WORLD BOXING ORGANIZATION

RESOLUTION

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP COMMITTEE

IN THE MATTER OF THE WBO WORLD MIDDLEWEIGHT CHAMPIONSHIP

DENZEL BENTLEY, WBO WORLD MIDDLEWEIGHT CHAMPION
YOENLI HERNÁNDEZ, MANDATORY CHALLENGER

WITHDRAWAL OF CHAMPIONSHIP RECOGNITION AND DECLARATION OF VACANCY

October 30, 2026

I. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE OF THIS RESOLUTION

The World Championship Committee of the World Boxing Organization ("WBO" or the "Organization"), having considered the complete factual and procedural record concerning the WBO World Middleweight Championship, including the prior resolutions and directives issued by the Organization, the proceedings conducted before the WBO Complaint and Grievance Committee, the October 22, 2026 Award, the subsequent communications and directives issued to the indispensable parties, and the failure of WBO World Middleweight Champion Denzel Bentley ("Bentley" or the "Champion") to comply with the final directives governing his mandatory championship obligation against WBO Mandatory Challenger Yoenli Hernández ("Hernández" or the "Mandatory Challenger"), hereby sets forth its findings, regulatory conclusions, and final determination.

This matter concerns the administration and enforcement of an outstanding mandatory championship obligation, the authority of the WBO to regulate its World Championships, the binding effect of its final rulings and directives, and the responsibility of a recognized World Champion to comply with the Organization's Rules and Regulations.

The Committee has not undertaken this review lightly. A World Championship is a significant distinction earned through athletic achievement. Nevertheless, the recognition and privileges associated with that distinction are accompanied by corresponding regulatory responsibilities. Those responsibilities include compliance with mandatory championship obligations, valid purse-bid proceedings, final adjudications, and directives issued by the competent WBO authorities.

The present determination follows an extensive procedural history during which Bentley and his representatives received notice of the relevant championship obligations, participated in the proceedings, challenged the September 2, 2026, negotiation order before the WBO Complaint and Grievance Committee, and were afforded additional opportunities to confirm their intention to proceed and complete the documentation required to implement the final Award.

The issue before the Committee is therefore not whether Bentley possesses the athletic ability or merit to compete at the world championship level. Rather, it is whether the continued recognition of a Champion who has failed to comply with a duly adjudicated mandatory championship obligation, notwithstanding repeated notice and opportunities to comply, is consistent with the WBO Rules and Regulations and the integrity of the World Middleweight Championship.

For the reasons set forth herein, the World Championship Committee unanimously determined on October 29, 2026, to recommend the withdrawal of Bentley's recognition as WBO World Middleweight Champion and the declaration of the Championship as vacant. On October 30, 2026, the WBO Executive Committee unanimously ratified and affirmed that recommendation, thereby declaring the WBO World Middleweight Championship **VACANT, EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY**.

II. THE WBO WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP AS A REGULATED TRUST

A WBO World Championship is not an unrestricted personal or proprietary asset belonging to an individual Champion. It is a distinction entrusted to a boxer by the Organization, subject to the WBO Rules and Regulations and to the responsibilities that accompany recognition as a World Champion.

The WBO recognizes and respects the rights of its Champions. Those rights, however, exist within a regulated championship system that must also protect the legitimate interests of Mandatory Challengers, promoters, other participants, and the sport of professional boxing.

The WBO's regulatory framework is intended to preserve an orderly, fair, credible, and consistent championship system; protect boxers and other participants; promote the integrity of professional

boxing; and ensure that championship contests are administered under established rules and procedures.

Accordingly, the title of WBO World Champion is properly understood as a regulatory trust. A Champion is entrusted with the privilege and responsibility of holding and defending the Championship, but does not possess an unrestricted right to retain, administer, or defend that title according to personal preference, independently of the Organization's governing framework.

The mandatory championship system is an essential component of that trust. It protects the rights of qualified contenders who have earned their position through the WBO's ratings and championship procedures. It also ensures that a World Championship remains an active and meaningful distinction rather than one held indefinitely without compliance with legitimate mandatory obligations.

The rights associated with championship recognition must therefore be understood together with the obligations imposed by the same regulatory framework. The Organization's responsibility is to administer those rights and obligations consistently, fairly, and in the best interests of the sport.

