



Department for
Digital, Culture,
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Mr Fedir Kurlak
CEO, Association of Ukrainians in Great Britain
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Dear Mr Kurlak,

Thank you for your correspondence of 8 July enclosing your letter to the President of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) regarding the decision to lift the suspension of the Russian Olympic Committee (ROC).

I was utterly appalled by the recent decision of the IOC to provisionally lift the suspension of the ROC and share your concern about the message it sends. The UK Government has been consistently clear that the Russian state should not be represented in international sport while the illegal full-scale invasion of Ukraine continues.

The UK has led the international response in this area, bringing together 35 like-minded nations across five collective statements to establish principles on Russian and Belarusian participation in sport. Published between March 2022 and November 2025, these statements are available on GOV.UK. Throughout, the Government's support for the people of Ukraine remains unequivocal.

In line with these principles, since the invasion of Ukraine, we have recommended to our domestic National Governing Bodies for Sport that Russian athletes should only be able to compete in the UK as neutrals with no state flags and anthems. This position respects the rights of all athletes to be treated without any discrimination in accordance with the Olympic Charter whilst ensuring the Russian state is not represented.

Whilst we are clear in our opposition, the Government also recognises and respects the independence of sports bodies, and that decisions on participation in international sports events are a matter for the relevant international sport federations and their national representatives.

Nevertheless, we will continue to work closely with our sport governing bodies and event organisers to do all we can to show solidarity with Ukraine.

Thank you for writing on this matter.

Yours sincerely,

Rt Hon Lisa Nandy MP
Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport

