Athletics Integrity Unit

1st Floor
6 Quai Antoine 1er
MC 98007, Monaco

Decision of the Athletics Integrity Unit in the Case of

Ms Jemila Wortesa

Introduction

1. World Athletics has established the Athletics Integrity Unit ("**AIU**") whose role is to protect the integrity of the sport of Athletics, including fulfilling World Athletics' obligations as a Signatory to the World Anti-Doping Code ('the "**Code**"). World Athletics has delegated implementation of the World Athletics Anti-Doping Rules ("**ADR**") to the AIU, including but not limited to the following activities in relation to International-Level Athletes: Testing, Investigations, Results Management, Hearings, Sanctions and Appeals.

2. Ms Jemila Wortesa ("the **Athlete**") is a 39-year-old long-distance runner from Ethiopia[1].

3. This decision is issued by the AIU pursuant to Rule 8.5.6 ADR, which provides as follows:

> *"8.5.6 In the event that the Athlete or other Person either (i) admits the violation and accepts the proposed Consequences or (ii) is deemed to have admitted the violation and accepted the Consequences as per Rule 8.5.2(f), the Integrity Unit will promptly:*
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> *(a) issue a decision confirming the commission of the violation(s) and the imposition of the specified Consequences (including, if applicable, a justification for why the maximum potential sanction was not imposed);*
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> *(b) Publicly Report that decision in accordance with Rule 14;*
>
> *(c) send a copy of the decision to the Athlete or other Person and to any other party that has a right, further to Rule 13, to appeal the decision (and any such party may, within 15 days of receipt, request a copy of the full case file pertaining to the decision)."*

The Athlete's Commission of Anti-Doping Rule Violations

4. Rule 2 ADR sets out that the following shall constitute an Anti-Doping Rule Violation:

> *"2.1 Presence of a Prohibited Substance or its Metabolites or Markers in an Athlete's Sample*
>
> *[...]*

[1] https://worldathletics.org/athletes/ethiopia/jemila-wortesa-14381156

2.2 Use or Attempted Use by an Athlete of a Prohibited Substance or a Prohibited Method"

5. On 15 June 2025, the Athlete provided a urine Sample In-Competition at the Guiyang Marathon held in China, pursuant to Testing conducted under the Testing Authority of World Athletics-AIU, which was given code 8236103 (the "**Sample**").

6. On 21 July 2025, the World Anti-Doping Agency ("**WADA**") accredited laboratory in Beijing, China (the "**Laboratory**") reported an Adverse Analytical Finding in the Sample based on the presence of Erythropoietin ("**EPO**") (the "**Adverse Analytical Finding**").

7. The AIU reviewed the Adverse Analytical Finding in accordance with Article 5 of the International Standard for Results Management ("**ISRM**") and determined that:

   7.1. the Athlete did not have a Therapeutic Use Exemption ("**TUE**") that had been granted for the EPO found in the Sample;

   7.2. there was no apparent departure from the International Standard for Testing and Investigations ("**ISTI**") or from the International Standard for Laboratories ("**ISL**") that could reasonably have caused the Adverse Analytical Finding; and

8. Therefore, on 31 July 2025, the AIU notified the Athlete of the Adverse Analytical Finding in accordance with Article 5.1.2.1 of the ISRM, imposed a Provisional Suspension (effective immediately) and indicated that the Adverse Analytical Finding may result in Anti-Doping Rule Violations pursuant to Rule 2.1 ADR and/or Rule 2.2 ADR. The Athlete was informed of her rights, inter alia, to request the B Sample analysis, to request copies of the laboratory documentation supporting the Adverse Analytical Finding and to admit the Anti-Doping Rule Violations and potentially benefit from a one-year reduction in the period of Ineligibility pursuant to Rule 10.8.1 ADR by 7 August 2025.

9. The AIU also invited the Athlete to confirm her availability to attend an online interview with AIU representatives to provide her explanation for the Adverse Analytical Finding by no later than 4 August 2025.

10. The Athlete failed to respond by 4 August 2025. Therefore, on 5 August 2025, the AIU contacted the Athlete concerning her availability for interview and whether an interpreter would be required to assist her.

11. On the same day, the AIU received a response from an unknown e-mail address stating that the Athlete was ready for the interview, and that she wanted to speak "*afan oromo*".