III. APPLICABLE REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

This Resolution is issued pursuant to the WBO Regulations of World Championship Contests ("WBO Regulations"), the WBO Appeals Regulations, and the authority vested in the WBO World Championship Committee and the WBO Executive Committee to administer, regulate, supervise, and enforce the Organization's World Championships.

The relevant regulatory provisions include, without limitation:

1. **Section 6**, concerning mandatory challengers, championship obligations, and the procedures governing mandatory championship contests;

2. **Section 10**, concerning the authority and responsibilities of the WBO Championship Committee and the administration of mandatory championship obligations;

3. **Section 11**, concerning purse-bid proceedings and the consequences arising from a successful purse bid;

4. **Section 19**, concerning violations of the WBO Regulations and the disciplinary or championship measures available to the Organization;

5. **Section 20**, concerning vacant championships and the procedures applicable to the determination of a successor Champion; and

6. **Section 35**, concerning the applicability of the WBO Regulations to participants in WBO-sanctioned championship activities, including World Champions and Contenders.

These provisions must be interpreted in a manner consistent with the purposes and principles underlying the WBO championship system, including the protection of mandatory challengers, the enforcement of final regulatory determinations, and the preservation of the integrity and orderly administration of each weight division.

The Committee has also considered the procedural determinations and findings contained in the October 22, 2026, Award of the WBO Complaint and Grievance Committee, which affirmed the September 2, 2026, mandatory negotiation order and remanded the matter to the World Championship Committee for further proceedings.

IV. THE ALIMKHANULY MATTER AND RESULTING MIDDLEWEIGHT CHAMPIONSHIP TRANSITION

The procedural history of the present matter originates, in part, from the circumstances surrounding the WBO World Middleweight Championship previously held by Janibek Alimkhanuly.

On December 6, 2025, Alimkhanuly was scheduled to participate in a unification contest against Erislandy Lara. A VADA sample collected on November 15, 2025, resulted in an adverse analytical finding for meldonium, which was reported to the WBO on December 2, 2025. The scheduled contest was subsequently canceled.

On December 4, 2025, the WBO issued a Show Cause Notice to Alimkhanuly, affording him an opportunity to respond to the adverse analytical finding and the potential regulatory consequences. Following the opening of the B sample on January 8, 2026, VADA confirmed the positive result on January 9, 2026.

The WBO thereafter issued a further Show Cause Notice on January 12, 2026, and afforded Alimkhanuly additional time to respond. The Organization considered the submissions made on his behalf, including requests concerning the pending proceedings in Kazakhstan.

On February 19, 2026, the WBO World Championship Committee issued its Resolution concerning the matter, which was published on February 20, 2026. Among other measures, the

Resolution imposed a one-year suspension retroactive to December 2, 2025, together with year-round WADA-certified random testing and an educational program, at the fighter's expense.

At that stage, the Committee did not immediately declare the Middleweight Championship vacant. Instead, it adopted a regulatory approach that considered the circumstances of the matter and the proportionality of the measures imposed.

On July 10, 2026, following the applicable compliance measures, Alimkhanuly's suspension was terminated. Thereafter, Alimkhanuly advised the WBO of his intention to compete in the Super Middleweight division and relinquished the WBO Middleweight Championship.

On July 20, 2026, the WBO issued a further Resolution addressing the relinquishment and termination of the suspension. The matter was referred to the Ratings Committee for consideration of Alimkhanuly's divisional placement. In the resulting championship transition, Bentley, who had held the Interim Championship, was elevated to full WBO World Middleweight Champion, and Hernández was designated the Mandatory Challenger.

The July 20 Resolution reserved to the World Championship Committee the authority to determine whether Bentley's first defense as full Champion would be voluntary or mandatory.

Bentley did not appeal the July 20, 2026, Resolution.

V. MARCH 25, 2026, SANCTION LETTER AND NOTICE OF OUTSTANDING MANDATORY OBLIGATION

Prior to Bentley's elevation to full Champion, the WBO issued a sanction letter dated March 25, 2026, approving the interim Middleweight Championship contest between Bentley and Endry Saavedra, scheduled for April 4, 2026, at The O2 Arena in London, England.

The sanction letter expressly reserved the WBO World Championship Committee's "full authority and discretion" to enforce the outstanding mandatory championship obligation at such time as the Committee deemed appropriate.

