



2025/ADD/124 International Weightlifting Federation v. Mohammed Jasim Abbood Al Alfuri

DECISION

delivered by the

ANTI-DOPING DIVISION OF THE COURT OF ARBITRATION FOR SPORT

sitting in the following composition:

Single Judge: **The Hon. Hugh L. Fraser, O.C., Judge, Ottawa, Canada**

in the procedure between

International Weightlifting Federation, Switzerland

Represented by the International Testing Agency, Lausanne, Switzerland

Appearing through Mr Adam Klevinas, External Legal Counsel, Montreal, Canada

Claimant

and

Mohammed Jasim Abbood Al Alfuri, Iraq

Respondent

I. PARTIES

1. The International Weightlifting Federation, (“the Claimant” or “IWF”) is the world governing body for the sport of Weightlifting. The IWF has delegated the implementation of its anti-doping program to the International Testing Agency (“ITA”). Such delegation includes the Results Management and subsequent prosecution of potential Anti-Doping Rule Violations (“ADRV”) under the IWF’s jurisdiction.
2. Mr. Mohammed Jasim Abbood Al Alfuri (“the Respondent” or “Mr. Al Alfuri”), is a former international-level weightlifting athlete from Iraq.

II. FACTUAL BACKGROUND

3. On 14 September 2014, the Respondent provided blood and urine Samples during the pre-Games period of the 2014 Asian Games held in Incheon, South Korea, where he was scheduled to compete in the 105+kg weightlifting event.
4. On 25 September 2014, the WADA-accredited Laboratory in Seoul, South Korea, reported an Adverse Analytical Finding (“AAF”) for the Prohibited Substances etiocholanolone and androsterone, which were detected in the Respondent’s Samples.
5. As a result of the Respondent’s AAF, he was disqualified from the 2014 Asian Games on 26 September 2014.
6. This was the Respondent’s second anti-doping rule violation and by decision dated 10 November 2014, an IWF Hearing Panel imposed an eight-year period of ineligibility against the Respondent for the Use of Prohibited Substances. Accordingly, the Respondent’s suspension period commenced on 14 September 2014, and expired on 14 September 2022.
7. On 18 June 2022, the West Asia Regional Anti-Doping Organization (“WARADO”) informed the ITA that it was investigating a possible violation by the Respondent and on 5 July 2022, the WARADA notified the ITA that the Respondent had run for and was elected to office with the Specialized Badrah Weightlifting Club (the “Club”) while still subject to a period of ineligibility.
8. The information provided by WARADO to the ITA was based on a letter from the Ministry of Youth and Sport in Iraq located by the Iraqi National Anti-Doping Organization, confirming that according to the minutes of the 6 August 2018 election, the Respondent had become a member of the administration of the club. The meeting minutes for the 6 August 2018 election confirmed that the Respondent had been elected to the Club’s administration as Secretary General.
9. The Respondent, having been made aware that there was an issue regarding his eligibility to stand for the 6 August 2018 election, resigned his position as the Club’s Secretary General on 7 August 2018, the day after the election.
10. On 24 January 2024, the ITA notified the Respondent that he may have breached the conditions of his period of Ineligibility and that the ITA was considering imposing a new period of Ineligibility against him pursuant to Article 10.14.1 of the 2018 IWF ADR.
11. The Notification sent to the Respondent provided him with an opportunity to submit written explanations, together with any corroborating evidence regarding his potential breach of Article 10.11.1 of the 2018 IWF ADR.

12. The Respondent replied to the ITA on 26 January 2024 and requested an extension to provide his response. On 31 January 2024, the ITA granted the Respondent an extension until 29 February 2024, to provide a response.
13. On 27 February 2024, the Respondent provided his response to the ITA, explaining that he believed that the suspension that had been imposed on him applied only in his capacity as an athlete and that he was not prevented from participating in sports in other capacities. He also explained that he resigned the day after he was elected to the Specialized Badrah Weightlifting Sports Club after a friend told him that he was violating the terms of his suspension.
14. The Respondent also explained that he chose not to participate in the Sports Club election in August 2022 but was told by the Ministry of Youth and Sport on 20 June 2023, that he could work in sport as of 14 September 2022, when his eight-year suspension had been completed.
15. The Respondent was elected President of the Specialized Badrah Weightlifting Sports Club on 23 June 2023.
16. On 14 April 2024, the Respondent provided further explanations and supporting documents to the ITA. After assessing the Respondent's explanations, the ITA, on behalf of the IWF, maintained that all the elements of a breach of the prohibition against participation during a period of ineligibility, as set forth in Article 10.11.1 of the 2018 IWF ADR, had been satisfied due to the Respondent's admission that he had been elected to the Club administration on 6 August 2018.
17. On 6 December 2024, the ITA issued a Notice of Charge against the Respondent, in which it was asserted that he breached Article 10.11.1 of the 2018 IWF ADR. The Notice of Charge set out the potential consequences of the ADRV and proposed the imposition of an additional six-month period of Ineligibility against the Respondent, as well as the Disqualification of any results that he achieved between 6 and 9 August 2018. The Notice of Charge also set out the Respondent's options in relation to the disciplinary proceedings, including the option to provide additional explanations if he sought to reduce the additional period of Ineligibility being proposed.
18. On 7 December 2024, the Respondent requested that his case be heard before the Iraqi Sports Settlement and Arbitration Center ("ISAAC").
19. On 11 December 2024, the ITA informed the Respondent that only the CAS ADD had jurisdiction over matters processed under the IWF ADR and reminded him that an Agreement on Consequences had been proposed should he choose to exercise that option.
20. On 16 December 2024, the Respondent provided additional explanations in support of his position that he did not violate Article 10.11.1 of the 2018 IWF ADR. The Respondent maintained that he had been wrongly informed by the Iraqi Central Weightlifting Federation that his suspension only applied to his activities as an athlete, and none of the administrators or legal representatives present during the 6 August 2018 election objected to his candidacy. The Respondent also explained that his election was never valid because his name was removed following his resignation and was never ratified.
21. On 19 February 2025, the ITA, on behalf of the IWF, informed the Respondent that, after reviewing his 8 January 2025 explanations, it maintained that he had breached Article 10.11.1 of the IWF ADR and the appropriate Consequences were an additional six-month period of Ineligibility.
22. On 26 February 2025, the Respondent confirmed to the ITA that he wished to have this matter heard before the CAS ADD.

