

Press release, Warsaw, 9 October 2023

Warsaw hosts the historic Anti-Doping Summit

The Central and Eastern European Anti-Doping Summit, the first such event in the anti-doping history of the continent, is held in Warsaw. The Summit is attended by over 70 top experts in fighting against doping in sport, from 26 countries. The invitation to Poland has been accepted by representatives of governments as well as President of the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) Witold Bańka and WADA Director General Olivier Niggli. The event is held on 9 – 10 October 2023. The summit is organized by the Ministry of Sport and Tourism and the Polish Anti-Doping Agency (POLADA).

The intention of holding the Summit is to increase anti-doping standards in Central and Eastern Europe, reinforce cooperation in order to create new dynamics and increase the importance of the region, and ensure active participation of all countries of the region in creating European and global anti-doping policies.

Among the experts there are guests from the World Anti-Doping Agency, South Korea and Europe, including: Albania, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Kosovo, Latvia, Lithuania, North Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Turkey, Ukraine and Poland.

The main goal of the Summit is to join forces in the anti-doping system so as to ensure a level playing field for all athletes in global competition. The strength of the anti-doping system lies in the cooperation between countries and the harmonization of standards. The fight against doping in sport can only be conducted effectively if it is carried out by all international partners, which is why cooperation in this area is so important.

Kamil Bortniczuk, Minister of Sport and Tourism, member of WADA Foundation Board:

„I am very pleased that today in Warsaw we are hosting outstanding experts in combating doping in sport, including, in the first place, Witold Bańka, President of the World Anti-Doping Agency and its Director General Olivier Niggli. As member of the Foundation Board of the World Anti-Doping Agency and Minister of Sport and Tourism I would like to emphasize our country’s full readiness to develop the anti-doping system on a global scale. The first Central and Eastern Europe Anti-Doping Summit, organized by the Ministry of Sport and Tourism and the Polish Anti-Doping Agency, proves this best today. I hope that the event will be an important turning point, will translate into even better cooperation between the countries of the region and will make it possible for us all to develop solutions for further development of anti-doping policies in Europe”.

Andriy Chesnokov, Deputy Minister for Youth and Sports of Ukraine for European Integration:

You are all aware that the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine is ongoing. Therefore, we still hope that the initiative of President Witold Bańka’s to test Ukrainian athletes in the countries where they temporarily train will continue in 2023. We would be grateful for such support of the Ukrainian anti-doping system and Ukrainian athletes. In 2022, 192 samples were collected by partner NADOs and analysed in WADA-accredited laboratories. A total of 19 NADOs responded positively to WADA's request and 18 countries tested Ukrainian athletes. A word of thanks also to Poland, which has been actively cooperating with the Ukrainian Anti-Doping Centre for many years and helping to create a strong anti-doping system in our country."

Witold Bańka, WADA President:

"The key to success for anti-doping around the world is collaboration. No single organization can achieve a level playing field for all athletes. WADA relies on the expertise, energy and local knowledge of all our global stakeholders. Here in Central and Eastern Europe we are fortunate to have reliable partners who together are making a difference. Summits such as this really help as they provide a platform for Anti-Doping Organizations to get together, share best practice and discover new ways to collaborate. I hope more opportunities like this can be organized and that the clean sport community here can really make its presence felt throughout Europe and the world."

Olivier Niggli, WADA Director General:

"It is a pleasure to be in Poland for what is an important summit for clean sport in the Central and Eastern Europe regions. I want to stress that harmonization, innovation and unity are the three key words as we deliver the Global Anti-Doping System that athletes deserve. This type of meeting is one way of achieving that and I commend the organizers for the leadership that is being shown here this week. I am feeling very optimistic that together we can deliver an ambitious program to protect athletes here and around the world."

Michał Rynkowski, Director of the Polish Anti-Doping Agency:

„I am pleased that we can jointly create this important and unique anti-doping event. POLADA is strongly focused on international cooperation and assistance provision to developing anti-doping organizations. We have been doing it for many years and we have been effective in doing so. However, it is now the time to use this experience to an even greater extent. The presence at our Summit of such important persons engaged in combating doping in Europe and around the world is a clear sign of the need to work together for the benefit of athletes and integrity of sports competitions. During the Summit, we will discuss topics related to law, the rules of the World Anti-Doping Program, international cooperation, investigations, as well as the role of athletes and journalists in promoting clean sport.”