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Russia Ruled in Breach of WADA Regulations While Mutko Remains Defiant

By Joanna Kozlowska

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A woman walks into the head office for the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) in Montreal, Canada.

Russia and five other countries have been ruled in breach of the World Anti-Doping Agency's codes by its supreme decision-making body, the BBC's Russian service reported Wednesday.

The decision by the Foundation Board means the suspension of Russia's national anti-doping body RUSADA, and revoking the license of the previously WADA-accredited lab charged with administering doping tests.

Also ruled in breach are Argentina, Andorra, Bolivia, Israel and Ukraine; a further six countries including Belgium, France, Greece and Spain risk following suit if they do not comply with the agency's requirements by March 2016.

However, Sports Minister Vitaly Mutko said that the resort had not halted the financing of

either RUSADA or the anti-doping lab, the Vedomosti newspaper reported Thursday.

"RUSADA is one question, but we have already set up a disciplinary committee to deal with the lab. ... We want to tackle the problem as efficiently as possible. There are budget considerations, and we cannot finance an unlicensed organization," Mutko was quoted as saying.

"The funding has not been suspended so far because the committee has not yet reached a decision. Both the lab and the team are working," he added.

The minister also said that the WADA ruling would stop the fight against doping in its tracks, according to the Interfax news agency.

"By suspending the activity of anti-doping bodies, we are halting all efforts to fight doping on Russian territory. I think that WADA governors also understand that," he said.

He went on to say that the problem was not limited to Russia, and that the country's record was "no better and no worse" than others, Interfax wrote Thursday in a separate report.

On Nov. 9, WADA accused Russia's sports ministry and the FSB of "meddling" in the work of the WADA-accredited anti-doping lab based in Moscow, the RBC news site reported Friday. The lab's former head Grigory Rodchenkov was alleged to have destroyed 1,417 blood and urine samples prior to an inspection, Russian media reported.

Russia's athletics federation was also provisionally banned from international competition by the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) last Friday, following accusations of "state-sponsored doping" by a WADA independent commission report.

The IAAF's vice president, Sergei Bubka, a former pole vaulter representing the Soviet Union, has suggested that he will support Russia's case, according to the Kommersant newspaper. The final decision rests with the IAAF Council.

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