23. Accordingly, the matter was referred by the ITA to the CAS ADD for the determination on the Respondent's breach of Article 10.11.1 of the 2018 IWF ADR and the imposition of the appropriate Consequences.

III. PROCEEDINGS BEFORE THE COURT OF ARBITRATION FOR SPORT

24. On 2 June 2025, and in accordance with Article A13 of the Rules of the CAS Anti-Doping Division, the Claimant filed its Request for Disciplinary Proceedings.
25. On 6 June 2025, and in accordance with Articles A16 and A17 of the ADD Rules, the Hon. Hugh L. Fraser, Judge in Ottawa, Canada, was appointed to act as Single Judge in this procedure.
26. On 13 July 2025, and further to a granted extension of time, the Respondent filed his Answer to the Request in accordance with Article A14 of the ADD Rules.
27. On 16 and 25 July 2025 respectively, both Parties requested that a hearing be held in this matter.
28. On 18 August 2025, the Parties signed and returned the Order of Procedure.
29. On 11 September 2025, i.e. after the filing of his Answer, the Respondent requested to be permitted to submit additional evidence.
30. On the same day, the CAS ADD Office informed the Respondent that, pursuant to Article A19.2 (2) of the ADD Rules, he was not authorized to adduce new evidence, unless the Parties agree or the Single Judge orders otherwise based on exceptional circumstances. In such letter, the Respondent was invited to provide the CAS ADD Office with his list of participants, including his interpreter.
31. On 14 September 2025, the Respondent provided the CAS ADD Office with his list of participants.
32. On 16 September 2026 and upon receipt of the original hard copies of the Respondent's new evidence, the CAS ADD Office granted IWF a 10-day deadline to comment on the admissibility and the content of this new evidence.
33. On 26 September 2026, in the absence of exceptional circumstances, the IWF objected to the admissibility of the Respondent's new evidence.
34. Still on 26 September 2025, the Respondent filed unsolicited comments in reply to IWF's observations on his additional evidence.
35. On 3 October 2025, the Single Judge issued a decision regarding the admissibility of the Respondent's new evidence:

1. *The Respondent filed his Answer in this procedure on 13 July 2025 and now seeks to submit additional material to supplement the information contained therein.*
2. *The Claimant objects to the Respondent's application to file additional documents.*
3. *Article A19.2 (2) of the ADD Rules provides that:*

Unless the parties agree or the President of the Panel orders otherwise on the basis of exceptional circumstances, after the exchange of written submissions set out in Article A.19.1, the parties shall not be authorized to supplement or amend their requests or their argument, to produce new exhibits, or to specify further evidence on which they intend to rely.

4. *On 23 June 2025, the Single Judge granted the Respondent an extension of time until 15 July 2025 to file his Answer. The Answer was filed on 13 July 2025 and did not contain any request for additional time to file supplementary documents.*
5. *On 18 August 2025, the Respondent signed and returned the Order of Procedure.*
6. *On 11 September 2025, the Respondent filed a request to submit additional documents. On 26 September 2025, the Claimant objected to the admissibility of the ten additional documents that the Respondent sought to admit, on the basis that the requirements in Article A19.2 (2) of the ADD Rules were not met as there were no exceptional circumstances supporting the Respondent's request.*
7. *After reviewing the Respondent's request, the Single Judge finds that there are no exceptional circumstances raised by the Respondent which would justify granting the request to file additional documents. Furthermore, several of the documents which the Respondent sought permission to submit would have been in his possession well before the time in which he was required to file his Answer. For these reasons, the Single Judge hereby denies the Respondent's request to submit additional documents.*
8. *The hearing will proceed on the basis of the written submissions filed in compliance with Article A19.1 of the ADD Rules.*
36. On 26 October 2025, the Respondent informed the CAS ADD Office that he would be assisted by his interpreter only and that his counsel would not attend the hearing.
37. On 27 October 2025, a video hearing was held. The Single Judge was assisted by Mr Fabien Cagneux, Managing Counsel of the ADD, and joined by the following:

