

Putin Calls For Creation of 'Independent Doping Commission'

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Sergei Karpukhin / Reuters

Russian President Vladimir Putin called on the Russian Olympic Committee to create an “independent commission on doping,” the RBC news website reported Friday.

He recommended that the public commission include Russian and foreign experts, with International Olympic Committee (IOC) member Vitaly Smirnov at its helm. Smirnov was Sports Minister in the 1980s, and is the honorary president of the Russian Olympic Committee. Putin described him as “a person with a flawless reputation.”

The president stressed that it was important to “closely cooperate” with the IOC and the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA), and all international sports federations.

In November, WADA accused Russia of running and covering up a state-sponsored doping program after a nearly year-long independent commission investigation. Their findings implicated top Russian sports officials, including Sports Minister Vitaly Mutko.

In June, the International Association of Athletics Federations banned Russia's track and field team from competing at the Rio Olympics, a decision which the Court of Arbitration for Sport upheld on Thursday. WADA published another report this week, confirming the accusations against the Russian Sports Ministry.

Putin provisionally terminated several sports officials who were "directly implicated" in WADA's recent findings, but Mutko remains in his position. The IOC meets on Sunday to determine whether to ban other Russian teams.

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