



Ms Heidy Purga
Minister of Culture of Estonia
min@kul.ee

11 March 2024

No: 09-03/43

Dear Ms Heidy Purga,

I avail myself of this opportunity to express gratitude to the Estonian authorities for the stance expressed against participation of the athletes representing Lukashenko's system.

With this letter I would like to kindly inform the Ministry on the successes achieved by the United Transitional Cabinet of Belarus with regard to the admission of the Belarusian dissident athletes to the qualification events and to the Olympic Games 2024 and non-admission of those Belarusian athletes who are affiliated with the Lukashenko's system and do not comply with the criteria set by the International Olympic Committee.

Admission of the Belarusian dissident marathons athletes in qualifications to the Olympic Games 2024 in Paris

We have sought clarification from Mr. Francis Dodoo, Chairman of the Working Group on the status of Russians/Belarusians in International Competition and Events of World Athletics, regarding the conditions for the participation of Belarusian dissident athletes (marathons) opposing repressions in Belarus and the war in Ukraine. Mr. Dodoo's responses provide us with a glimmer of hope that Belarusian dissident athletes may be able to participate in the qualifications.

Specifically, Mr. Dodoo mentioned that World Athletics' decision to ban all Belarusians from athletics competitions is considered a recommendation for marathon organizers. Consequently, the final decision on the admission of Belarusians in marathons lies with the organizers of those competitions.

In light of this, based on information from Belarusian athletes Ms. Sviatlana Kudzelich and Ms. Volha Mazurenok, we have identified upcoming marathons for potential participation: Rotterdam Marathon on April 14, Vienna City Marathon on April 21, and Copenhagen Marathon on May 5. We have initiated communication with the organizers to facilitate the participation of Belarusian dissident athletes.

Ms. Sviatlana Kudzelich and Ms. Volha Mazurenok are the Belarusian marathon athletes who actively participated in peaceful protests of the Belarusians opposing the brutality and election fraud perpetrated by A.Lukashenko and his system.

At that time Ms Mazurenok and Ms Kudzelich also signed the Open Letter of the Belarusian Sport Representatives, a collective effort aimed at cessation of violation of the Constitution in the country, protection of basic civil rights and democratic principles. After Russia's full-scale invasion in Ukraine the athletes spoke out against the war and, as a result, had to leave the country for security reasons.

If the Ministry deems it appropriate to seek support from Estonian authorities for Ms. Sviatlana Kudzelich and Ms. Volha Mazurenok before the organizers of the mentioned marathons, we would be immensely grateful.

**Non-admission of the athletes qualified to the Olympic Games
2024 and affiliated with Lukashenko's military agencies**

On December 8, 2023, the International Olympic Committee took a decision on admission of the athletes with Russian and Belarusian passports to the Olympic Games 2024 based on strict eligibility conditions. The strict eligibility conditions for Individual Neutral Athletes at Paris 2024 are the very same strict eligibility conditions under which were set such athletes to be qualified, including the condition that *“athletes who are contracted to the Russian or Belarusian military or national security agencies will not be eligible to be entered or to compete. Support personnel who are contracted to the Russian or Belarusian military or national security agencies will not be entered.”*

Recently, Anastasiya Shkurdai (Анастасія Шукрдай)¹ and Vanesa Kaladzinskaya (Ванэса Каладзінская)², Belarusian athletes of the Lukashenko's system, have qualified to the Olympic Games 2024 in swimming and wrestling respectively.

As it was verified both stated athletes are affiliated with Lukashenko's military agencies. The relevant evidence has been sent to the World Aquatics, the United World Wrestling, and the International Olympic Committee. For convenience the documents are attached to this letter.

With this regard, we kindly ask the Ministry to advocate the adherence to the effective verification principle before the International Olympic Committee and the Paris 2024 Organising Committee for the Olympic and Paralympic Games and **non admission of those athletes who are affiliated with the military agencies.**

We are ready to provide the Ministry of Culture with all necessary information additionally needed on the issue stated above. Should there be any further clarifications or explanations of the above needed, please feel free to contact Ms Maryia Zhurava, a legal representative of the athletes (e-mail: pointofunity@proton.me).

Yours faithfully,

Pavel Latushka
Deputy Head of the United Transitional Cabinet
Head of the National Anti-Crisis Management
Ambassador



¹ Athlete Profile: <https://www.worldaquatics.com/athletes/1055981/anastasiya-shkurdai>

² Athlete Profile: <https://uww.org/athletes-results/vanesa-kaladzinskaya-10647-profile>