Opening address by the Minister of State for Sport, attached to the Minister of Urban Affairs, Youth and Sport,

Mr Thierry Braillard

Dear Representative of United States Under Secretary of Commerce and Director of NIST

Dear Minister, Chair of WADA Health and Medical Research Commission of the World Anti-Doping Agency, Dear Valérie

Dear Director of the International Bureau of Weights and Measures,

Dear Madam and Sir,

It is a great honour to be with you all here to the BIPM. You are organizing over two days, the first joint symposium between the World Anti-Doping Agency and the International Bureau of Weights and Measures. It is the first time ever and it is taking place in France. It is a great honour that the BIPM has its headquarters in France since its foundation in 1875. This symposium brings together top level speakers and representatives from laboratories and accreditation bodies from a large number of countries. The objective is two-fold:

- Emphasize the importance of measurement standards and metrology in sport and in particular in the fight against doping
- Harmonize technical principles and analytical methods in this area.

Because France is the first organizing country of major international sports events and believes that it will continue to be so in presenting its application to host the 2024 Olympic Games, I owe to France, as Minister of State for Sport, to guarantee clean and ethically sound sporting, proud of its values.

After the terrorist attacks took place, France has entrusted to the Minister of Education and to the Minister of Sport the task to teach the values of a citizen’s Republic.

However, if sport has a role model, it has to fight against one of it’s greatest challenges: doping. Fight against doping has to lead to the implementation of strong preventive and legal measures but this fight also requires experts and scientists to ensure the thoroughness required for such an exercise, and the efficiency of the detection of doping.

In other words, sports needs you and your scientific action. That’s why I am delighted that WADA and BIPM, these two leading international institutions have decided to organise this symposium for moving forward together.

As you know, the mission of the International Bureau of Weights and Measures is to ensure world-wide uniformity of measurements and their traceability to the International System of Units (SI). Here lies the guarantee of the accuracy and comparability of results. The activities of the World Anti-Doping Agency have by their very nature rely on metrology. Because it’s clear that the quality of measurements used by the anti-doping analyses laboratories is one of the pillars of the fight against anti-doping, strongly promoted for more than 15 years by WADA.

In that respect, I would like to thank WADA representatives here, for all the actions they run all over the world to fight against doping and for their regular efficient cooperation with us. I would like to reaffirm my full support in the situation we find ourselves today.

Coming back to this Symposium, please allow me to define the challenges faced by your organisations.

First, in the sports news, we have seen over the last twelve months that the accreditation of several laboratories has been suspended or withdrawn. Some of the decisions made by WADA were made in response of serious errors in analytical results. Sport cannot afford such scandals. Reliability of results cannot be a detail. Only transparency and thoroughness will rebuild sport image and will give back to sport its noble values.

Such as we value sporting results, we must value ethics in sport and the quality and reliability of anti-doping techniques. And to reach this goal, sport needs your common work.
WADA and its Health and Medical Research Commission chaired by Dr Valérie Fourneyron, to whom I would like to pay tribute for all the work accomplished, have of course to continue to play a major role and to innovate in finding new methods of detection and analyses.

As we all know, France has been involved very early in the fight against doping. France is one of the first major European countries to have adopted regulation in the area of fight against doping with the Law of 1st June 1965. This law already aimed at prohibiting the use of stimulants in sporting competitions with a two-fold aim: protect health of athletes and promote equity in sporting competitions.

Following that, France has never stopped improving its regulation in connection with the successive versions of the World Anti-Doping Code in order to play a central and leadership role in the fight against doping and in favor of integrity of sporting competition.

In that spirit, our country has recently transposed in its internal rules, the third version of the World Anti-Doping Code. WADA acknowledged this transposition in March 2016.

Following this implementation, the international cooperation between the major players and the enforcement system have been improved. In particular, controls at night are now possible in a balanced legal framework and the mechanism of « prohibited association » and « substantial help » are now defined by the law.

France can also be proud to have one of the accredited laboratory by the World Anti-Doping Agency. The French Anti-Doping Agency (AFLD) has earned a worldwide reputation of excellence, and I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the agency for all the work accomplished all these years:

- Our analytical laboratory has been distinguished in establishing the detection of EPO and for its contribution to several highly publicised affairs.
- In 2015, research and development in methods of analysis enabled to expose 506 prohibited substances compared to 306 five years earlier.

All this shows that our Agency has made research one of its priorities.

In this area, I hope that the Agency will be able to continue cooperation at international level with the many stakeholders of the fight against doping, in particular with the national agencies.

To conclude, I am convinced that these two days of discussion at a very high level will open new perspectives to face the challenges of the fight against doping and the evermore sophisticated techniques used by those cheating which we need to fight against together with unbreakable commitment.