For the Claimant:

- Adam Klevinas (Counsel)

For the Respondent:

- Mohammed Jasin Abboud Al Alfuri (Respondent)
 - Mohammed Abdul-Munen (Witness)
 - Layth Safaa Tariq (Interpreter)
38. At the outset of the hearing, the Parties confirmed that they had no objection to the appointment of the Single Judge. At the close of the hearing, the Parties confirmed that they had received a fair hearing and had been given the opportunity to fully present their cases.
 39. In a letter dated 18 November 2025 – received by email on 19 November 2025, the Respondent requested the Single Judge to postpone the notification of his decision until 31 December 2025.
 40. On 20 November 2025, and upon invitation of the CAS ADD Office, the IWF objected to the Respondent's request and submitted that the Single Judge should render his decision in accordance with his intended timeline, whether before or after 31 December 2025.

IV. SUBMISSIONS OF THE PARTIES

A. The Claimant

41. The Claimant submits that there is no dispute that the Respondent ran for election on 6 August 2018, and that any justification that he offers about his misunderstanding of the rules speaks to his degree of fault.
42. The Claimant also submits that the length of time for which the Respondent's breach was in effect should not be the determining factor and would be relevant only to a consideration of whether the ultimate sanction should be lower. The Claimant reiterates that the Respondent's near immediate resignation has no bearing on the fact that he breached the terms of his suspension.
43. The Claimant maintains that Document No 2, the document that the Respondent places great reliance on, which was provided to the Respondent by the Iraqi Weightlifting Federation, was not an official translation of the sanction document that was issued by the International Weightlifting Federation.
44. The Claimant states that it was reckless and highly negligent for the Respondent not to take any steps to verify the information that he had received regarding his sanction when he had the opportunity to do so. The Claimant adds that Mr. Al Alfuri could have asked the Iraqi Olympic Committee for verification, or he could have asked his National Anti-Doping Organization, or even the lawyer who represented him in Kazakhstan, for clarification of the particulars of his sanction, but he failed to do so.
45. The Claimant argues that the Respondent cannot shift the blame for his alleged misunderstanding of the sanction to anyone but himself, since he is the one who is subject to the rules and the suspension that resulted from a breach of those rules.
46. The Claimant submits that the circumstances of Mr. Al Alfuri's resignation should be looked at with suspicion since there is no evidence that he actually reviewed the IWF decision between 6 and 7 August 2018, and no evidence that he had considered any information on 7 August 2018, that he had not accessed prior to that date.
47. With regard to the delay in notifying the Respondent of the breach, the Claimant submits that the breach was made out once the Respondent participated in the activity, and notes that the breach was not discovered until 2022. The Claimant states that the fact that differing interpretations of the sanction were offered by different organizations within Iraq has no bearing on the issue of whether or not a breach was committed.
48. The Claimant submits that pursuant to Article 3.1 of the 2018 IWF ADR, the burden of proof is on the IWF to establish, to the comfortable satisfaction of the Panel, that the Respondent has breached Article 10.11.1 of the 2018 IWF ADR. Article 3.1 of the 2018 IWF ADR defines the comfortable satisfaction standard as "greater than a mere balance of probability but less than proof beyond a reasonable doubt".
49. The Claimant submits that the IWF has met its evidentiary burden in proving that the Respondent breached Article 10.11.1 of the 2018 IWF ADR based on the following evidence:
 - The Respondent was serving an eight-year period of *Ineligibility* between 14 September 2014 and 14 September 2022;
 - The Respondent ran for election to the Club on 6 August 2018, while subject to a period of *Ineligibility*;

- The Respondent has not denied that he ran for election to the Club while subject to a period of *Ineligibility* and that he was elected;
 - The Club is clearly under the jurisdiction of a member of a Code Signatory and/Code Signatory; and
 - The Respondent resigned from the Club's administration the day after his election.
50. The Claimant further submits that intent is not an element of a breach of Article 10.11.1 of the 2018 IWF ADR and is only relevant when assessing the Consequences of the breach.
51. The Claimant also observes that the Respondent had been serving his eight-year period of *Ineligibility* for almost four years at the time of the Club election in August 2018 and therefore had sufficient time to make inquiries with the relevant authorities regarding the terms and scope of his suspension, before seeking election to the Club's administration.
52. The Claimant submits that the Respondent's argument that he believed he could run in the 6 August 2018 election because none of the administrators or legal representatives present during the election objected to him running, should be rejected.
53. The Claimant observes that there is jurisprudence in cases such as *CAS 2010/A/2245* which determined that even where an athlete was under the mistaken belief that he could compete in certain tournaments following a suspension and deeply regretted his error, he was still found to have "entirely abdicated his responsibility to inform himself of the provisions of the anti-doping rules when the ability to understand the nature and extent of those provisions were reasonably within his control."
54. The Claimant submits that pursuant to Article 10.11.3 of the 2018 IWF ADR, the Respondent carries the burden of establishing that the otherwise applicable period of *Ineligibility* should be reduced based on his degree of Fault and the other circumstances of the case. The Claimant further submits that while it will be very difficult for the Respondent to establish No Significant Fault or Negligence because of the high level of his personal responsibility, he may benefit from a reduction of based on the fact that the duration of his breach was very short, and did not have any impact on the results of a Competition.
55. The Claimant submits that as per Article 10.10 of the 2018, ADR, any period of *Ineligibility* should start on the date of the final hearing decision, particularly in light of the fact that any delays during the Results Management process were as a result of extensions sought by the Respondent.
56. The Claimant has requested that the Single Judge grant relief holding that:
1. *The IWF's request is admissible.*
 2. *Mr Mohammed Jasim Abbood Al Alfuri is found to have breached the prohibition against participation during Ineligibility pursuant to Article 10.11.3 of the 2018 IWF ADR.*
 3. *Mr Mohammed Jasim Abbood Al Alfuri is sanctioned with appropriate Consequences pursuant to Article 10.11.3 of the 2018 IWF ADR.*
 4. *The costs of the proceedings, if any, shall be borne by Mohammed Jasim Abbood Al Alfuri.*
 5. *The ITA is granted an award for its legal and other costs.*
 6. *Any other prayer for relief that the Hearing Panel deems fit in the facts and circumstances of the present case.*

