

Thursday 1st June 2017

A Letter to Athletes from the Chair of the Athletics Integrity Unit

Dear Athlete,

As the 2017 summer season kicks off, and for many of you the IAAF World Championships London 2017 draws near, I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself, the Athletics Integrity Unit (AIU), and its Independent Board.

I am honoured to have been appointed as Chair of the AIU and relish the opportunity this provides to join you in protecting the values that make athletics such a great sport. As the former head of the World Anti-Doping Agency, I am of course only too aware of the recent doping issues the sport has faced. And for this same reason, I know that the establishment of the AIU is likely to be a defining moment in the future of this sport. It will change forever how integrity issues are dealt with in athletics, and, given the recent challenges the sport has faced, I believe there exists a real opportunity for us to demonstrate leadership on integrity issues by providing an example for other sports and federations to follow in future.

Our highly experienced Board (which operates fully independent of the IAAF), and the talented individuals we appoint to the AIU, are dedicated to working towards driving cheats out of our sport. While much of the recent spotlight has been on doping, which still remains one of the top threats to our sport, our remit is much, much broader. Put simply, we are tasked with stamping out any and all forms of corruption and ethical misconduct within the sport. This means the relentless pursuit of any official or other person who breaches the new Integrity Code of Conduct, including those who seek to manipulate results, who act fraudulently with regards to transfers of allegiance, or who engage in age manipulation in connection with our junior and youth events.

I firmly believe that athletes who seek to cheat or defraud their fellow competitors have no place in this sport. My promise to you is that we will use every means available to us in our relentless pursuit of these athletes and those who support them. We will be transparent in our activities and clear in our intentions. I am not concerned with public relations exercises. What I am concerned with is doing everything in my power to support our honest athletes around the world who dedicate their lives to reaching their sporting goals through two values we all cherish: dedication and hard work.

But no matter how talented and hard working the staff of the AIU is, ultimately it is not the administrators who will change the culture of our sport. I believe that you as athletes hold the key to the future. Every time that an athlete speaks out against the injustices caused by doping or cheating in our sport, we step closer to a fairer playing field. Every time an athlete stands up for the true values of sport, young people around the world realise that they can achieve their goals in the same way. Speaking out against doping or cheating can become the cultural norm in sport if we allow it to, and so I urge you, the athletes, to use the increasing number of different 'reporting' platforms now available to you, particularly the hotline available on the front page of our website (www.athleticsintegrity.org). I encourage you to submit to us anything you know or suspect, no matter how minor, or to contact my team or I directly with a thought or opinion you may have about what we can do better to protect your rights (david.howman@athleticsintegrity.org).

Our role as the Board and staff of the AIU is to support, facilitate, and empower you as athletes to help create an environment in our sport that encourages pure performances and does not accept those who seek to take illegal shortcuts. The AIU must implement anti-doping and other integrity programs that are robust, open, and inspire the confidence of athletes and fans around the world. I ask you to hold us to account for this and to join with us in the development and delivery of these programs.

I finish by wishing you the best of luck no matter what your sporting goals are in 2017. The Board and our team are here to support you and your rights to fair sport, and we look forward to celebrating your achievements throughout 2017 and beyond.

Yours Sincerely,



David Howman, Chair, Athletics Integrity Unit

On behalf of Abby Hoffman, Marc Peltier and Dr. Andrew Pipe: Athletics Integrity Unit Board Members