

PRESS RELEASE

Thursday 20 April 2023

BWF Position on Participation of Athletes from Russia and Belarus

The Badminton World Federation (BWF) has maintained its suspension of Russian and Belarussian athletes and officials from participating at any BWF sanctioned international tournaments.

The decision was made following a BWF Council Meeting on Tuesday.

This position reflects BWF's core intention to preserve the integrity of badminton competitions and ensure the safety of all athletes.

The [decision last March](#) to support the unified approach of the sports movement to not allow athletes from Russia and Belarus to participate in international competitions due to fears over participants' safety is a position still largely enforced by many federations.

Given the conflict between Ukraine and Russia and Belarus is ongoing, and recent precedence of governments interfering and blocking athletes' participation in sporting events as a vehicle to sanction instead of allowing sport to build bridges and promote solidarity between all people, we feel that such fears for safety have not been exacerbated.

BWF acknowledges that sport should foster peace and solidarity between all people, and that sport should not become a political vehicle for influence in geo-politics.

In that sense, the guiding principle is that athletes should always be allowed to participate in sport competitions without judgement of their passport and separate of any geo-political conflict outside the control of the sports movement.

We recognise the recently proposed framework of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to which athletes from Russia and Belarus could potentially resume participation if International Federations decide such inclusion. And we are also aware that in some sports, peaceful and safe participation has been possible.

However, in sight of risks to players and events that could arise by re-opening participation, plus steps to seek more clarity on IOC's complex criteria for allowing participation, and any such repercussions this may have, including conditions related to Olympic qualification and potential participation in Paris 2024, BWF is not convinced there is satisfactory justification to lift the suspensions on Russian and Belarussian players and officials at this time.

BWF continues to express unwavering support to the people of Ukraine, and the Ukrainian badminton community, and we strongly condemn the invasion of Ukraine, which works against BWF's core values and our objective to obtain peace.

We will continue to monitor the situation closely and will keep open dialogue with the BWF Membership and our international sport movement partners to review our position in time.

It is a regrettable scenario to be in where badminton players are not being allowed to freely participate due to geo-political conflicts and interference by governments. But it is a reality BWF presently accepts as we strive to uphold our role of preserving the integrity of badminton competitions and ensuring the safety of all athletes.

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ABOUT BWF

The Badminton World Federation (BWF) is the international governing body of the sport of badminton, recognised by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and the International Paralympic Committee (IPC). It was originally the International Badminton Federation (IBF) which was founded on 5 July 1934, before being rechristened the Badminton World Federation in 2006.

The purpose and objectives of BWF include regulating, promoting, developing, and popularising the sport of badminton throughout the world and organising, conducting, and presenting international events at the highest level.

The BWF's vision is to make badminton a leading global sport accessible to all – giving every child a chance to play for life. Its mission is to lead and inspire all stakeholders; to deliver entertainment through exciting events to drive fan experience; and to create innovative, impactful, and sustainable development initiatives.

BWF has its headquarters in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, with 198 Member Associations worldwide.

Poul-Erik Høyer is the BWF President, and Thomas Lund is the BWF Secretary General.

Websites: www.badminton.sport and www.bwf.sport