B. The Respondent

57. The Respondent submits that he attended the hearing on 10 November 2014, which resulted in his eight-year suspension. He stated that he did not speak English and had no prior knowledge of relevant international regulations. He also stated that following the hearing, the suspension decision was not sent to him but was sent to the relevant supervisory authorities in Iraq, including the Central Iraqi Weightlifting Federation, the Iraqi National Olympic Committee, the Iraqi Anti-Doping Agency, the Sports Medicine Department of the Ministry of Youth and Sports, the Al-Shorta Sports Club and the Badrah Specialised Weightlifting Club.
58. The Respondent states that approximately one week after the hearing, he received an official notification issued by the Iraqi Weightlifting Federation indicating that the International Weightlifting Federation had imposed a suspension against him for eight years as an athlete. The Respondent further states that this document, which he refers to as Document No. 2 in his submissions, was written in Arabic, and confirmed that the sanction did not extend to or include a prohibition on engaging in any other activities at the local level.
59. The Respondent maintains that since he had relied on the Iraqi Weightlifting Federation to handle all the legal and administrative arrangements for the hearing which imposed the eight-year sanction, he treated the notification from that Federation (Document No. 2), as an official and binding notification and accepted in good faith, the confirmation that he could engage in other activities at the local level as long as he did not participate as an athlete.
60. The Respondent submits that he was unfamiliar with the English language and with international procedures, and had no reason to question the validity or content of a notification issued by the official body to which he belonged, that being the Iraqi Weightlifting Federation, the body which prepared the lawyer, convened the hearing and looked after translation for him during the first session in South Korea and in the hearing in Kazakhstan.
61. The Respondent further submits that he had been nominated and participated in the election with full confidence, based on the official notification that he had received from the Iraqi Weightlifting Federation which clearly stated that the sanction extended for eight years as an athlete only, without any mention of a prohibition on engaging in other roles at the national level – including coaching, refereeing, or running for administrative office.
62. The Respondent maintains that in 2014, he did not have an email address and did not have the ability to communicate with the lawyer who accompanied him during the hearing session since he was not Iraqi.
63. The Respondent also submits that the election process in Iraq falls under the supervision of the National Olympic Committee and its provincial branches. He also observes that the election in 2018, was conducted in the presence of a representative of the Ministry of Youth and Sports, a representative of the Ministry of Higher Education, and a representative of the Directorate of Sports Activities.
64. The Respondent notes that all who supervised the elections and who reviewed the candidates' files possessed advanced academic qualifications and had decades of experience in the interpreting the laws of sport. He added that since he is a well-known and prominent athlete, the sanction that had been imposed on him was something that the election officials were aware of, yet no one objected to his candidacy. As a result, he maintains that he did not harbour any doubt regarding the legality of his nomination.
65. The Respondent submits that if anyone had warned him that his candidacy was in violation of the rules, he would have immediately withdrawn from the election. He points to his immediate

withdrawal hours after the conclusion of the elections as proof of his good faith belief that he was not breaking any rules. Mr. Al Alfuri adds that his resignation occurred promptly, voluntarily and transparently, without pressure from anyone. He notes that he explicitly stated in his resignation that it was out of respect for the sanction imposed upon him by the International Weightlifting Federation.

