TAS / CAS
TRIBUNAL ARBITRAL DU SPORT
COURT OF ARBITRATION FOR SPORT
TRIBUNAL ARBITRAL DEL DEPORTE

STATEMENT

ICE HOCKEY

THE COURT OF ARBITRATION FOR SPORT (CAS) ISSUES STATEMENT ON THE RIHF v. IIHF PROCEDURE

Lausanne, Thursday 5 November 2026 – The Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) acknowledges the divisive reaction to the ruling issued on Friday 30 October 2026 by a CAS Panel concerning the participation of Russian teams in International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF) competitions.

CAS wishes to reiterate that as an independent sports arbitration institution, rulings are made on the legal substance of an appeal and on the sole basis of the arguments and evidence submitted by the Parties.

The Russian International Ice Hockey Federation (RIHF) and the International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF) submitted their dispute to CAS in accordance with a specific arbitration agreement setting the scope and calendar of the procedure. The RIHF and the IIHF knew the legal questions to be discussed and the consequences of the appeal being upheld or dismissed.

The CAS Panel examined whether the IIHF's decisions not to reintegrate Russian teams in July 2026 were made in accordance with the applicable IIHF statutes and regulations. The CAS Panel found that the IIHF did not present sufficient evidence to establish the legal requirements for the non-participation of Russian teams. The CAS Panel remarked that internal processes within the IIHF had previously raised this concern.

The CAS Panel noted that the organisational consequences of this ruling, as well as the potential introduction of a neutrality regime, which are now at the centre of public debate, were neither substantiated by sufficient evidence nor sought by the IIHF during the proceedings. CAS cannot impose measures that have not been requested by the Parties.

CAS will ensure that the full Award, including presented arguments and legal reasons, is issued and published as soon as possible.

This is an unofficial summary for media use. For legal purposes, only the wording used in a written decision is binding. CAS issued a media release at the time of this decision, which can be found here.