

PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL

To: Russian Weightlifting Federation

Lausanne, 21 July 2023

Dear President,
Dear General Secretary,

In March 2022 the IWF Executive Board expressed its grave concerns for the situation in Ukraine and since then has repeatedly affirmed its commitment to the mission of the Olympic Movement to contribute to peace and unite the world in peaceful competition. IWF, as an integral part of the Olympic Family, is striving to develop and promote weightlifting in the spirit of the Olympic Charter and is aligned with the Olympic values.

It was in this spirit that the IWF Executive Board decided, on 12 May 2023, to open the possibility for Russian and Belarusian athletes to participate in IWF competitions, as neutral athletes. The IWF Executive Board took note of the IOC recommendations, but also took special care to be attentive of the surroundings and aligned with the practice of other International Federations and made an independent decision ensuring that the rules and requirements which were put in place were not prohibitive in any way and were carefully crafted to ensure that no undue constraints would be applied on athletes.

In doing so, IWF has been attentive to set requirements which the concerned Russian and Belarusian athletes could reasonably meet. In this respect, the focus of our policy was a position of “abstention”, far from expressing political views or siding with government, and care was taken not to put anyone in contradiction with legal requirements which they have to observe as citizens of their respective countries. As such, the policy does not force the athletes to “express political views” as you claim. As a condition to their participation, the athletes are simply requested to abstain from expressing support to the war. Since you are referring several times to the Olympic values, we can rightly assume that the expression of support to war does rightly not belong thereto.

The successful entering and participation of Belarusian athletes in the IWF Grand Prix in Havana, Cuba (8-18 June 2023) illustrates that the IWF policy is indeed achieving its purpose of allowing athletes' participation. Russian athletes had exactly the same opportunity. We regret that they were not entered by your Federation in the same manner. In this respect, we also note that in other sports in respect to which similar requirements apply, Russian athletes are actually participating in international competition.

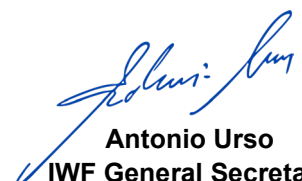
We would like to hereby reaffirm that the IWF Executive Board will continue to closely monitor the evolution of the situation and ensure that all potential pathways are explored for Russian and Belarusian athletes' participation in coming IWF competitions, while at the same time preserving the integrity of the sport, the relationships between our members and the safety of all participants.

At this stage, we can only confirm that Russian athletes continue to be welcome to participate in any IWF coming competition provided the requirements set out in IWF regulations and policies are met.

Yours sincerely,



Mohammed Jalood
IWF President



Antonio Urso
IWF General Secretary