



# RUSSIAN PARALYMPIC COMMITTEE

Russian Federation, 101000, Moscow, Turgenevskaya sq., 2

[www.paralymp.ru/en](http://www.paralymp.ru/en) +7 499 922 11 90 [paralympru@gmail.com](mailto:paralympru@gmail.com)

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**PR-228/23**

**National Paralympic Committees  
International Sport Federations  
International Organisations of Sports for the Disabled**

## **Open Letter of the Russian Paralympic Committee**

**Dear Sirs and Mesdames!**

Russian Paralympic Committee (hereinafter "RPC") deeply appreciates the work of your organizations in protecting the rights of disabled people around the world.

On 16 November 2022, the IPC Extraordinary General Assembly decided to suspend all RPC membership rights for an indefinite period.

Using the right of appeal, on 23 December 2022, the RPC sent to the IPC Appeals Tribunal an appeal against the decision of the General Assembly.

The hearing for RPC's appeal is scheduled for 25 April 2023, in Dubai.

Suspension of all RPC's membership rights in the IPC means complete prohibition of Russian athletes with disabilities to take part in all international sports competitions and Paralympic Games until the IPC (based on its own subjective opinion) considers that the grounds for application of the sanctions have disappeared.

The IPC has cited the breach by the RPC of its membership obligations under the IPC Constitution as grounds for imposing such a sanction on the RPC.

So far, the IPC has not provided evidence that the RPC has violated any membership obligations in accordance with the provisions of the IPC Constitution: all the IPC's allegations in this regard are completely unfounded and/or do not refer to the actions of the RPC.

The IPC also accused the RPC of violating the Olympic Truce. However, neither the RPC, nor the athletes, nor the coaches violated and could have made decision to violate the Olympic Truce and, therefore, should not be held responsible for it.

On this basis, the IPC blames the RPC for the fact that we "...ha[ve] not condemned this violation of the Olympic Truce...have done nothing to distance ourselves from the actions of our government...but instead have remained silent". At the same time, according to the provisions of Article 13.2.16 of the IPC Constitution, an IPC member must "be neutral and impartial in matters of policy." Thus, the IPC actually calls on the RPC to violate the provisions of its own Constitution on the observance of political neutrality.

By its actions, the IPC grossly violated, among other things, the provisions of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted by UN General Assembly Resolution 217 A (III) of December 10, 1948, the European Convention on Human Rights, as well as the basic principle of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities on non-discrimination, which guarantees disabled persons equal and effective legal protection against discrimination on any ground.

The RPC's position of non-discrimination on the basis of nationality, which we have always openly expressed, was echoed by UN Special Rapporteurs who wrote to the IOC President expressing their serious concerns about decisions taken by the IOC Executive Board imposing and recommending sanctions against Russian and Belarusian athletes: "we express serious concern, however, about the recommendation to ban Russian and Belarusian athletes and officials such as judges from international competitions, based solely on their nationality, as a matter of principle. This raises serious issues of non-discrimination."

In response to these concerns and the recommendations of UN Special Rapporteur, the IOC stated: "[...] The international community also broadly supports a unifying Olympic mission. This is fully in line with UN resolution A/77L.28 entitled "Sport as an enabler of sustainable development", which was adopted by consensus during the 77th Session of the UN General Assembly on 1 December 2022. This resolution recognised that "major international sports events should be organised in the spirit of peace, mutual understanding and international cooperation, friendship and tolerance, and without discrimination of any kind, and that the unifying and conciliative nature of such events should be respected"

We are asking you to call on the IPC to prevent discrimination against Russian athletes with disabilities on the basis of their nationality and infringement of their rights to participate in international sporting events and the Paralympic Games.

**Respectfully,**

**President**

**Russian Paralympic Committee**



**P.A.Rozhkov**