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iNADO Statement on IPC Decision to Maintain Suspension of Russia

(Bonn, Germany) The Institute of National Anti-Doping Organisations (iNADO) applauds the decision of the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) to maintain its suspension of Russia from the Paralympic Movement and thus the Paralympic Games in Pyeongchang. “The IPC has again demonstrated its commitment to put principles before politics in taking this considered position.” said iNADO Chair Doug MacQuarrie. In taking this stance, it is clear the IPC gives highest priority to its responsibility to ensure clean sport and a level playing field for all Para athletes.

Since the evidence regarding wide spread, systemic and institutionalized doping was released in the McLaren Report, the IPC has been unequivocal in its support of fair sport and clean athletes – this continues with today’s pronouncement. While IPC has taken this bold step regarding the Russian Paralympic Committee, in recognition of the progress achieved in Russia, it has also identified a process by which clean Paralympic athletes from Russia can still be included in the Games. Unlike its Olympic counterpart, the IPC has further demonstrated its leadership in support of clean sport by agreeing to publish the conditions whereby such athletes can participate in the Games thereby ensuring a transparent process.

The IPC has gone the extra mile in this matter. In contrast to the decision taken for the Olympic Games, they have required that any athlete from Russia who meets their strict conditions for participating in the Games attend under the Paralympic Flag AND wearing a uniform that only identifies them as a ‘neutral athlete’ rather than being from Russia. The Chairperson of the IPC Athletes’ Council, Chelsey Gotell, said it best: “For Russian Para athletes, albeit as neutrals, this decision gives them an opportunity to fulfil their Paralympic dream. I am sure they would prefer to compete under their country’s flag, like any other Para athlete, but Russia’s unwillingness to take responsibility for the biggest doping scandal ever to take place in sport should not be rewarded, nor celebrated.”

iNADO whole-heartedly supports the IPC for doing the right thing, as they did in advance of the last summer Paralympic Games in Rio, by taking the steps necessary to protect clean competition, in an open and transparent manner, for the upcoming Pyeongchang Paralympic Winter Games.

iNADO is the international member association of NADOs. NADOs have the sole and unequivocal mandate to protect clean athletes, without conflicting responsibilities such as promoting sport. iNADO's 69 Members represent all Olympic Regions and conduct the majority of anti-doping work world-wide each year.