The sanction letter further identified that the WBO Middleweight division had not fulfilled a mandatory championship obligation since April 4, 2021.

The letter was formally transmitted to Frank Warren / Queensberry Promotions, the promoter requesting sanction approval, with Bentley's manager copied in the formal electronic notice and

Bentley also copied. The sanction letter expressly provided that the fighters participating in the contest, including Bentley, were deemed to have acknowledged, understood, and accepted its terms, which constituted material terms of the sanction approval.

On April 4, 2026, Bentley defeated Saavedra by seventh-round knockout.

The March 25 sanction letter is relevant because it established, before Bentley's elevation to full Champion, that the WBO had expressly preserved its authority to enforce the outstanding mandatory obligation. It also provided notice that the interim contest did not extinguish or supersede that obligation.

VI. JULY 20, 2026, RESOLUTION: BENTLEY'S ELEVATION AND HERNÁNDEZ'S MANDATORY DESIGNATION

By Resolution dated July 20, 2026, the WBO formally elevated Bentley from Interim Champion to full WBO World Middleweight Champion and designated Hernández as the Mandatory Challenger.

The Resolution reserved to the World Championship Committee the authority to determine whether Bentley's first defense as full Champion would be voluntary or mandatory.

That reservation was consistent with the Committee's previously expressed authority in the March 25 sanction letter and with the Organization's regulatory responsibility to determine the appropriate timing and enforcement of the outstanding mandatory obligation.

Bentley did not appeal the July 20 Resolution. Accordingly, his elevation to full Champion and Hernández's designation as Mandatory Challenger remained in full force and effect.

The designation of Hernández was not an informal or provisional recognition. It was a formal championship determination issued by the competent WBO authority.

VII. PROPOSED VOLUNTARY DEFENSE AGAINST LIAM SMITH AND THE COMMITTEE'S RESERVATION OF JURISDICTION

Following Bentley's elevation, the World Championship Committee authorized consideration of a proposed voluntary defense against Liam Smith.

That authorization was expressly subject to the Committee's continuing jurisdiction and authority to issue further rulings and directives, including the enforcement of the outstanding mandatory championship obligation.

The proposed voluntary defense against Liam Smith did not materialize.

Importantly, before the issuance of the September 2, 2026, mandatory negotiation order, the WBO had not received a formal petition or written confirmation from Bentley or his representatives identifying another opponent or establishing a confirmed alternative voluntary defense that would supersede or otherwise resolve the outstanding mandatory obligation.

The Committee's prior consideration of the proposed Liam Smith contest did not constitute a waiver of its authority, nor did it create an unconditional right to select a voluntary opponent in disregard of the Mandatory Challenger's position.

Once the proposed contest failed to materialize and the Mandatory Challenger formally sought enforcement of his rights, the Committee was entitled to exercise the jurisdiction it had expressly reserved.

VIII. SEPTEMBER 2, 2026, MANDATORY NEGOTIATION ORDER AND SUBSEQUENT PURSE-BID PROCEEDINGS

Following the failure of the proposed Liam Smith contest to materialize, Team Hernández submitted a formal petition requesting enforcement of the mandatory championship obligation.

Upon consideration of that petition and the existing championship record, the World Championship Committee issued a mandatory negotiation order on September 2, 2026, directing the parties to negotiate the mandatory contest within the period established therein.

The September 2 order was issued pursuant to the Committee's authority under the WBO Regulations and the express reservation of jurisdiction contained in the March 25 sanction letter and July 20 Resolution.

The parties did not reach an agreement within the prescribed negotiation period. Accordingly, the matter proceeded to purse-bid proceedings pursuant to the WBO Regulations.

The successful purse bid was awarded to Warriors Boxing, represented by Leon Margules, in the amount of **US$200,000**, with the applicable 80/20 division resulting in:

- **Denzel Bentley: US$160,000**
- **Yoenli Hernández: US$40,000**

The purse-bid proceedings established the successful promoter and the financial terms governing the mandatory championship contest, subject to the WBO Regulations and the applicable championship directives.

The successful purse bid was not merely an informal proposal or an invitation to continue negotiations indefinitely. It was a formal regulatory proceeding conducted under the WBO's established championship procedures.