12. On 6 August 2025, the AIU responded to the above reply asking the individual to confirm their identity because the e-mail had been sent from a different e-mail address to that which the AIU had sent the Notice of Allegation.

13. On the same day, the AIU received confirmation that it was the Athlete who had responded from the alternative e-mail address and the Athlete confirmed that future correspondence could continue through that address. The AIU informed the Athlete that an interpreter would

be available to assist her at the interview and asked her to confirm her availability for interview on 8 August 2025 between 11:00-13:00 CEST. The Athlete confirmed her availability.

14. On 7 August 2025, the AIU informed the Athlete that it would not be possible to complete the interview on 8 August 2025 because the AIU had been advised that the interpreter was no longer available. The Athlete thanked the AIU for having informed her.

15. On 20 August 2025, the AIU contacted the Athlete stating that an interpreter had now been located and invited the Athlete to attend an online interview on 28 August 2025 at 11:00 CEST.

16. On 21 August 2025, the Athlete's Authorised Athlete Representative responded using the Athlete's e-mail address declaring that "*I read your reply for my request to work as an Oromo language interpreter on the date August 20, 2025. As you mentioned, I would like to tell you that I am ready for the online interview you scheduled on Thursday, 25 August at 11.00 CEST (12.00EAT). Therefore, please send me the link for the online interview. Fyi I am an agent/representative for Athlete Jemila Wortesa – which is currently out of Ethiopia*."

17. The AIU replied on the same date requesting confirmation that the Athlete would attend the interview on 28 August 2025 and noted that whilst the Athlete's Authorised Athlete Representative could accompany the Athlete to the interview, they were not required to interpret/translate for the Athlete because an independent translator would be present. The AIU also included the link for the Athlete to connect to the interview.

18. On 27 August 2025, the AIU reminded the Athlete and the Athlete's Authorised Athlete Representative that the interview would take place the following day at 11:00 CEST and asked the Athlete to confirm her attendance. The Athlete did not respond.

19. On 28 August 2025, AIU representatives attended the online interview. During this time, the Athlete wrote to the AIU by e-mail stating that "*I'm don't have on interview because my phone is loosed yesterday so excuse me please. This time i using it person phone so sorry*". The Athlete attached to her e-mail a letter dated 26 August 2025 in which she admitted her mistake and explained that she had "*ingested a substance that I believed to be a vitamin supplement. I was misinformed by the seller, who assured me it was a harmless vitamin. Unfortunately, I later discovered that the substance was prohibited under anti-doping regulations*". Furthermore, she added that "*I take full responsibility for consuming it without consulting a qualified medical or sport's professional".* The Athlete failed to attend the interview on 28 August 2025.

20. Therefore, on 29 August 2025, the AIU offered the Athlete a further opportunity to attend an online interview on either 10 or 11 September 2025 and asked her to confirm her availability by no later than 2 September 2025. The AIU also noted that if the Athlete failed to confirm her availability and/or if she failed to attend the interview, then the AIU would proceed by issuing a Notice of Charge.

21. On 30 August 2025, the Athlete confirmed that she would attend an interview on 11 September 2025. Following further correspondence with the AIU, the Athlete ultimately confirmed her availability to attend the interview on 15 September 2025. However, on that date, the Athlete's Authorised Athlete Representative informed the AIU that the Athlete was "*in the countryside of the family and she was very sick yesterday*". Nevertheless, shortly

before the scheduled start of the interview on 15 September 2025, the Athlete wrote to the AIU stating that she was online. AIU representatives immediately joined the online interview but the Athlete was not present.

22. Following the unsuccessful attempts to complete an interview with the Athlete and a review of the Athlete's explanation for the Adverse Analytical Finding (as set out in her letter of 26 August 2025), the AIU remained satisfied that the Athlete had committed Anti-Doping Rule Violations.

23. Therefore, on 9 December 2025, the AIU issued the Athlete with a Notice of Charge in accordance with Rule 8.5.1 ADR and Article 7.1 ISRM confirming that she was being charged with Anti-Doping Rule Violations under Rule 2.1 ADR and Rule 2.2 ADR ("the **Charge**") and invited her to confirm how she would like to proceed with the Charge.

24. On 17 December 2025, the AIU received an Admission of Anti-Doping Rule Violations and Acceptance of Consequences Form signed by the Athlete.