66. The Respondent further submits that following the conclusion of the elections on the evening of 6 August 2018, he received numerous messages of congratulations. However, shortly after the results were announced and the congratulations had begun, the Respondent recalled hearing from a close friend who asked him whether his candidacy was legally valid given the sanction that had been imposed on him.
67. The Respondent states that this question cast a serious doubt in his mind and he decided to resign immediately from the position. He also points to his belief that the election result had not even been ratified at the time when he submitted his resignation.
68. The Respondent submits that the official ratification of the election results did not take place until 9 October 2018, meaning that he never acquired legal status as an elected member and never assumed or performed any duties, administrative or otherwise. On the basis of this chronology, the Respondent argues that the election result was purely symbolic, without any legal effect.
69. The Respondent questions why an official investigation was not opened back in 2018, after the elections concluded and his resignation had been submitted. He also questions why the Ministry of Youth and Sports after receiving his resignation, did not contact any entities such as the Sports Medicine Department or the Iraqi Anti-Doping Agency to determine whether a violation had occurred.
70. The Respondent observes that his eight-year suspension was set to expire on 14 September 2022 and wonders why the suspension violation case opened just three months before his eight-year suspension would have been served.
71. Mr. Al Alfuri maintains that having previously served two anti-doping suspensions should not imply that he was fully aware of every clause in the complex legal framework of the World Anti-Doping code. He submits that he has always sought to comply with international regulation as evidenced by the fact that he did not stand for election in the 30 August 2022, elections and did not submit his candidacy for the 23 June 2023 elections until he formally requested legal clarification from the Sports Medicine Department and the Iraqi Anti-Doping Agency, regarding his eligibility to engage in any sports activity after serving the full suspension.
72. The Respondent notes that upon receiving a formal legal opinion, he submitted his candidacy and was duly elected President of the Badra Weightlifting Club. His term of office continues through to 2028. The Respondent submits that he has been unfairly targeted by individuals who oppose his election as Club President.
73. In his closing submissions, the Respondent stated that in the event that a new penalty was issued against him, he would lose his status as club president which would make it very difficult for him to recover amounts that are owed to him by the Club and by the Ministry of Sport. The Respondent also affirms that he is a candidate for other sports-related positions and if a further suspension is imposed, he would lose the opportunity to obtain such positions.
74. The Respondent asks that no further suspension be imposed against him. He reiterates that he did not have any intention of breaking his suspension and requests that if any additional suspension is imposed against him, it should be made retroactive to 2022.

V. JURISDICTION

75. Rule A2 of the CAS ADD rules provides as follows:

CAS ADD shall be the first-instance authority to conduct proceedings and issue decisions when an alleged anti-doping rule violation has been filed with it and for imposition of any sanctions resulting from a finding that an anti-doping rule violation has occurred. CAS ADD has jurisdiction to rule as a first-instance authority on behalf of any WADA signatory which has formally designated its powers to CAS ADD to conduct anti-doping proceedings and impose applicable sanctions.

These Rules apply whenever a case is filed with CAS ADD. Such filing may arise by reason of an arbitration clause in the Anti-Doping Rules of a WADC signatory, by contract or by specific agreement.

76. The alleged breach of Article 10.11.1 of the 2018 IWF ADR occurred in 2018 and shall therefore be governed by the ADR in force at the time which was the 2018 ADR.
77. The 2024 ADR was in force when the Respondent was notified of the charges and is currently in force. Pursuant to the principles of *tempus regit actum*, the 2024 ADR will therefore govern the procedural aspects of this case.
78. The ADR applies, *inter alia*, to each IWF Member Federation or any member or affiliate organization of any Member Federation, and specifically, to any other Person who is subject to the jurisdiction of any member or affiliate organization of any Member Federation. The Iraqi Weightlifting Federation is an IWF Member Federation.
79. At the time of the alleged breach of Article 10.11.1 of the 2018 IWF ADR, the Respondent had been elected to the administration of the Club which was an affiliate organization of the Member Federation; as such, the ADR were applicable to the Respondent.
80. The IWF has appointed the CAS ADD to act as the former's first instance hearing panel as of 1 January 2021, after the 2021 IWF ADR came into force. his appointment remains in effect in the 2024 ADR.
81. The Respondent expressly instructed the ITA to refer the case to CAS ADD for adjudication. On 2 June 2025, the ITA filed its request on behalf of the IWF, to the CAS ADD for adjudication.
82. In light of the foregoing, the CAS ADD is vested with the jurisdiction to hear this proceeding.
83. Separately, the Parties confirmed jurisdiction by signing the Order of Procedure.

VI. APPLICABLE LAW

84. In accordance with Article A20 of the Rules, the Single Judge shall decide the dispute in accordance with the World Anti-Doping Code and the applicable anti-doping rules or with the laws of a particular jurisdiction chosen by agreement of the parties, or in the absence of such a choice, according to Swiss law.
85. The alleged breach occurred in 2018 and shall therefore be governed by the ADR in force at the time, the 2018, IWF ADR.
86. The IWF is seated in Switzerland, Swiss law applies subsidiarily to the present dispute.

VII. MERITS

87. The Single Judge observes that the main issues to be resolved are:

- Has the IWF met its burden of proof to establish an ADRV to the comfortable satisfaction of the Panel?
- If an ADRV has been established, what period of *Ineligibility* should be imposed on the Respondent?

Has the IWF met its burden of proof to establish an ADRV to the comfortable satisfaction of the Panel?

88. Pursuant to Article 3.1 of the 2018 IWF ADR, the burden of proof is first on the IWF to establish an ADRV to the comfortable satisfaction of the Panel. That section of the ADR reads as follows:

3.1 Burdens and Standards of Proof

IWF shall have the burden of establishing that an anti-doping rule violation has occurred. The standard of proof shall be whether IWF has established an anti-doping rule violation to the comfortable satisfaction of the Hearing Panel bearing in mind the seriousness of the allegation which is made. This standard of proof in all cases is greater than a mere balance of probability but less than proof beyond a reasonable doubt. Where this Anti-Doping Policy places the burden of proof upon the Athlete or other Person alleged to have committed an anti-doping rule violation to rebut a presumption or establish specified facts or circumstances, the standard of proofs shall be by a balance of probability.

