

## Former World Champion Fails Doping Test

Swedish Athletics Association (SFIF) has announced Sweden's Ethiopian-born 1,500 meters former world champion [Abeba Aregawi](#) has tested positive for doping.

SFIF general secretary Stefan Olsson remarked it is with dismay and with extreme disappointment that we report this issue. Olsson also said we totally reject all forms of cheating, doping and added that we have a zero tolerance, and this is totally unacceptable.

Aregawi tested positive for a banned substance following an out-of-competition urine test conducted by the International Association of Athletics Federations, the world governing body of athletics. According to the IAAF, the 2013 world champion voluntarily withdrew from competition and asked for her backup "B" sample to be tested. An IAAF spokesman added the athlete, following notification of the laboratory finding, has voluntarily withdrawn from competition until the investigations into the laboratory finding are completed. The spokesman added the athlete in the meantime has requested the analysis of the B sample which will be conducted shortly. The spokesman also said the IAAF and the Swedish Athletic Federation will not make any further comment until completion of the result management procedure.

The Swedish Athletics Association announced a full investigation will now be concluded. Fredrik Trahn, a spokesman for the association, said we cannot disclose the actual substance that she tested positive for because this is an ongoing investigation. Trahn also added Abeba Aregawi is provisionally suspended effective immediately.

It was reported by Swedish tabloid *Aftonbladet* that Åke Andrén-Sandberg, a medical expert of SFIF, confirmed the Aregawi had tested positive for Meldonium, which is a substance that was banned in sports at the start of 2016 just before her [doping test](#). The suspension means place of the Ethiopian-born runner in the Swedish team for the Rio Olympics in August is now in doubt.

Aregawi won the European championships and World Indoors gold over her specialist distance. The 25-year-old athlete finished fifth at the London Games, again in a slow

tactical race behind Turkey's Asli Cakir Alptekin, who was later stripped of her Olympic title for a second doping offence. Aregawi, who competed for Ethiopia at the London Olympics, was world champion in 2013 in Moscow and finished only sixth in a slow tactical race in Beijing last year. The athlete switched allegiances to Sweden soon after the Olympics to gain citizenship through her marriage to a naturalized Swede of Ethiopian origin.

The Swedish Olympic Committee (SOC) decided to withdraw their financial support for Aregawi. It is highly unlikely that she would now be a part of the Rio Games team. The Ethiopian-born middle-distance runner, currently representing Sweden internationally, is the current world champion over 1500 meters.

It is rumored that Aregawi is one of a number of Ethiopian-born athletes who will be announced to have failed [drugs tests](#) in the coming weeks. The news of Aregawi's positive test came a few days after she was caught in a storm over unpaid taxes after she told Swedish authorities she had never lived in the country and was therefore not liable for tax.