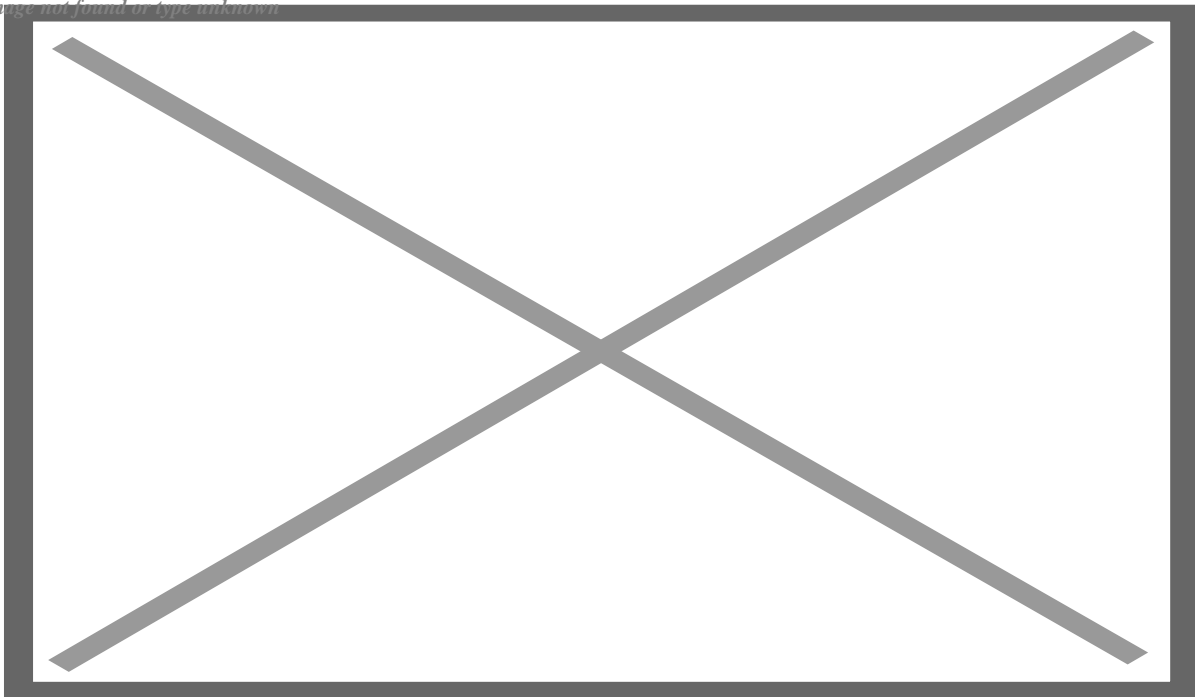


# *The Russian Olympic Committee calls suspension counterproductive*

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Moscow, October 12 (PL) - The decision of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to suspend the Russian Olympic Committee (COR) is counterproductive and politically motivated, the Russian sports organization commented.

The IOC's order was announced Thursday and was due to the incorporation of the Olympic councils of the Donbass republics and the Kherson and Zaporozhie regions into the Russian Olympic Committee, made official on October 5, Sputnik news agency reported.

The IOC also said it reserves the right to decide on the participation of Russian athletes as neutrals in the 2024 and 2026 Olympics in due course.

"Today's decision has clear political undertones, and in this way the IOC formalized de jure what it had already done in February 2022," the COR added.

"This step in no way affects Russian athletes, most of whom remain unjustly suspended from international competitions," it concluded.

After the start of Russia's special military operation in Ukraine, the international sports body recommended international federations not to allow athletes from Russia and Belarus to participate in competitions.

However, last March, the IOC recommended to international federations to allow Russian and Belarusian athletes who do not support the Russian operation in Ukraine and are not connected with the army and security forces to participate in sporting events as neutrals.

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