89. Once a breach of Article 10.11.1 of the 2018 IWF ADR has been established, the burden of proof then shifts to the Respondent to prove either that the alleged breach should not be considered as such, or that the additional period of *Ineligibility* can be reduced on the grounds provided for in the IWF ADR. The Respondent's evidentiary threshold is on the balance of probability pursuant to Article 3.1 of the 2018 IWF ADR.
90. Article 10.11.1 of the 2018 IWF ADR specifies the circumstances and conduct which constitute a breach of the prohibition against participation during *Ineligibility*.

10.11 Status During Ineligibility

10.11.1 Prohibition Against Participation During Ineligibility

No Athlete or other Person who has been declared Ineligible may, during the period of Ineligibility, participate in any capacity in a Competition or activity, (other than authorized anti-doping education or rehabilitation programs) authorized or organized by any Signatory, Signatory's member organization, or a club or other member organization of a Signatory's member organization, or in Competitions authorized or organized by any professional league or any international level Event organization or any elite or national-level sporting activity funded by a governmental agency.

An Athlete or other Person subject to a period of Ineligibility longer than four years may, after completing four years of the period of Ineligibility, participate as an Athlete in local sport events not sanctioned or otherwise under the jurisdiction of a Code Signatory or member of a Code Signatory, but only so long as the local sport event is not at a level that could otherwise qualify such Athlete or other Person directly or indirectly to compete in (or accumulate points toward) a national championship or an IWF Calendar Event, and does not involve the Athlete or other Person working in any capacity with Minors.

An Athlete or other Person subject to a period of Ineligibility shall remain subject to Testing.

(Comment to Article 10.11.1: For example, subject to Article 10.11.2 below, an Ineligible Athlete cannot participate in a training camp, exhibition or practice organized by his or her Member Federation or a club which is a member of that Member Federation or which is funded by a government agency. Further, an Ineligible Athlete

may not compete in a non-Signatory professional league (e.g., the National Hockey League, the National Basketball Association, etc.). Events organized by a non-Signatory International Event organization or a non-Signatory national-level event organization without triggering the Consequences set forth in Article 10.11.3. The term “activity” also includes, for example, administrative activities, such as serving as an official, director, officer, employee, or volunteer of the organization described in this Article. Ineligibility imposed in one sport shall also be recognized by other sports (see Article 15.1, Mutual Recognition).

91. Article 10.11.3 provides that a violation of the prohibition against participation during Ineligibility will result in a new period of Ineligibility equal in length to the original period of Ineligibility. This Article states that:

Where an Athlete or other Person who has been declared Ineligible violates the prohibition against participation during Ineligibility described in Article 10.11.1, the results of such participation shall be Disqualified and a new period of Ineligibility equal in length up to the original period of Ineligibility shall be added to the end of the original period of Ineligibility. The new period of Ineligibility may be adjusted based on the Athlete or other Person’s degree of Fault and other circumstances of the case. The determination of whether an Athlete or other Person has violated the prohibition against participation, and whether an adjustment is appropriate, shall be made by the Anti-Doping Organization whose results management led to the imposition of the initial period of Ineligibility. This decision may be appealed under Article 13.

[...]

92. The Respondent acknowledges that he ran for election to the Club on 6 August 2018, while still subject to a period of Ineligibility. The Respondent has argued that he resigned from the Club’s administration the day after the election once he realized that he might have been in violation of the terms of the eight-year sanction that had been imposed on him. Mr. Al Alfuri argues that he had no intent to breach the terms of his sanction.
93. The comment to Article 10.11.1 of the 2018 IWF ADR specifies that the term “activity” also includes, administrative activities such as serving as an official, director, officer, employee, or volunteer of the organization described in the Article.
94. CAS panels have given a broad interpretation to Article 10.11.1 of the 2018 IWF ADR. In *CAS 2017/A/4937*, the CAS held as follows:

It is the involvement (i.e. “participation”) while sanctioned that is the breach and the provision read as a whole does not require a measure of how close or how far from an organized competition or activity to be the relevant consideration. Furthermore, the Panel does not accept the submission that the addition of the words “authorised or organised” by a Signatory to the Rules modifies the general rule such as to allow athletes banned from sport to play any role within that sport during the sanction period.

95. The Respondent’s contention that he was under a misapprehension that his suspension only applied to him in his capacity as an Athlete is of no benefit to him given the fact that intent is not an element of a breach of Article 10.11.1 of the 2018 IWF ADR. The Respondent’s intent will only be relevant when assessing the Consequences of the breach.
96. The Respondent has attempted to shift responsibility for his predicament to the Iraqi Central Weightlifting Federation and the Iraqi Sport officials who apparently knew that he was running for election but did not discourage him or warn him that he might be in breach of terms of his 8-year suspension. However, as the CAS found in *CAS 2010/A/2245*, the Respondent also had a responsibility to make himself aware of the rules that applied to his suspension. His over reliance on Iraqi sport administrators does not absolve him of the responsibility that rests with the athlete to ensure that he is in full compliance with the rules. If the unidentified “friend” of the Respondent

was aware that Mr. Al Alfuri might be in breach of the rules, it raises the question as to why the Respondent himself did not better educate himself regarding the limits on his involvement in sport.

