



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



Anti-doping  
Convention

## **Series of Ministerial webinars on Traditional pharmacopoeia, sport values and COVID-19: a Regional Perspective**

### **Session for the Latin America and the Caribbean Region**

27 May 2021, 14:30-17:00 Paris time

### **Summary Report**

1. The opening session, comprising interventions from the Chairperson of the seventh session of the Conference of Parties (COP7), Mr Marcos Diaz, the Chairperson of the Anti-Doping Fund's Approval Committee, Dr. Reema Alhosani, and the Assistant Director-General for Social and Human Sciences, Ms Gabriela Ramos, provided the opportunity to recall the importance of this series of ministerial webinars within the framework of the implementation of the International Convention against Doping in Sport and its Annexes, constantly evolving and adapting to contemporary challenges such as the potential impact of the use of traditional pharmacopoeia on sport values. Moreover, the success of these webinars testifies, once again, the key role of the Convention in fostering regional cooperation and exchange of good practice examples with the objective of leaving no State Party behind.
2. Further to these introductory words, the Panel session welcomed the participation of several distinguished participants, representing governments, experts and athletes, who enriched this discussion with their insights from different approaches, further broadened by the Q&A session.
3. The Latin American and Caribbean region has a very long history linked to the use of traditional medicine. The use of plants, animals and minerals in these healing practices are documented in many regions of the world, as emphasized by Colombia, Costa Rica and Peru - which is one of the first countries in terms of the number of plant species with healing properties known and used by the population. In this regard, the need to safeguard this intangible cultural heritage and ensure that indigenous' rights are respected is key.
4. Athletes are used to consuming herbs and plants instead of modern medicines for fear of adverse results, accentuating the importance of today's discussion, or in order to increase their performances as underlined by Costa Rica, and seconded by Brazil. This calls for more contextualized research, national education programmes, and regulation.
5. This was further underlined in the context of the ongoing organization of the South American Games to be held in Argentina in 2022, where a need of education and awareness-raising among athletes has been identified and support for anti-doping stakeholders is required. WADA also emphasized this

aspect since the Agency is already involved in preventive education, supporting athletes in their preparation for major sports events.

6. WADA also recalled that, despite the pandemic, no flexibility with respect to sanctions for non-compliance and doping would be envisaged. However, when asking for Therapeutic Use Exemptions (TUE) in the case of an illness, if there is an urgent need for a diversion from the standard, then a request for a retroactive authorization can be received. Moreover, experts are meeting yearly to examine the lists of pharmacopoeias to update the Prohibited List, but the key is that experts are looking at substances that enhance performances to protect athletes' health.
7. Furthermore, from an academic perspective, it has been proven that not only elite athletes are doping, as stressed out by Cuba, where most amateur athletes are using prohibited substances even for aesthetic reasons. The focus on education amongst recreational sport practitioners and youth, as emphasized by the Dominican Republic, is essential concerning the use traditional medicines and pharmacopeia without endangering their health.
8. Facing the pandemic, governments have implemented prevention measures to protect the health of athletes, including trainings and research conducted to analyse the impact of the crisis and its potential repercussions on athletes' mental health, as underlined by Cuba and emphasized by participating athletes. Even though athletes are very selective of the information received, the situation requires a lot more efforts to testify and analyse data increasing also individual responsibility when consuming substances that are not referenced yet for example.
9. Indeed, in most countries in the region, the use of traditional medicines has significantly increased to find remedy to Covid-19. During the crisis, we witnessed a strong mobilization of traditional health care professional to propose alternative treatments to Covid-19, as mentioned by Barbados with regards to the Caribbean islands.
10. Hence, as underlined by Costa Rica, regional cooperation, the exchange of information between countries and the necessity to determine a common strategy is critical to understand the challenges and gaps to be addressed in anti-doping and identify available and potential resources to tackle this issue.
11. In this view, as proposed by the Chairperson of the Fund's Approval Committee, the elaboration of a questionnaire to identify existing regulations in the region, involving authorities to collect comprehensive data and elaborate good practice guidelines could be considered. This suggestion was seconded by WADA.
12. Colombia and Barbados noted the different shortcomings in this domain, emphasizing the lack of scientific proof and research to use evidence-based information, as well the lack of protection of indigenous knowledge, and of awareness on improper use of such substances by communities who do not have the necessary knowledge. Even though guidelines were issued by the

Ministry of Health on the basis of the World Health Organization's (WHO) traditional medicine strategy, along with a Vademecum including bibliographies of studies, the difficulty remains when it comes to regulating and aligning with international standards, namely the World Anti-Doping Code, setting a rigid set of standards without relating with traditional pharmacopeia.

13. To benefit from the richness of both modern and traditional medicines and promote intercultural health, national programmes through the coordination of local stakeholders can be conducted and adapted to the local contexts and practices, as it was presented by Peru where the National Center of Intercultural Health was established. As another good practice example, Brazil launched a digital consultation on the use of traditional pharmacopeia by athletes notably with respect to the international standards. Moreover, the country is conducting initiatives involving athletes who have already been sanctioned as a pedagogical programme within the broader international context, looking at the legal, ethical and health aspects for anti-doping rules, which must be respected regardless of the context, as this issue is directly impacting the health of communities.
14. In this view, national inventories of medicinal plants are underlined as a good practice to be developed by national authorities in cooperation with scientists and health care professionals. Indeed, further research in this domain is required to reduce the gap between actual use of traditional pharmacopeia by communities and referenced data. Moreover, even though this traditional knowledge reaches modern medical professionals, mainly during medical training and within rural care programs, unfortunately it is sometimes diluted, leaving no evidence of the benefits of using both modern and traditional medicines, as stressed out by Peru.
15. To conclude, the necessity to deepen knowledge and to coordinate and harmonize a global and regional strategy to tackle this challenge under the auspice of the Anti-Doping Convention by public authorities in cooperation with key national, regional and international stakeholders (WADA, RADOs and NADOs) has been strongly emphasized by all participants.
16. Several questions were raised in terms of forward-looking, focusing on the empowerment of public authorities; the protection of cultural heritage following a human rights based approach; the need to undertake data collection and identify the appropriate stakeholders. The follow-up to the Ministerial webinar will be further discussed during the fourth meeting of the COP7 Bureau and presented during COP8 (26-28 October 2021) to provide meaningful responses.

