

Russia's Doping Culture Has Not Yet Ended, Says WADA

The World Anti-Doping Agency declared on Sunday that Russian sport is a long way from convincing the world that it has cleaned up its act.

The anti-doping agency pointed to failure of the state to accept it was behind a doping program, its continued obstruction of testing, and a series of cyber attacks. WADA President [Craig Reedie](#) said after being re-elected for a second term it would be better if they were maybe a little bit more contrite.

Russia is hoping to get readmitted to WADA a year after the country was declared non-compliant with the doping code, after the publication of a report detailing widespread cheating in track and field. To add to woes of the country, fresh evidence of state-backed [doping](#) cover-ups was revealed by investigators ahead of the Rio de Janeiro Games. The WADA recommendation to the International Olympic Committee for suspending the entire Russian contingent from the Rio Olympics was turned down. Vitaly Mutko, who was the sports minister till recently, was banned from attending the Rio Olympics after he was accused by McLaren of ordering the cover-up of a failed drug test by a foreign soccer player.

Yuri Nagornykh, one of Mutko's deputies at the sports ministry, was ousted on the orders of Russian head of the state Vladimir Putin. This was after McLaren disclosed Yuri helped to orchestrate cover-ups of hundreds of [drug tests](#).

Integrity of the country is all set to be challenged again when the final doping report by Canadian law professor Richard McLaren gets published on December 9, with the focus on winter sports.

Reedie said Russia still has to get the rest of the world to believe that they have reformed and doping won't happen again and added so there is much work to be done. WADA officials outlined at Sunday's Foundation Board meeting how Russia continues to frustrate anti-doping officials by limiting or denying access to the so-called closed cities where athletes are training and also to a sealed-off laboratory in Moscow that has samples sought by sporting federations. Reedie, referring to the areas where the Russian military

restricts access, said it would be a great shame if they couldn't be compliant because they couldn't find a way of dealing with closed cities. Reddie said of the hacking that this doesn't make international acceptance of Russian improvement any easier if this goes on.

The WADA president also added he believes there is a willingness to resolve the problems. Reddie however added he will not insist on a full acceptance of guilt at government level as an absolute condition of Russia's anti-doping body being cleared by the World Anti-Doping Agency.

Vitaly Smirnov, the former Soviet sports minister now heading Russia's state-backed anti-doping, responded defiantly to WADA allegations by saying the country has never had a state-sponsored system of doping. Smirnov also defended Yuri Nagornykh by saying he was not a member of the government because he was deputy minister and maintained that only ministers are members of the government.