97. The Single Judge does not give any weight to the Respondent's argument that his election to the Club's administration was never valid because it was not ratified until months later. It was the Respondent's participation in the Club election that constituted the violation of Article 10.11.1 of the 2018 IWF ADR.
98. The Single Judge finds that the Respondent ran for election to the Club on 6 August 2018, while subject to a period of *Ineligibility*. When the Respondent was informed that his candidacy for the election could be considered as a breach of his period of *Ineligibility* under Article 10.11.1, he immediately tendered his resignation from the administrative position for which he had just been elected.
99. On the basis of the accepted evidence, the Single Judge therefore finds that the ITA, on behalf of the IWF, has discharged its burden of establishing to the comfortable satisfaction of the Single Judge, that the Respondent breached the provisions of Article 10.11.1 of the 2018 IWF ADR.

What Period of Ineligibility should be imposed on the Respondent?

100. Article 10.11.3 of the 2018 IWF ADR provides that a violation of the prohibition against participation during *Ineligibility* will result in a new period of *Ineligibility* which can be equal in length to the original period of *Ineligibility* and will run consecutive to the original period of *Ineligibility*. This Article also contains a provision that permits adjustment of the new period of *Ineligibility* based on the Athlete's degree of Fault and other circumstances of the case.
101. The Claimant has stated that when determining the appropriate Consequences of the breach, the ITA is not bound by its 6 December 2024 proposed Agreement on Consequences whereby the Respondent was offered the opportunity to accept an additional six-month period of *Ineligibility* to resolve his case.
102. Furthermore, the Claimant asserts that it is the Respondent's burden to establish that the otherwise applicable additional period of *Ineligibility* should be reduced based on his degree of Fault and the other circumstances of the case. The Claimant has also stated that there are a number of factors that the Single Judge can consider which might warrant a shorter additional period of *Ineligibility* for the Respondent's breach of Article 10.11.1 of the 2018 IWF ADR.
103. Some of the factors that the Single Judge has taken into consideration in determining the appropriate Consequences for the Respondent's breach are as follows:
 - The Respondent has committed multiple ADRVs, and therefore should have been aware of his responsibilities as a suspended athlete.
 - The Respondent failed to verify with any relevant Anti-Doping Organization whether he was permitted to run in the 6 August 2018 Club election and failed to exercise a sufficiently high level of care and investigation in relation to the perceived level of risk.
 - The Respondent immediately resigned from the Club's administration the day after his election after learning that he was not permitted to run in the election and serve on the Club's administration. The duration of his breach of the prohibition against participation during *Ineligibility* was therefore very short.
 - The Respondent's breach did not have any impact on the results of a Competition.

- The Respondent does not speak or read English and relied on a translation of the suspension document provided by the Iraqi Weightlifting Federation. This translation was an inaccurate statement of the nature of his suspension.
- The Respondent had relied on the Iraqi Weightlifting Federation for significant assistance during the hearing process which led to his eight-year prohibition. That Federation had provided his previous legal assistance and had provided him with translated documents in his native Arabic language.
- The Respondent believed that he could rely on the document provided to him by the Iraqi Wrestling Federation, an organization that he had been actively involved with for a number of years.
- The Respondent did not hide the fact of his eight-year suspension. The fact of the suspension would have been well known to the election Supervisory Committee and Club officials who were present on 6 August 2018.
- The Respondent's breach occurred on 6 August 2018, yet he was not notified of the current ADRV case until 13 June 2022, almost four years after the election and his subsequent resignation.
- No adequate explanation was given by the IWF for the almost four-year gap between the Respondent's breach and the decision to proceed with an Anti-Doping Rule Violation charge.

104. The Single Judge finds that, although the Respondent should have taken additional steps to confirm that he was eligible to contest the Club election, his level of fault is at the lowest level of the no significant fault threshold.
105. Mohammed Abdul Munen testified on behalf of the Respondent. This testimony was significant in addressing the circumstances leading up to the participation breach. Mr. Munen was a representative of the Iraqi Weightlifting Federation from 2014 to 2018, serving as a member of the Board. Mr. Munen testified that a few days after the Respondent had his hearing in Almaty, Kazakhstan, the Respondent was served a notice advising him that he was banned from participation in sport for a period of eight years.
106. Mr. Munen testified that the Respondent had not requested the notification, but that it was sent to him by the Iraqi Weightlifting Federation as a matter of procedure. Mr. Munen stated that Mustafa Salih Mahdi, General Secretary of the Iraqi Weightlifting Federation, received the decision from the International Weightlifting Federation and informed all concerned parties about the decision.
107. Mr. Munen confirmed that the suspension notice document was in the English language and was translated by the Iraqi Weightlifting Federation before it was sent to Mr. Munen and Mr. Al Alfuri. Mr. Munen acknowledged that the translated document was not the official notice document but was a translation of the original decision. The translation was signed by the head of the Iraqi Wrestling Federation. Mr. Munen agreed that there was no evidence that the translated document was ever approved by the IWF. Mr. Munen testified that the translated document stated that Mr. Al Alfuri was banned from participation in weightlifting but was not banned from other activities such as coaching or involvement in other capacities.
108. The circumstances of this case are quite unique. The Respondent, Mr. Al Alfuri, was notified of the results of his hearing of 10 November 2014, approximately one week after the hearing had taken place. The decision of the IWF Hearing Panel was written in English. The Respondent does not

speak or write English. According to the testimony of Mr. Munen, Mustafa Salih Mahdi was one of the few individuals in the Iraqi delegation who spoke English.