IX. BENTLEY'S APPEAL OF THE SEPTEMBER 2 NEGOTIATION ORDER AND OCTOBER 22 AWARD

Bentley challenged the September 2, 2026, mandatory negotiation order before the WBO Complaint and Grievance Committee.

For purposes of clarity, the appeal concerned the September 2 mandatory negotiation order and the enforcement process arising from it, including the mandatory negotiations, purse-bid proceedings, and the adjudication of the resulting promotional rights. It was not an appeal of the July 20, 2026, designation of Hernández as Mandatory Challenger.

On October 1, 2026, the Chairman of the Complaint and Grievance Committee issued a stay pending the resolution of the appeal.

On October 2, 2026, public announcements and reports emerged concerning Bentley's agreement to participate in a contest against Shane Mosley Jr., reportedly scheduled for November 7, 2026, in London, England, under the Zuffa Boxing banner, with Sky Sports coverage.

On October 6, 2026, the Complaint and Grievance Committee established an expedited briefing schedule, requiring the parties to submit their respective briefs by October 15, 2026, with any reply submissions or motions due by October 19, 2026. The parties submitted their briefs within the established schedule, and neither party requested additional reply submissions.

On October 22, 2026, the Complaint and Grievance Committee, composed of Chairman Fernando J. Gierbolini-González, Esq., and Members José R. Negrón-Fernández, Esq., and Scott E. Gizer, Esq., issued its final Award.

The Award denied Bentley's appeal, affirmed the September 2 mandatory negotiation order, lifted the October 1 stay, directed the parties to confirm their intention to proceed within twenty-four (24) hours of service, and remanded the matter to the World Championship Committee.

The Award addressed and rejected Bentley's principal arguments, including his claims concerning alleged assurances, the interpretation of Sections 6 and 10 of the WBO Regulations, and alleged unequal treatment in comparison with the Alimkhanuly matter.

Among its material findings, the Complaint and Grievance Committee determined that:

1. The World Championship Committee retained authority to designate and enforce mandatory championship obligations;

2. The President's authority under the applicable provisions did not include unilateral discretion to determine whether a mandatory challenger would be enforced;

3. Bentley had received notice of the outstanding mandatory obligation through the March 25 sanction letter and the July 20 Resolution;

4. Bentley did not appeal the July 20 Resolution;

5. Bentley had no vested right to insist upon a voluntary first defense in disregard of the Committee's reserved authority and the Mandatory Challenger's rights;

6. Bentley's voluntary agreement to participate in the proposed Mosley Jr. contest, without authorization from the competent WBO authority, did not displace the outstanding mandatory obligation; and

7. The Committee was entitled to reject the appeal and affirm the September 2 order under the applicable WBO Regulations and Appeals Regulations.

The Award further determined that its decision was final on the merits pursuant to Article 7 of the WBO Appeals Regulations.

The Complaint and Grievance Committee's Award therefore resolved Bentley's challenge to the September 2 order and returned the matter to the World Championship Committee for implementation and further proceedings consistent with the Award.

X. MOSLEY JR. ANNOUNCEMENT AND ABSENCE OF WBO AUTHORIZATION

The Committee has considered the public announcement concerning Bentley's proposed contest against Shane Mosley Jr., reportedly scheduled for November 7, 2026.

The public announcement emerged on October 2, 2026, thirty (30) days after the September 2 mandatory negotiation order.

As of September 2, 2026, the WBO had not received a formal petition or written confirmation from Bentley or his representatives identifying a different opponent, a confirmed alternative voluntary defense, or a proposed promoter, date, or venue for such a contest.

The subsequent announcement of the proposed Mosley Jr. contest did not constitute authorization by the competent WBO authority and did not supersede, suspend, or extinguish the outstanding mandatory championship obligation.

The October 22 Award expressly addressed the significance of Bentley's voluntary commitment to the proposed Mosley Jr. contest and rejected the contention that such commitment excused compliance with the WBO's mandatory championship process.

The Committee does not base its determination solely upon the public announcement of the proposed Mosley Jr. contest. Rather, the announcement is considered together with the procedural history, the final Award, the subsequent directives, and Bentley's failure to comply with the obligations confirmed by the Award.

XI. POST-AWARD DIRECTIVES AND THE PARTIES' OBLIGATIONS

Following issuance and service of the October 22 Award, the WBO proceeded to implement the directives contained therein.

