

Kremlin Calls New Doping Allegations 'Slanderous'

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov

Presidential spokesman Dmitry Peskov has labelled new claims of doping among Russian athletes as “absolute slander,” the RBC news website reported Wednesday.

His statement comes before German television channel ARD airs a new investigation into the doping scandal on June 8. The report will include allegations that Russian Minister of Sport Vitaly Mutko stopped evidence of doping by a Russian premier-league soccer player from being published.

Peskov called the allegations baseless, maintaining that both President Vladimir Putin and the Russian government have all publicly condemned the use of performance-enhancing drugs, RBC reported.

Peskov told reporters that the Kremlin will treat these new doping accusations as slander until

they are supported by “clear evidence.” Russia's Olympic team is continuing to practice for the upcoming games in August, he said.

Peskov has previously dismissed similar claims made by former director of Russia's anti-doping laboratory Grigory Rodchenkov in a New York Times interview last month. Rodchenkov told the newspaper that a state-backed doping program had been used to give dozens of Russian athletes banned performance-enhancing drugs during the 2014 Sochi Olympics. Peskov also labelled the allegations as slander.

Mutko responded to the allegations in the film after details were first announced by ARD in May. He called the documentary an attempt to influence the upcoming International Association of Athletics Federations' (IAAF) ruling on June 17.

The IAAF ruling will decide whether to lift the current suspension of Russian athletes from international competition, and whether the Russian athletics team should be allowed to compete in the Rio Olympics this August. Russia announced in April that it had introduced a number reforms in order to ensure the team's participation.

The suspension was put in place following an extensive World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) report in November 2015. WADA claimed to have found evidence of a large, state-sponsored doping program in Russia and said that the government had covered up the use of performance-enhancing drugs during the London 2012 Olympics. The Kremlin was also heavily complicit in sabotage, corruption, and bribery, the review said. The investigation took place after a previous ARD documentary on the doping of Russian athletes in December 2014.

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