

Athletes Banned For Doping In Lead-Up To Olympics

World Anti-Doping Agency President John Fahey recently announced the results of a program that was designed to test athletes under suspicion before they arrived in London.

At least 107 athletes drew doping bans, ruling them out of the games, in the six months to mid-June, Fahey said and acknowledged that perhaps not all would have qualified to compete. "Had that been their ambition, then I am pleased to say that they are not with us in London," Fahey told the International Olympic Committee's annual gathering.

In another announcement, the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) handed over lengthy bans to nine track and field athletes for doping violations in a crackdown on the use of prohibited substances in the lead up to the London Olympics.

The nine athletes, include Olympic bronze medalist Nataliya Tobias, have tested positive for "sophisticated doping" offenses. Six of these athletes (Morocco's Abderrahim Goumri, Greece's Irini Kokkinariou, Turkey's Meryem Erdogan, and three Russians -- Svetlana Klyuka, Nailiya Yulamanova, and Yevgenina Zinurova) were caught for using a new "biological passport" method that builds up a profile of each over a period of time. Erdogan, Klyuka, Yulamanova, and Zinurova admitted the offense and waived the right to a "B" sample.

The remaining three, including Olympic bronze medalist Nataliya Tobias, were suspended after further analysis of samples they gave at the World Championships in Daegu last year. Bulgaria's Inna Eftimova tested positive for a [synthetic growth hormone](#), while Ukrainian Antonina Yefremova was charged after synthetic testosterone was found in their systems. All the three athletes admitted the offense and waived the right to a "B" sample.

"Today's announcements underline the IAAF's continued and unwavering campaign against doping in athletics," IAAF President Lamine Diack said in a statement. "They demonstrate the IAAF's commitment to use advanced methods to detect doping and to enforce increased sanctions when justified. We will not stint in our resolve to do everything in our power to eradicate cheating."

[Moroccan runner Mariem Alaoui Selsouli was also suspended](#) by the IAAF from the London Olympics after she tested positive for doping. Selsouli tested positive for the diuretic furosemide at the Paris Diamond League meeting on July 6, the governing body said. The runner became an Olympic medal favorite after clocking 3 minutes 56.15 seconds in the 1,500 meters.

"Selsouli has waived her right to the B (backup sample) analysis, and as a result has now been provisionally suspended from all competition in athletics," the IAAF said in a statement. The World Anti-Doping Agency list of prohibited substances includes Furosemide and is used by sportsmen as a masking agent for disguising the presence of performance enhancing drugs.

According to another announcement, Greek athlete Paraskevi Papachristou was expelled for posting an offensive comment about African immigrants on Twitter. "With so many Africans in Greece, the mosquitoes from the West Nile will at least be eating some homemade food," Papachristou said on Twitter.

"I would like to express my heartfelt apologies for the unfortunate and tasteless joke I published on my personal Twitter account," she later wrote on Facebook.