



INTERNATIONAL
OLYMPIC
COMMITTEE

NOC Relations Department

Dr Vasil TUPURKOVSKI
President
Mr Sasho POPOVSKI
Secretary General
Olympic Committee of North Macedonia

Lausanne, 27 September 2019

Situation of the Olympic Movement in North Macedonia

Dear President,
Dear Secretary General,

Thank you for your letter dated 18 September 2019 and our various discussions on this subject.

As you know, the IOC's position regarding the relationship that should prevail between the government authorities and national sports organisations (in particular the NOCs and National Sports Federations) is very clear, and has been summarised in a reference document (attached), which was established and circulated to all NOCs in 2016, as a result of the implementation of Recommendation 28 of Olympic Agenda 2020. This approach is based on the fundamental principle of "responsible autonomy" of the NOCs and National Sports Federations as set out in the [Olympic Charter](#), in particular:

- Paragraph 5 of the Fundamental Principles of Olympism: *Recognising that sport occurs within the framework of society, sports organisations within the Olympic Movement shall apply political neutrality. They have the rights and obligations of autonomy, which include freely establishing and controlling the rules of sport, determining the structure and governance of their organisations, enjoying the right of elections free from any outside influence and the responsibility for ensuring that principles of good governance be applied.*
- Paragraph 7 of the Fundamental Principles of Olympism: *Belonging to the Olympic Movement requires compliance with the Olympic Charter and recognition by the IOC.*
- Rule 27.2.2: *[The NOCs' role is to] ensure the observance of the Olympic Charter in their countries.*
- Rule 27.5: *In order to fulfil their mission, the NOCs may cooperate with governmental bodies, with which they shall achieve harmonious relations. However, they shall not associate themselves with any activity which would be in contradiction with the Olympic Charter. The NOCs may also cooperate with non-governmental bodies.*
- Rule 27.6: *The NOCs must preserve their autonomy and resist all pressures of any kind, including but not limited to political, legal, religious or economic pressures which may prevent them from complying with the Olympic Charter.*
- Rule 27.9: *Apart from the measures and sanctions provided in the case of infringement of the Olympic Charter, the IOC Executive Board may take any*

*appropriate decisions for the protection of the Olympic Movement in the country of an NOC, including suspension of or withdrawal of recognition from such NOC **if the constitution, law or other regulations in force in the country concerned, or any act by any governmental or other body causes the activity of the NOC or the making or expression of its will to be hampered.** The IOC Executive Board shall offer such NOC an opportunity to be heard before any such decision is taken.* [emphasis added]

It is also worth recalling that the autonomy of sport was formally established in a Resolution of the United Nations General Assembly adopted in New York in October 2014 ([A/RES/69/6](#)), which recognises sport as a means to promote education, health, development and peace, and also *supports the independence and autonomy of sport as well as the mission of the International Olympic Committee in leading the Olympic Movement.*

To summarise, sports development in a country requires fruitful collaboration between the government authorities and the national sports organisations (including the NOC and the National Sports Federations) to develop relations on good terms and complementary actions which benefit sport and the athletes. However, such cooperation must take place with absolute and mutual respect for the autonomy of the NOC and the National Sports Federations, and without any external interference with the internal governance and operations of these organisations.

This approach was already mentioned in self-explanatory letters sent to your NOC on 29 September 2014, 13 June 2016 and 4 April 2019. Unfortunately, this has not produced the expected results from the government authorities concerned so far. However, we are extremely happy to note, from the recent meeting you had with the Prime Minister of the Republic of North Macedonia, that this approach is now well understood at the highest level of the country, and that specific instructions will be given to the authorities concerned to resolve this situation shortly and make the sports legislation fully compatible with the principles and rules which govern the Olympic Movement.

In view of this, we propose the following roadmap and steps, which should be implemented without any further delay:

1. Revision of the sports legislation by the relevant authorities (in close coordination and consultation with your NOC, the National Sports Federations as well as the IOC and the international sports organisations concerned) to make it fully compatible with the principles and rules which govern the Olympic Movement.
2. Adoption and signature of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the NOC/National Sports Federations and the government authorities concerned, based on the “reference document” (attached), as mentioned in our letter dated 4 April 2019 (attached).
3. Revision of the Statutes of the National Sports Federations in close coordination with their respective International Federations (IFs), to ensure full compliance with the Statutes of their respective IFs and the principles of the Olympic Charter.
4. Update of your NOC Statutes in close coordination with the IOC (having in mind the recent name change of your NOC).

In order to ratify these steps and determine mutually acceptable deadlines to complete this process, we would like to organise a joint meeting as soon as possible with your NOC and the relevant government authorities at the IOC headquarters in Lausanne, Switzerland. Therefore, we would appreciate it if you could consult and coordinate with the government

authorities concerned and confirm to us, by next week at the latest, a few dates which would be suitable for your NOC and the government authorities for this joint meeting in Lausanne.

In the meantime, and in order to avoid any further delay, we kindly request that you send us as soon as possible:

- an official English translation of the current sports legislation, so that we can help you and the government authorities identify the specific provisions which need to be reviewed to make them fully compatible with the principles and rules which govern the Olympic Movement; and
- an English translation of the draft MoU which you have already prepared, based on the "reference document" which we circulated in 2016, for final review and confirmation before it is submitted to all parties concerned for final discussion and signature.

We are counting on the understanding and positive collaboration of all parties concerned to resolve these issues quickly and amicably, and avoid any unnecessary complications and/or further action from the IOC, as major international sports events, including the Olympic Games Tokyo 2020, are approaching.

Thank you for your kind attention and valuable cooperation, and we look forward to receiving your prompt feedback on the above-mentioned issues.

Yours sincerely,



James MACLEOD
Director of Olympic Solidarity and
NOC Relations



Jérôme POIVEY
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