

STATEMENT

by People's Deputies of Ukraine – members of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine Committee on Youth and Sports on the recommendations of the International Olympic Committee to international sports federations on allowing russian and belarusian athletes to participate in competitions under a neutral flag

On March 28, 2023, the Executive Committee of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) recommended that international sports federations consider the participation of russian and belarusian athletes in international sports competitions under a neutral flag, subject to the following requirements:

- national teams, athletes and functionaries from aggressor states that support the war and military or law enforcement officers are not allowed to participate in international sports competitions;
- it is forbidden to use any russian and belarusian flags in the competition venues, as well as in the places of stay of athletes, staff and spectators;
- any statements in support of the war are prohibited before, during or after the competition, as well as within the framework of communication with journalists;
- all russian and belarusian athletes must be tested for doping in accordance with the anti-doping programs of the international federations, and not with the anti-doping organizations of russia or belarus.

We, People's Deputies of Ukraine – members of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine Committee on Youth and Sports have studied the officially published recommendations of the IOC Executive Committee on the admission of russian and belarusian athletes to international competitions.

We strongly condemn this position and regard this decision as open support for the aggressor states in the conditions of the barbaric war unleashed by the russian federation against the Ukrainian people.

Every russian and belarusian citizen who continues to live, work and pay taxes in russia and belarus is a sponsor of the genocide of the Ukrainian people. The tacit consent of athletes who are opinion leaders, in particular russians with the putin regime and belarusians with the fact that their state is being used as a military foothold, is actually support for the war against Ukraine.

Moreover, such a decision is a manifestation of disdain for Ukrainian athletes, who, despite the war, personal losses and a difficult psychological state, continue to represent Ukraine with dignity in international competitions. Representatives of russian murderers and terrorists have no moral right to participate in prestigious competitions and receive medals while their country violates all possible norms of morality and international law.

Undoubtedly, the approval of such a decision by the International Olympic Committee gives the russian federation the opportunity to use sports as a tool of propaganda and disinformation to justify military aggression against an independent state and distract the world from its crimes.

The Committee continues to work on the development of proposals for the application of personal special economic and other restrictive measures (sanctions) against athletes, their functionaries from the russian federation and other states. In particular, it is proposed that such sanctions be applied to members of the governing bodies of international sports federations allowing russian and belarusian athletes to participate in international competitions.

Moreover, the People's Deputies of Ukraine – members of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine Committee on Youth and Sports suggest that the states on whose territory international sports competitions will be held refrain from issuing visas to russian and belarusian athletes, coaches and sports functionaries.

The Committee calls on the International Olympic Committee to honor its commitments to the international sports community and not to give criminal countries tools to whitewash their reputation.

We, as People's Deputies of Ukraine, emphasize the need for a complete and unconditional ban on the participation of russian and belarusian athletes in international sports competitions, in particular

in the Olympic Games, until the end of the armed aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine, including the withdrawal of troops from all the territory of Ukraine and the payment of reparations by Russia for the damage it has caused to Ukraine and the restoration of the destroyed sports infrastructure.”

**People’s Deputies of Ukraine –
members of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine
Committee on Youth and Sports**

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**To the Presidents
of international sports federations**

Dear colleagues,

On March 28, 2023, the Executive Committee of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) recommended that international sports federations consider the participation of russian and belarusian athletes in international sports competitions under a neutral flag, subject to certain requirements.

We strongly condemn this approach and consider the recommendations of the IOC on the admission of russian and belarusian athletes as open support for the aggressor states in the barbaric war unleashed by the russian federation against the Ukrainian people.

We send you the Statement of People's Deputies of Ukraine – members of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine Committee on Youth and Sports in connection with the official recommendations of the International Olympic Committee to international sports federations on allowing russian and belarusian athletes to participate in competitions under a neutral flag.

We do hope that everyone who cherishes the Olympic ideals and respects the Olympic Charter will, in this time of trial for Ukraine, stand with Ukrainian athletes for the reaffirmation of the highest human values in the world: PEACE, FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY.

The Statement is attached hereto.

Yours sincerely,

Andriy KOZHEMIKIN,

Head of the Committee