Consequences

25. This is the Athlete's first Anti-Doping Rule Violation.

26. Rule 10.2 ADR specifies that the period of Ineligibility for an Anti-Doping Rule Violation under Rule 2.1 ADR or Rule 2.2 ADR shall be as follows:

> *"10.2.1 Save where Rule 10.2.4 applies, the period of Ineligibility will be four years where:*
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> *(a) The anti-doping rule violation does not involve a Specified Substance or a Specified Method, unless the Athlete or other Person can establish that the anti-doping rule violation was not intentional.*
>
> *(b) The anti-doping rule violation involves a Specified Substance or a Specified Method and the Integrity Unit can establish that the anti-doping rule violation was intentional.*
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> *10.2.2 If Rule 10.2.1 does not apply, then (subject to Rule 10.2.4(a)) the period of Ineligibility will be two years."*

27. EPO is a Prohibited Substance under the WADA 2025 Prohibited List under the category S2, Peptide Hormones, Growth Factors, Related Substances, and Mimetics. It is a Non-Specified Substance prohibited at all times.

28. The period of Ineligibility to be imposed is therefore a period of four (4) years, unless the Athlete demonstrates that the Anti-Doping Rule Violations were not intentional.

29. The Athlete has not demonstrated that the Anti-Doping Rule Violations were not intentional. Therefore, the mandatory period of Ineligibility is a period of Ineligibility of four (4) years.

30. However, Rule 10.8.1 ADR provides that an athlete potentially subject to an asserted period of Ineligibility of four (4) years or more may benefit from a one (1)-year reduction in the period of Ineligibility based on an early admission and acceptance of sanction:

> "*10.8.1 One year reduction for certain anti-doping rule violations based on early admission and acceptance of sanction.*
>
> *Where the Integrity Unit notifies an Athlete or other Person of an anti-doping rule violation charge that carries an asserted period of Ineligibility of four (4) or more years (including any period of Ineligibility asserted under Rule 10.4), if the Athlete or other Person admits the violation and accepts the asserted period of Ineligibility no later than 20 days after receiving the Notice of Charge, the Athlete or other Person may receive a one (1) year reduction in the period of Ineligibility asserted by the Integrity Unit. Where the Athlete or other Person receives the one (1) year reduction in the asserted period of Ineligibility under this Rule 10.8.1, no further reduction in the asserted period of Ineligibility will be allowed under any other Rule*".

31. A Notice of Charge was issued to the Athlete on 9 December 2025. On 17 December 2025, the Athlete returned a signed Admission of Anti-Doping Rule Violations and Acceptance of Consequences Form confirming that she admitted the Anti-Doping Rule Violations and accepted the asserted period of Ineligibility.

32. The Athlete shall therefore receive a one (1) year reduction in the asserted period of Ineligibility pursuant to Rule 10.8.1 based on an early admission and acceptance of sanction.

33. On the basis that the Athlete has admitted the Anti-Doping Rule Violations under Rule 2.1 ADR and Rule 2.2 ADR, in accordance with Rule 10.2.1 ADR and the application of Rule 10.8.1 ADR, the AIU confirms by this decision the following Consequences for a first Anti-Doping Rule Violation:

    33.1. a period of Ineligibility of three (3) years commencing on 31 July 2025 (the date of the Provisional Suspension); and

    33.2. disqualification of the Athlete's results on and since 15 June 2025, with all resulting Consequences, including the forfeiture of any titles, awards, medals, points, prizes and appearance money.

34. The Athlete has accepted the above Consequences for her Anti-Doping Rule Violations and has expressly waived her right to have those Consequences determined by the Disciplinary Tribunal at a hearing.

Publication

35. In accordance with Rule 8.5.6(b) ADR, the AIU shall publicly report this decision on the AIU's website.

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Rights of Appeal

36. This decision constitutes the final decision of the AIU pursuant to Rule 8.5.6 ADR.

37. Further to Rule 13.2.3 ADR, WADA and the Ethiopian Anti-Doping Authority ("**ETH-ADA**") have a right of appeal against this decision to the Court of Arbitration for Sport in Lausanne, Switzerland, in accordance with the procedure set out at Rule 13.6.1 ADR.

38. If an appeal is filed against this decision by WADA or ETH-ADA, the Athlete will be entitled to exercise her right of cross-appeal in accordance with Rule 13.2.4 ADR.

Monaco, 19 December 2025