

IOC Supports IAAF Decision to Ban Russian Track and Field Athletes

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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The International Olympic Committee (IOC) unanimously agreed to fully respect the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) decision to ban Russian track and field athletes from the 2016 Olympics in Rio de Janeiro over doping charges.

However, Russian athletes can participate in the Olympics under the Russian flag if they are both reinstated by the IAAF and selected by the Russian Olympic Committee (ROC), according to the declaration published on the IOC website [Tuesday](#).

“With regard to participation in the Olympic Games, it is up to the international federations only to decide on the technical eligibility of athletes, in particular in relation to doping issues. Only national Olympic Committees can enter athletes into the Olympic Games, selecting from the pool of eligible athletes,” the IOC statement said.

During its press conference on June 17, the IAAF council announced that individual Russian athletes can apply to the IAAF for reinstatement to compete internationally as a neutral

athlete.

Athletes will have to demonstrate that they have been subject to a credible anti-doping system and that they are not tainted by the Russian system, Rune Andersen, the independent chairperson of the IAAF monitoring task force, said in the press conference.

There is “systematic and systemic doping rooted in many parts of [Russian] society,” Andersen said. “Because the system in Russia has been tainted by doping from the top level and down, we cannot trust that what we call ‘clean athletes’ really are clean,” he added.

If reinstated by the IAAF, Russian track and field athletes can be selected by the ROC to compete in the Rio Olympics under the Russian flag. They will also be able to compete internationally as a neutral athlete.

The IAAF imposed the ban on Russian athletes in November 2015 after an independent commission by the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA). The WADA report recommended that the ARAF be declared "non-compliant" with the IAAF's anti-doping code and be suspended from competition.

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