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To: World Swimming Media  
From: George Block, President  
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Re: Statement from the WSCA Board

One of the Olympic ideals is respect, yet it has become abundantly clear that the international leaders of our sports have traded this ideal for convenience and self-dealing. To have respect, one must recognize that cheating ruins the sport for both the competitors that are now victims, but also participants and fans who no longer respect that anyone is competing fairly. Thus, today, we are calling on athletes, coaches and leaders from around the world and across the aquatics sports to unite and fight to ensure that clean sport still is the cornerstone of swimming and all Olympic sports.

The “Russia Crisis” that has loomed from Sochi, through Rio and now, on to PyeongChang has clearly demonstrated that the IOC is no longer interested in either Clean Sport or Fair Sport. What the world has witnessed over the past four years is the “abject failure of the international anti-doping system,” according to Bill Bock, the General Counsel of the United States Anti-Doping Agency (USADA).

The current “solution” being proposed, the Independent Testing Authority (ITA), is not the solution, as it attempts to fix a failed system with a broken system. In fact, ITA will be neither Independent, nor an Authority, with 50% government representatives (for whom this is the last thing on their to-do list) and 50% IOC board members (for whom this allows control of Olympic anti-doping efforts). We are back to the “fox guarding the hen house.” We should have recognized how broken the proposed solution was when the first positive response came from TASS (the official Russian news agency).

There is nothing we can do to affect the IOC; however, we can affect FINA. To start, FINA must get serious about anti-doping - now. That means that FINA should push back and not succumb to massive pressure from the IOC to become part of the ITA. Rather, FINA should create its own Swimming Integrity Unit that is completely independent of the FINA government structure with a committed, long-term funding structure. Fortunately, that path has been blazed by the leaders of the IAAF, the International Federation for Track and Field. The IAAF has developed an independent “[Athletics Integrity Unit](#).” This unit will be completely independent of the IAAF governance structure, but with long-term, guaranteed funding. It will handle anti-doping, as well as bribery, corruption, conflicts of interest, and more. It will have jurisdiction over anything that threatens the integrity of the sport. This is the model that FINA should follow.

Every coach and athlete should be contacting their own National Federation to insist that their federation supports real independence, by not succumbing to IOC pressure, but instead supporting the creation of a FINA Swimming Integrity Unit. Working together, around the world and across the aquatics sports, we have the opportunity to return respect to FINA sports, and once again have clean and fair sports. Let’s all work together to turn this into a reality.