109. The Claimant has been critical of the Respondent for accepting the statement in the translated document, (Document No. 2) that he was only banned from participating in weightlifting as an athlete. However, the Single Judge is less critical of Mr. Al Alfuri's reliance on what turned out to be an inaccurate translation or interpretation of the IWF decision based on the circumstances.
110. The decision of the IWF Hearing Panel dated 6 November 2014, notes that "*the athlete was present at the hearing, together with his counsel, Me Sami Boussarsar, Attorney-at-law in Tunis, and as observer, Mr. Mustafa Salih Mahdi, general secretary of the Iraqi Weightlifting Federation, the latter delivering – with everybody's agreement – a translation Arabic English for the athlete*".
111. As stated above, Mr. Al Alfuri (the Respondent) did not speak or understand English. The IWF Hearing Panel was content to have Mr. Mahdi, General Secretary of the Iraqi Weightlifting Federation, serve as translator for the Respondent. The IWF decision was then delivered to Mr. Mahdi who arranged for it to be translated and sent to the Respondent. It is not difficult to comprehend why Mr. Al Alfuri would accept as accurate, the translated version of the IWF suspension notice from Mr. Mahdi, given the fact that the same individual had been deemed suitable to provide translation services for him during the actual hearing.
112. While it is acknowledged that the Respondent could have taken the additional step of verifying with the IWF or his National Anti-Doping Organization whether he was eligible to run in the Club's election, it is understandable under the circumstances, why he accepted the translation provided by Mr. Mahdi, the General Secretary of the Iraqi Weightlifting Federation, without making further inquiries.
113. Once the Respondent learned the day after his election, that the translated document contained inaccurate or erroneous information, he immediately resigned from his position. For these reasons the Single Judge finds that the Respondent's level of fault is low.
114. With the finding that the Respondent's level of fault is not very significant in this case, the circumstances warrant the imposition of a period of *Ineligibility* of three months.
115. During this three-month period of *Ineligibility*, the Respondent cannot participate in any capacity in a Competition or activity (other than authorized anti-doping education or rehabilitation programs) authorized or organized by any Signatory, Signatory's member organization, or a club or other member organization of a Signatory's member organization, or in Competitions authorized or organized by any professional league or any international level Event organization or any elite or national-level sporting activity funded by a governmental agency.

Commencement of the Period of Ineligibility

116. In accordance with Article 10.10 of the 2018, IWF ADR, the period of *Ineligibility* shall start on the date of the final hearing decision providing for *Ineligibility*. Mr. Al Alfuri has not been subject to a Provisional Suspension during these proceedings and is therefore not entitled to any corresponding credit.
117. The Single Judge is satisfied that this Anti-Doping Rule Violation has been prosecuted in a timely manner. Any delays with regard to the completion of this matter are the result of the Respondent's requests for extensions.

VIII. COSTS

(...)

IX. APPEAL

126. Article 8 of the 2025 IWF ADR provides:

8.2.1 *At the end of the hearing, or promptly thereafter, the CAS ADD shall issue a written decision that conforms with Article 9 of the International Standard for Results Management and which includes the full reasons for the decision, the period of Ineligibility imposed, the Disqualification of results under Article 10.10 and, if applicable, a justification for why the greatest potential Consequences were not imposed.*

8.2.2 *IWF shall notify that decision to the Athlete or other Person and to other Anti-Doping Organizations with a right to appeal under Article 13.2.3, and shall promptly report it into ADAMS. The decision may be appealed as provided in Article 13.*

127. Pursuant to Article A21 of the ADD Rules, this award may be appealed to the CAS Appeals Arbitration Division within 21 days from receipt of the notification of the final award with reasons in accordance with Articles R47 *et seq.* of the CAS Code of Sports-Related Arbitration, applicable to appeals procedures.

ON THESE GROUNDS

The Court of Arbitration for Sport rules that:

1. The Request for Arbitration filed on 2 June 2025 by the International Testing Agency, on behalf of the International Weightlifting Federation, is upheld.
2. Mr. Mohammed Jasin Abboud Ali Al Alfuri is found to have committed an anti-doping rule violation pursuant to Article 10.11.1 of the International Weightlifting Federation Anti-Doping Rules.
3. Mr. Mohammed Jasin Abboud Ali Al Alfuri is sanctioned with a period of *Ineligibility* of three (3) months starting from the date of this Decision.
4. (...).
5. (...).
6. All other motions or prayers for relief are dismissed.

Lausanne, 14 April 2026

THE ANTI-DOPING DIVISION OF THE COURT OF ARBITRATION FOR SPORT

Hon. Hugh L. Fraser O.C.
Single Judge