

## AIU's 'Tireless Persistence' Results in 7-Year Ban for Cherono

**10 JULY 2024, MONACO:** Former marathon world No.1, Lawrence Cherono, has been banned for seven years by the Athletics Integrity Unit (AIU), after admitting to three Anti-Doping Rule Violations (ADRVs), including Tampering for attempting to mislead the investigation.

The 35-year-old Kenyan, a two time major marathon winner and 12th fastest marathon runner of all time, was found to have breached Anti-Doping Rule (ADR) 2.1, relating to the Presence of a Prohibited Substance or its Metabolites or Markers in an Athlete's Sample' and ADR 2.2, relating to the Use or Attempted Use by an Athlete of a Prohibited Substance or a Prohibited Method, after testing positive for the banned substance Trimetazidine in May 2022.

Cherono also violated ADR 2.5 – Tampering or Attempted Tampering with any part of Doping Control by an Athlete or other Person” – after making false statements and then producing fraudulent medical documents to explain his positive test. He received a four-year ban for breaching ADR 2.1 and ADR 2.2 collectively, and another four-year ban for Tampering, but benefitted from a one-year reduction due to his early admission and acceptance of the sanction.

“This decision is testament to the tireless and persistent efforts of the AIU in investigating doping and the explanations provided for positive tests,” said AIU Head, Brett Clothier.

“Since its inception, the AIU has remained steadfast in its commitment to clean sport, and this decision sends a strong signal to drug cheats that the AIU will leave no stone unturned in carrying out its mandate.”

Cherono was provisionally suspended on 16 July 2022 – the date from which his ban will begin – after testing positive for Trimetazidine in an out-of-competition test on 23 May 2022.

Trimetazidine is categorised as a S4 Hormone and Metabolic Modulator under the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) 2022 Prohibited List and is known to boost the endurance and recovery time of athletes following training.

In attempting to explain the positive test, Cherono initially said he had been given the antibiotic Erythromycin and was also injected with an unknown substance by a doctor to treat stomach problems, but then also attempted to implicate his training colleagues for the failed test, claiming they were “jealous of his success”.

However, in a subsequent written statement, Cherono said he had been inadvertently given Trimetazidine in the form of Carvidon tablets by his wife – instead of the painkillers he had requested – to treat muscle pain following training on 22 May 2022. According to the runner, his wife had been prescribed the Trimetazidine four days earlier at a medical centre. To support his explanation, Cherono provided a Laboratory Request from the medical centre, including hand-

written details of medications prescribed for his wife, along with a photograph of the underside of tablets enclosed in their blister packaging.

In collaboration with the Anti-Doping Agency of Kenya (ADAK), further investigations into the Laboratory Request and additional medical documents provided by Cherono as proof of his wife's treatment at the medical centre, revealed "several inconsistencies". Following a request from ADAK to the medical centre in November 2022 for additional information to verify the documents independently, the clinic director confirmed in December 2022 that they "were not genuine/official documents from the Clinic and that the information they contained was not true and accurate".

Following this development, the AIU said its investigation into Cherono's explanation and the submitted documents "was materially obstructed and substantially undermined", with repeated attempts to obtain copies of medical records to corroborate the runner's wife's alleged medical treatment proving unsuccessful.

After its attempts to secure the wife's medical records were repeatedly impeded, the AIU – through ADAK – gained a Court Order in Kenya compelling the medical centre to surrender the documents. In response, the medical centre said there were no records available for any treatment to the athlete's wife since 1 May 2022.

"This has been an exhaustive process, taking two years and requiring a lot of resources, but thanks to determined investigative efforts and valuable collaboration with ADAK, we have been able to uncover the truth and serve the interest of athletes who compete cleanly," concluded Clothier.

Cherono Decision: <https://bit.ly/CHERONO-Decision>

## ABOUT THE ATHLETICS INTEGRITY UNIT

Link: [HTTPS://WWW.ATHLETICSINTEGRITY.ORG](https://www.athleticsintegrity.org)

The Athletics Integrity Unit (AIU) is the independent body created by the World Athletics that manages all integrity issues – both doping and non-doping – for the sport of athletics. The remit of the AIU includes anti-doping, the pursuit of individuals engaged in age or competition results manipulation, investigating fraudulent behaviour with regards to transfers of allegiance, and detecting other misconduct including bribery and breaches of betting rules. It is the AIU's role to drive cheats out of our sport, and to do everything within its power to support honest athletes around the world who dedicate their lives to reaching their sporting goals through dedication and hard work.



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