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Rio Olympics ban: Russian track & field athletes to file class action with CAS

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Russian track and field athletes will file collective and possibly individual lawsuits with Lausanne arbitration court to challenge the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) decision banning them from the 2016 Rio Olympics.

Class action against the IAAF decision will be filed with the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) next week, the All-Russia Athletics Federation (ARAF) Secretary General Mikhail Butov told TASS on Thursday.

Read more [Doping scandal: Russian weightlifting team to face Rio ban](#)



*“A suit or suits will be submitted to CAS next week. It is also necessary to completely determine the legal direction, but we have generally formed a group of lawyers with whom we will work,”* Butov said.

*“I don't know whether Mike Morgan (Morgan Sports Law LLP) of the UK will be among them, so far I'd rather not disclose the names. Class actions will be filed for certain, but some individual suits are also possible,”* Butov said.

*“We are going to have consultations with these lawyers in the coming days. Then we will make the final decision,”* the ARAF secretary general said.

The announcement comes following the vote of the Executive Board members of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) in favor of supporting the IAAF decision not to admit the Russian track and field team to the 2016 Olympic Games in Brazil. The IOC decision was made at an Olympic federations' summit on June 21.

The IAAF has voted to uphold the ban imposed on Russia's team last November over suspected widespread doping.

The IOC says Russian athletes will be evaluated individually to determine their eligibility to compete in Rio. Read more [Russian athletes must be individually evaluated to determine Olympic eligibility - IOC](#).



*“With regard to participation of track and field athletes from Russia – we still have to wait,”* IOC President Thomas Bach said on Tuesday.

*“The individual decisions are still coming from IAAF. We will respect the decisions they are taking as a consequence with regard of the qualified athletes,”* Bach said.

The International Weightlifting Federation (IWF) has stripped the Russian Olympic team of two quotas. Russia had maximum quota of 10 athletes – 6 men and 4 women. The IWF Executive Board meeting in Tbilisi, Georgia, also stripped two quotas from the teams of Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, North Korea and Moldova. In addition, the national teams of Belarus, Romania and Uzbekistan lost one quota each.

*“Russia’s Weightlifting Federation is set to file a lawsuit and seek legal redress,”* Sports Minister Vitaly Mutko told journalists. *“Taking decisions of the kind on the eve of the Olympics is callous disregard towards sportsmen and national teams,”* Mutko said, adding that athletes and countries have spent years and colossal sums of money to get ready for the Rio Games.

The IAAF issued a set of guidelines for Russian athletes seeking *“exceptional eligibility”* to take part in the Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro and other international competitions, adding that the sportspeople would be admitted to the competition only as *“neutral”* athletes and *“not for Russia.”*

*“The IAAF has today published a set of guidelines for athletes seeking exceptional eligibility for International Competition under Competition Rule 22.1A,”* the track and field governing body said in a [statement](#).

Athletes allowed to file a request for permission involve those *“who can clearly and convincingly show that they are not tainted by the Russian system because they have been outside the country and subject to other effective anti-doping systems.”*

The IOC, however, said on Tuesday that the IAAF is not entitled to decide under which flag an athlete may compete at the Olympics.

The Olympic Games 2016 begin in Brazil on August 5 and run till August 21.

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