



**DET KONGELIGE
KULTURDEPARTEMENT**

Ministry of Cultural Affairs Statssekretær Per Kristian Skulberg

SPEECH

Speech by: State Secretary Mr. Per Kr. Skulberg
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**Mme Minister Ms Jackie Kelly
Ministers and Heads of Delegations
Fellow Delegates**

On behalf of the Norwegian Minister of Cultural Affairs, Mrs. Åslaug Marie Haga, I first of all want to express my admiration and gratefulness for the initiative taken by the Australian Minister for Sport and Tourism, Ms. Jackie Kelly, to summon representatives of Governments with special responsibilities in sport issues to this conference on anti-doping here in Sydney, the site for next year's Olympic Games. From our co-operation through the International Anti-Doping Arrangement, the seven IADA-countries committed to pursue a systematic, consequent, qualified and fair anti-doping policy, we have learned to appreciate and respect the Australian side as a highly aim-oriented, operative, and very constructive partner.

We look forward to fully participate in this conference, being confident of the management and the results of this important gathering of responsible and committed representatives of Governments.

Let me at once underline that Governments not only have a role to play if effective anti-doping programmes are to be developed. In order to secure that sport on national level is not treated as a private phenomenon belonging to international sports organisations, and thereby left to be treated according to different standards, regulations and procedures, the Governments should protect and guide sports in their respective countries by establishing unified, quality oriented anti-doping systems that apply to all national athletes.

This statement is in fact the core of the Norwegian Anti-Doping Policy, which was laid down as early as 1976 by the Norwegian Confederation of Sports. At the General Assembly in 1976 the fundamental principles were adopted, which since then have been applied to all Norwegian athletes, regardless of what sport they practice. A centralised national anti-doping system was established, based on the duties and obligations of voluntarily entering into membership of organised sports in Norway.

Since the mid 70-ties the national anti-doping system has developed in many dimensions, but the fundamental principles have been the same during these almost 25 years: Norwegian athletes are citizens of the same country. As such they are treated equally, i.e. the same general laws apply to everybody. The misuse of drugs and doping substances are part of the same complex social problem area, that cannot be treated as private problems belonging to a certain selfprotected sector of our societies.

Doping regulations fall outside of the competition rules and regulations of each sport. While competition rules and regulations are sport-specific, of the simple fact that sports have different cultural backgrounds, and express themselves physically in very different ways, no one would seriously argue that drug taking by athletes should be considered as sport-specific activities, and as a consequence be under the jurisdiction of a wide variety of international sports federations.

The Norwegian Government has politically and financially supported the unified solution adopted by the Norwegian Confederation of Sports. There has been no need for intervention as long as organised sports in Norway, through their umbrella organisation, the Confederation, have adopted and loyally adhered to common rules and regulations, sanctions included. The consequence has been that all Norwegian athletes have been treated as equal citizens of the same society. Norwegian sport has behaved according to the codex of the society of which sport is an important member and contributor.

Since 1976, when the first national regulations were adopted, and national testing programmes were introduced, the whole set up has undergone considerable refinement. Competence and quality have been secured, inside the testing, prosecution and sanction systems as well as inside the laboratory procedures. To-day both sides, the drug testing and drug analysis systems, are accredited by the International Standard Organisation (ISO), according to specific and relevant requirements.

To keep up public trust and thereby public support, and to protect athletes' rights to fair and just treatment, are of fundamental importance if modern sport is to maintain legitimacy as something more valuable than mere money-oriented entertainment and business.

From a Norwegian sport-loving outlook it has been sad and frustrating to experience the lack of real interest and responsibility among sports organisations, especially on the international level, to acknowledge the problems, and to counteract forcefully, and in time.

The preoccupation with imagery and money-making has given international sports a long way to go if value rhetoric is to be believed in the years to come.

Let me in this context briefly touch an issue that has been part of the WADA discussion. Representatives of the IOC side have on several occasions bluntly expressed that if Governments were to expect any influence on WADA's structure and running, they had to equal the IOC investment of 25 million US \$. The Norwegian Government finds it unacceptable that the IOC, on behalf of international sports federations, demands financial contributions from the GO-sector, as if the problem on this agenda is of that nature. The

international sports federations and the IOC have harvested heavily on the commercial possibilities of modern sports. It can be nothing but logical that the drug problems in international sports, created through the pressures and gains on international level, are – at last – paid for by those who have taken out the prestige and surplus of that game.

The Governments should continue to contribute to their national sport systems, especially by taking active responsibility for the financing and quality assurance of anti-doping solutions that are treating athletes as citizens of the same country, regardless of their sport activity. Anti-doping regimes do not come under the competition rules and regulations that are the field of jurisdiction of international sports organisations. They are far more important, and should be treated accordingly.

International co-operation is needed to develop and harmonise national anti-doping systems. This is the main aim of the work of the International Anti-Doping Arrangement (IADA), an excellent tool for the seven Governments that so far have entered into this fairly intensive co-operation. Co-operation of this kind should be encouraged and developed in other parts of the world.

Allow me, Mme Minister, to finish by stating that the fight against doping in sport is a fight in order to protect sport as a positive phenomenon of great influence in the lives of our citizens. Governments have a duty to intervene when international influence tends to overthrow the value priorities of national systems.

This conference is of vital importance for setting the right agenda for the future anti-doping debate and initiatives. The Norwegian contribution is focused on each country's rights and obligations to protect its national sport systems from being deadly contaminated by the money and prestige culture pursued by international sports organisations.

Thank you.