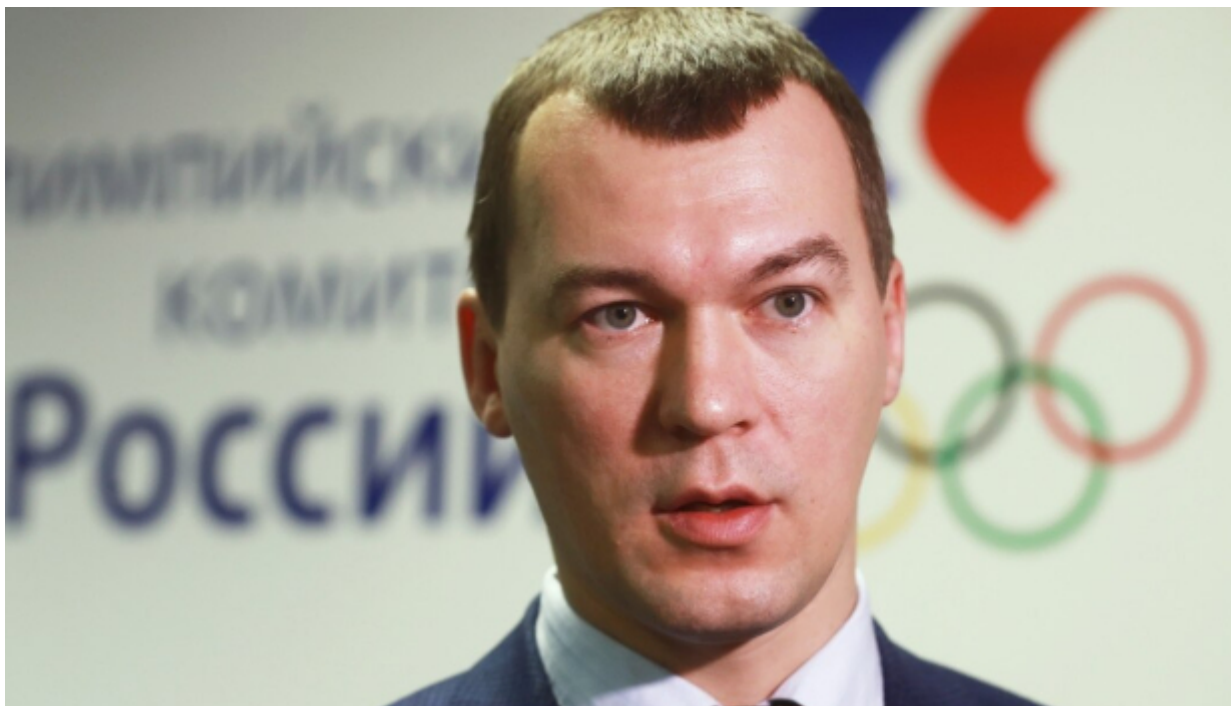


# *Russia calls IOC ban of athletes discriminatory*

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**Russian Sports Minister Mikhail Degtiariov**

Moscow, May 29 (PL) -. The Russian Minister of Sports, Mikhail Degtiariov, today described the ban on Russian athletes by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) as discrimination on national grounds.

"The IOC's ban on our athletes is discrimination for national reasons, the same goes for our laboratory and Rusada (Russian Anti-Doping Agency), it is outrageous," Degtiariov said in an interview with the Sputnik news agency.

According to the minister, Russia will dialogue with international organizations and will also address this issue at the Saint Petersburg International Economic Forum (SPIEF) that will take place from June 5 to 8, 2024.

On December 8, 2023, the IOC announced that athletes from Russia and Belarus could participate in the 2024 Paris Games if they meet certain criteria.

The measure states that athletes and accompanying personnel, with neutral status, must refrain from undertaking any activity related to national symbols and from expressing support for the Russian special military operation in Ukraine.

Likewise, they will not be able to participate in the opening ceremony, their medals will not be reflected on the medal board of the Olympic Games. Due to all these limitations, a maximum of 55 Russian athletes will be able to participate in the Paris Games.

In March 2024, the executive committee officially approved a flag and anthem without lyrics created exclusively for neutral athletes from Russia and Belarus at the Paris Olympiad. In addition, the medals won by these athletes with neutral status will not appear in the official medal table.

On May 24, the IOC press office clarified that journalists from Russia and Belarus accredited for the Paris 2024 Games will also not be able to use national emblems.

According to Russian President Vladimir Putin, "international officials distort the meaning of the Olympic movement and undermine the foundations of international sport."

The Paris Olympic Games will be held from July 26 to August 11, 2024.

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