

Professor quits in Semenya protest

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UNIVERSITY of Pretoria law professor Steve Cornelius has joined the growing list of those protesting the International Association of Athletics (IAAF) introduction of rules forcing some female athletes to undergo testosterone reducing treatment or face bans.

Cornelius, who is a professor and head of the department of private law and director of the centre for intellectual property law at the institution, resigned in protest against the controversial new rule that is believed to target gold medal winner Caster Semenya.

He was appointed to the IAAF tribunal late last year and is also a member of the Independent Anti-doping Hearing Panel of the South African Institute for Drug-free Sports.

This follows after the IAAF announced its amended hyperandrogenism rule last week. It forces female athletes born with the condition to reduce their natural testosterone levels.

Cornelius said he could not "in good conscience" continue in the role.

"The adoption of the new eligibility regulations for female classification is based on the same kind of ideology that has led to some of the worst injustices and atrocities in the history of the planet," Cornelius said.

In his resignation letter addressed directly to Sebastian Coe, he accused the IAAF president of making "empty reform promises".

"How the IAAF council can, in the 21st century, when we are meant to be more tolerant and aware of fundamental



IN THE SPOTLIGHT: SA's top woman athlete Caster Semenya has been 'unfairly targeted' by the IAAF, says a law professor. PICTURE: GALLO IMAGES

human rights, even contemplate these kinds of objectionable regulations, is a sad reflection on the fact that the antiquated views of the 'old' scandal-hit IAAF, still prevails and that your promises of reform have been empty indeed," the letter said.

"I am confident that history will judge you and the members of the IAAF council harshly for going down this route.

Semenya's future as an elite middle-

distance runner is now in doubt following the announcement.

Athletics Canada also issued a strong response saying that it had "serious concerns" about the regulations.

"In Canada, we encourage the full access for all Canadians to participate and compete in athletics and every level of our sport, free of discrimination," said in a statement.

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