



SUMMARY

Introduction

The inaugural Central-Eastern Anti-Doping Summit was convened in Warsaw on October 9-10, 2023, marking a significant milestone in regional anti-doping cooperation. Anti-doping experts from 26 countries gathered to address critical issues related to the fight against doping in sports. The Summit focused on several key topics, including global NADO cooperation, regional anti-doping collaboration, the role of education, Intelligence & Investigations (I&I), athlete and media involvement, and the upcoming update of the World Anti-Doping Code.

Key Discussions and Outcomes

- **Global NADO Cooperation:** The panel discussion on Global NADO Cooperation emphasized the critical need for more structured collaboration in combating doping in sports. Participants stressed the importance of sharing information and best practices to establish a unified anti-doping system. Challenges faced by the anti-doping community, including structural development, political environment, and resource shortages, were acknowledged. Discussions also highlighted the importance of addressing issues related to sample transportation, IT support, and data security through technology investments. The panel emphasized solidarity and mutual support as essential elements in achieving a level playing field.
- **Anti-Doping Collaboration in the Region:** The discussion on Anti-Doping Collaboration in the Region emphasized essential strategies for effective international cooperation. Participants highlighted the need to promote good practices of NADOs from the region, who have much to offer. Some tangible examples of collaboration were mentioned, where developed NADOs supported developing counterparts through practical collaboration. Open communication and transparent sharing of experience were emphasized as factors fostering continuous learning. Constant communication, both on regional and global levels, was deemed vital. The significance of intercontinental

collaboration and mentorship programs was emphasized, with mentors viewed as valuable resources. The Erasmus+ program was recognized as a valuable funding source for many anti-doping projects for NADOs from the region. The final outcome statement from the panel was focused on the need to have structured and better organized coordination with the aim of achieving better recognition of regional needs, which can differ from other European regions. Moreover, the establishment of a coordination platform would allow the region to play a more significant role in Europe and globally.

- **Towards an Updated World Anti-Doping Code (2027):** During the discussions about the update of the World Anti-Doping Code and International Standards, several key points were made. The participants advocated for a limited scope of revision to maintain a delicate balance between compliance amendments of the rules. Acknowledging the Code's significant development since its release, the panelists stressed the importance of keeping rules athlete centered. Ensuring detailed explanations of sanctions and athletes' rights was deemed crucial, as well as the promotion of transparency and fairness. The provision of substantial assistance was highlighted as essential, considering its significant value in the daily operations of many National Anti-Doping Organizations (NADOs). Participants generally agreed on the need to avoid fundamental changes, focusing instead on strengthening a more athlete-friendly approach. Overall, the discussions emphasized the Code's evolution, focusing on athlete-centric, transparent, and comprehensible regulations for the future. The last part of the discussion touched on WADA's responsibility to continue its tasks as a compliance watchdog, monitoring all kinds of anti-doping rules, including those embedded in national legislations, to ensure a level playing field for athletes worldwide.
- **Intelligence and Investigation (I&I) and Cooperation with Law Enforcement:** The panel discussion on I&I highlighted the importance of well-drafted national anti-doping legislation, which provides a solid foundation for cooperation between law enforcement and NADOs. It was also noted that additional financial support for I&I departments should be considered. Establishing cooperation between NADOs and law enforcement agencies was acknowledged as a long process that requires efforts on both sides to build trust. Finding the right individuals for collaboration is key to achieving that goal. Another outcome of this panel discussion was that NADOs should engage in mutually beneficial relationships, where information is shared based on mutual benefits. This symbiotic approach ensures that when NADOs provide assets to other organizations, they receive vital information in return, fostering effective collaboration in the fight against doping.
- **Education as the Key to Future Success:** The Education panel discussion emphasized the fundamental role of education in the anti-doping system. Participants firmly asserted that athletes have the right to education and that NADOs bear the responsibility of providing it in a comprehensive manner. Education was set at the same level as testing and investigation. The discussion also emphasized the need to educate athletes' support personnel and highlighted the importance of WADA's educational programs for NADOs. Cooperation among educational departments of different NADOs was deemed crucial. Collaboration with schools and universities was noted as essential, as well as educating educators to spread anti-doping knowledge more effectively. The presence of a qualified

person with medical knowledge within NADOs, available for athlete inquiries, was also highlighted, underscoring the necessity of having a structured education plan in place.

- **Role of Athletes and Media:** The panel discussion underscored the crucial partnership between NADOs and the media in promoting anti-doping efforts. Collaborating with the media serves as a vital channel to inform society about the work of ADOs and educate them about anti-doping rules. Transparency and trust-building were emphasized as fundamental in fostering a positive relationship where media supports the promotion of clean sports. A key point highlighted was the media's role in education, not only by reporting events, but also by guiding the audience to avoid similar mistakes in the future. Having elite athletes as ambassadors for clean sports was noted as highly effective in conveying anti-doping messages. Initiatives such as organizing meetings between NADOs and journalists were praised, providing essential education to media professionals about the anti-doping system and its complexities. The symbiotic relationship between media and NADOs was emphasized, with media helping to maintain anti-doping awareness in society and promoting clean sport. Building strong relationships with society through media engagement emerged as a core strategy, ensuring a united front in the battle for clean sport.
- **Future Plans:** It was suggested that Polish Anti-Doping Agency (POLADA) assumes the role of a Central and Eastern European group coordinator. POLADA will work closely with other NADOs in the region to create a collective voice of the Central-East European countries on anti-doping issues. This will enable a more effective presentation of the region's efforts in international forums. In the near future, the region will need to focus on the update of the World Anti-Doping Code, and to prepare to work efficiently in forums such as CAHAMA of Council of Europe, Conference of Parties of UNESCO or NADO Expert Advisory Group of WADA.

During the Summit, it was formally announced that Romanian NADO has been entrusted with the honor of hosting the upcoming Central and Eastern European Anti-Doping Summit in 2024.

Conclusion

The Central and Eastern European Anti-Doping Summit underscored the importance of international cooperation, intelligence-driven approaches, education, and athlete engagement in the fight against doping. The Summit laid the groundwork for a more robust, unified, and proactive approach to maintaining the integrity of sports in the European Central-Eastern region and globally. The commitment and outcomes of this Summit set a positive precedent for future endeavors in the pursuit of clean and fair sports worldwide.