The parties were required to confirm their intention to proceed with the mandatory championship contest within twenty-four (24) hours of service of the Award.

The WBO thereafter issued further communications and directives requiring written confirmation of the parties' intention to proceed and completion of the standard bout agreement submitted by the successful purse-bid promoter.

The directives also confirmed that Hernández was to proceed to his next contest as the Mandatory Challenger without an intervening bout.

The initial post-Award deadline was established as October 23, 2026, at 3:00 p.m. Atlantic Standard Time.

Hernández confirmed his willingness to proceed and executed the required documentation.

Bentley, however, did not provide the required written confirmation and did not execute and submit the required bout agreement within the established deadline.

Team Bentley sought additional time and raised issues concerning the implementation of the mandatory contest. The WBO considered those communications and the matters raised by the parties.

The subsequent extension request was not granted in a manner that displaced the final deadline established by the WBO.

XII. PASSPORT INFORMATION, LOGISTICAL COMMUNICATIONS, AND EVIDENCE OF NONCOMPLIANCE

The Committee has also considered the communications concerning passport information and other logistical matters exchanged between the parties and the successful purse-bid promoter.

The submission or exchange of passport information may assist with immigration, travel, and logistical planning. However, such information does not constitute written confirmation of an intention to proceed, nor does it substitute for execution and submission of the required bout agreement.

The Committee notes that, rather than completing and submitting all documentation required to implement the mandatory championship contest, including the executed bout agreement, Bentley himself was publicly announcing and promoting his proposed contest against Shane Mosley Jr., scheduled for November 7, 2026.

That conduct, considered together with the failure to provide the required written confirmation and execute the bout agreement within the deadlines established by the WBO, is indicative of an intention to proceed with a separate contest rather than comply with the October 22 Award, the mandatory negotiation order, and the subsequent WBO directives.

The Committee does not rely upon the public announcement in isolation. It considers that announcement in conjunction with the complete record, including the final Award, the parties'

communications, the additional opportunity afforded to Team Bentley, and the failure to complete the documentation required to implement the mandatory contest.

The exchange of passport information and logistical communications did not satisfy the substantive obligations imposed by the WBO and did not constitute compliance with the final Award or the subsequent directives.

XIII. OCTOBER 24 NOTICE AND FINAL OCTOBER 26 DEADLINE

On October 24, 2026, the WBO President issued a further notice to the parties, reiterating the outstanding obligations arising from the October 22 Award and establishing a final deadline of **October 26, 2026, at 4:00 p.m. Atlantic Standard Time**.

The purpose of the notice was to afford Team Bentley an additional opportunity to confirm its intention to proceed with the mandatory championship contest and complete the documentation required to implement the successful purse bid and the WBO's directives.

On October 25, 2026, Team Bentley submitted objections and comments concerning various proposed implementation terms. Those communications were retransmitted on October 26, 2026, at approximately 10:13 a.m. Atlantic Standard Time.

The matters raised included, among other things:

1. Flexibility concerning the proposed contest date and venue;
2. Proposed deductions and financial terms;
3. Travel and accommodation arrangements;
4. Acclimatization requirements;
5. Gymnasium access and access to the official scale;
6. Life insurance and release provisions;
7. Potential assignment of promotional rights;
8. Anti-doping expenses; and

9. The appointment and participation of officials.

The Committee has considered these matters and does not disregard the fact that certain implementation issues may appropriately require clarification or resolution between the parties and the successful purse-bid promoter.

Nevertheless, the existence of such issues did not, by itself, suspend the operative effect of the October 22 Award, the mandatory negotiation order, or the subsequent directives. No competent WBO authority issued an order staying or suspending the applicable deadline.

The October 26 deadline was established as a final opportunity for Team Bentley to provide the required confirmation and documentation.

XIV. FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH FINAL PURSE-BID AND POST-AWARD DIRECTIVES

The final deadline of October 26, 2026, at 4:00 p.m. Atlantic Standard Time, expired without Bentley providing the required written confirmation of his intention to proceed and without submission of the executed bout agreement required to implement the mandatory championship contest.

The Committee recognizes that Team Bentley raised concerns regarding certain proposed contractual and logistical terms. However, those concerns did not relieve Bentley of the obligation to comply with the final Award and the WBO's directives, nor did they authorize him to unilaterally disregard the mandatory championship process.