## **ANNEX**

### **List of Participants**

#### **Governance of the International Convention against Doping in Sport**

- Mr Marcos Diaz, Chairperson of the Bureau of the seventh session of the Conference of Parties to the International Convention against Doping in Sport (Dominican Republic)
- Dr. Reema Alhosani, Chairperson of the Approval Committee of the Fund for the Elimination of Doping in Sport (United Arab Emirates)
- Mr Neil Murrell, Member of the Approval Committee of the Anti-Doping Fund, representing Latin America and the Caribbean (Barbados)

#### **Barbados**

- Ms Elmonda Chase, Pharmacist and trained in the area of traditional pharmacopeia

#### **Brazil**

- Ms Luisa Parente, Secretary of the Brazilian Anti-Doping Authority (ABCD), representing the Special Sports Secretary, Mr Marcelo Magalhaes
- Dr. Ivan Pacheco, President of the Brazilian Society of Sport Medicine, Member of the Brazilian Anti-Doping Forum
- Ms Flávia Delaroli, Olympic and national record holding, freestyle swimmer

#### **Cuba**

- Mr Victor Cabrera, National Focal Point of the Anti-Doping Convention, representing Mr Osvaldo C. Vento Montiller, INDER Chairperson
- Mr José Ramón Acosta Sariego, IBC member, Vice-Chair, UNESCO Latin American and Caribbean Bioethics Network and Founder Member of Honoric Cathedra Andrés Kolychkine Thompson for Ethics in Sports and Fair Play of the Faculty of Medical Sciences “Victoria de Girón”, University of Medical Sciences of Havana

#### **Colombia**

- Mr Orlando Reyes, Director, National Anti-Doping Organization of Colombia, representing the Minister of Sport, Mr Ernesto Lucena (Moderator)

#### **Costa Rica**

- Ms Karla Aleman, Minister of Sport

#### **Dominican Republic**

- Dr. Karina Gonzales, Chief of Sport Medicine, representing the Minister of Sport, Mr Francisco José Camacho Rivas

#### **Haiti**

- Mr Ernst Gilmus, President of the National Institute of Sciences of Youth and Sport, representing the Minister of Youth and Sport, Mr Ronald Gérard D'Mézard

## **El Salvador**

- Ms Adriana Escobar, member of the Panam Sport Athlete Commission and member of WADA Athlete Commission

## **Peru**

- Mr Victor Carpio, Director of the NADO of Peru and Chairman, South America Regional Anti-Doping Organization

## **Organizations**

### **Caribbean Regional Anti-Doping Organization**

- Mr Patrick Werleman, Chairperson

### **South American Sports Organization (ODSUR)**

- Mr Camilo Pérez López Moreira, President

### **World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA)**

- Ms María José Pesce Cutri, WADA Regional Director for Latin America

## **UNESCO**

- Ms Gabriela Ramos, Assistant Director-General for Social and Human Sciences
- Ms Saadia Sanchez-Vegas, Ph.D., Director and Representative, UNESCO Cluster Office for the Caribbean
- Mr Magnus Magnusson, Director of Partnership and Outreach, UNESCO Social and Human Sciences Sector
- Mr Marcellin Dally, Secretary of the International Convention against Doping in Sport
- Teams from UNESCO Offices in Kingston, La Havana and Montevideo
- Secretariat of the International Convention against Doping in Sport

## **Additional participants**

- Jorge Laurence, Argentina
- Hans Van der Meersch, Belgium
- Cristiane Araújo, Brazil
- Gabriel Fialho, Brazil
- Bryan Gual, Cuba
- Clara Rojas Gonzales, Colombia
- Maria Fernanda Bravo, Colombia
- Vanessa Metou, Congo
- Affoue Leonie Kouakou, Côte d'Ivoire
- Dunia Morales, Costa Rica
- Marta Solano, Costa Rica
- Romualda Hyacinth, Dominica
- Daniel Caamaño, Ecuador
- Janet Emén, Ecuador
- Pablo Flores, Ecuador
- Melissa Dow-Richardson, Guyana

- Alicia Smith, Jamaica
- Dionne Blair, Jamaica
- Donna-Marie Wynter-Adams, Jamaica
- Kamilah Hylton, Jamaica
- Juan Manuel Herrera, Mexico
- Manuel Villalobos, Mexico
- Paulina De la Loza, Mexico
- Wendolyne Márquez Rosado, Mexico
- Elisabeth Jimenez, Paraguay
- Fabio Deudán, Paraguay
- Mery Bobbio, Peru
- Miguel Cabrero, Peru
- Sandra Cordova, Peru
- Yaneisy Perez, Peru
- Wilmar Saavedra, Peru
- Patrick Mathurin, Saint Lucia
- Valencia Syder, Saint Kitts and Nevis
- Merey Tan, Singapore