to demonstrate our capacity to revisit and improve our governance structures, enhance our rule-making processes and increase engagement with our stakeholders. I believe that the IO partnership is also very beneficial in this perspective, by allowing all of us to share best practices and learn from each other.

Therefore, I clearly support the Joint Statement that has been prepared and I stand ready to contribute to promoting and defending the role of international organizations as I do on a daily basis for WADA.

Thank you.