

Outrage over CAS ruling on Semenya

South Africans have reacted to the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) ruling on the case between Caster Semenya and the International Association of Athletics Federation (IAAF), saying the outcome is discriminatory.



© celsopupo – [123RF.com](https://www.123RF.com)

In an array of tweets, South Africans expressed their support for Semenya, while expressing outrage at the double standards that professional sport organisations implement.

South Africans argued that organisations prohibit athletes from using drugs, saying it is illegal to take drugs to enhance their performance. However, on the other, certain athletes are forced to take drugs to reduce the naturally occurring testosterone in their bodies.

Others said the IAAF, since Semenya started competing, has made it its mission to change the regulations in order to disadvantage her.

Others stated that when an African woman starts winning, there will always be those who try to move the finish line.

The outrage came after Wednesday's announcement by CAS.

"The CAS has dismissed both requests for arbitration. Caster Semenya and ASA [Athletics South Africa] requested that the DSD regulations be declared invalid and void with immediate effect.

"By majority, the CAS panel has dismissed the requests for arbitration, considering that the claimants were unable to establish that the DSD regulations were 'invalid'.

"The panel found that the DSD regulations are discriminatory but the majority of the panel found that on the basis of the evidence submitted by the parties, such discrimination is a necessary, reasonable and proportionate means of achieving the IAAF's aim of preserving the integrity of female athletics in the restricted events," CAS said in a statement.

The regulations would require women with naturally elevated levels of testosterone to lower it to below five nanomoles for at least six months. The rules target female athletes competing in the distances between 400 metres and 800 metres, which are the events Semenya excels in internationally.

The ruling effectively means Semenya will not be able to compete in these events, unless she lowers her testosterone to the required levels.

CAS took the decision after South Africa's 800-metre double Olympic champion appealed the new set of regulations from the IAAF, which separate female classification for athletes with hyperandrogenism to participate in the female athletics categories and the conditions under which they would be allowed to compete.



Caster Semenya: how much testosterone is too much for a female athlete?

Daniel Kelly 2 May 2019



Hyperandrogenism is defined as a medical condition characterised by excessive levels of androgens ("male" sex hormones like testosterone) in the female body.

The IAAF argued that Semenya should be classified as female but also as a "biological male".

It believes that female athletes with high testosterone have an advantage of up to 9% over women with normal levels of testosterone.

Semenya and her lawyers - global law firm Norton Rose Fulbright – challenged this, saying the case is about the rights of women who are born as women, reared and socialised as women, who have been legally recognised as women for their entire lives, who have always competed in athletics as women, and who should be permitted to compete in the female category without discrimination.

Sport and Recreation Minister Tokozile Xasa joined South Africans in expressing her disappointment and has directed ASA to request a copy of the full judgment.

"We will study the judgment, consider it and determine a way forward. As the South African government, we have always maintained that these regulations trample on the human rights and dignity of Caster Semenya and other women athletes. We will comment further after studying the full judgement," Xasa said.

The Minister called on ASA, as a member of the IAAF, to take this matter up in the General Council of members of the IAAF.

"ASA should continue to lobby national athletics associations in other jurisdictions to internally oppose these regulations. We too in government will continue to lobby through other international organisations on our opposition to these regulations

and to continue to put the necessary pressure on the IAAF to see the impact of these regulations on global human rights tenets and frameworks.”

Xasa assured Semenya that South Africa will continue to support her, as they navigate the future with her.

“You remain our golden girl. What you have done for our people and girls is enormous. You have flown our flag high. You have united a nation and inspired a rural girl. For that, we thank you Mokgadi.”

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>