Any disagreement concerning the conformity or implementation of particular contractual provisions was subject to consideration by the competent WBO authority. It did not confer upon either party the unilateral authority to suspend or abandon the mandatory contest.

The record further establishes that Hernández confirmed his willingness to proceed and completed the required documentation, while Bentley failed to provide the corresponding confirmation and executed agreement.

The Committee therefore finds that Bentley did not comply with the final directives issued to implement the October 22 Award and the successful purse-bid proceedings.

XV. SELECTIVE INVOCATION OF REGULATORY RIGHTS AND CHAMPIONSHIP OBLIGATIONS

The Committee has considered the distinction between the right of a Champion to seek appellate review and the obligation to comply with final regulatory determinations.

Bentley exercised his right to challenge the September 2, 2026, mandatory negotiation order. That appeal was considered by the Complaint and Grievance Committee, which issued its final Award on October 22, 2026.

The Organization does not consider the exercise of Bentley's appellate rights to be misconduct, nor does it rely upon the filing of the appeal as a basis for withdrawing championship recognition.

However, once the competent appellate authority rendered its Award, lifted the stay, and remanded the matter for implementation, the parties were required to comply with the resulting directives unless and until a competent authority issued a further order modifying, reversing, or staying their operative effect.

A Champion may not selectively invoke the protections and procedures of the WBO Regulations while disregarding the corresponding obligations imposed by those same Regulations and by final rulings issued under them.

The right to appeal and the obligation to comply with operative championship determinations are distinct matters. The former does not, by itself, eliminate the latter.

XVI. DUE PROCESS AND OPPORTUNITY TO BE HEARD

The Committee has carefully considered whether Bentley and his representatives were afforded adequate notice and a meaningful opportunity to be heard concerning the mandatory championship obligation and the subsequent enforcement proceedings.

The record reflects that:

1. The March 25, 2026, sanction letter expressly reserved the Committee's authority to enforce the outstanding mandatory obligation and was transmitted to the promoter requesting sanction approval, with Bentley and his manager copied;

2. The July 20, 2026, Resolution elevated Bentley to full Champion, designated Hernández as Mandatory Challenger, and reserved the Committee's authority to determine the nature of Bentley's first defense;

3. Bentley did not appeal the July 20 Resolution;

4. The September 2, 2026, mandatory negotiation order was formally issued and subsequently challenged by Bentley;

5. Bentley received an opportunity to submit written arguments and supporting materials before the Complaint and Grievance Committee;

6. The Complaint and Grievance Committee established an expedited briefing schedule, and the parties submitted their respective briefs;

7. The October 22 Award addressed Bentley's arguments, denied his appeal, affirmed the September 2 order, lifted the stay, and remanded the matter to the World Championship Committee;

8. Following the Award, the WBO issued further communications and directives requiring the parties to confirm their intention to proceed and complete the documentation necessary to implement the mandatory contest;

9. Team Bentley submitted communications raising objections and concerns regarding the proposed implementation terms; and

10. The WBO afforded Team Bentley an additional and final opportunity to comply by October 26, 2026, at 4:00 p.m. Atlantic Standard Time.

The Committee finds that Bentley was afforded notice of the outstanding championship obligation, an opportunity to challenge the mandatory negotiation order, an adjudication of that challenge by the competent appellate body, and additional opportunities to comply with the resulting directives.

The Committee's present determination is based upon the complete procedural record and the failure to comply with the operative championship obligations after the final Award and subsequent directives. It is not based upon Bentley's exercise of his appellate rights.

XVII. FINDINGS OF FACT

Upon review of the complete record, the World Championship Committee makes the following findings:

1. The WBO Middleweight division had an outstanding mandatory championship obligation that had not been fulfilled since April 4, 2021.

2. The March 25, 2026, sanction letter expressly reserved the Committee's full authority and discretion to enforce that obligation.

3. Bentley participated in the April 4, 2026, interim championship contest against Endry Saavedra and thereafter was elevated to full WBO World Middleweight Champion by the July 20, 2026, Resolution.

4. The July 20, 2026, Resolution designated Hernández as Mandatory Challenger and reserved the Committee's authority to determine whether Bentley's first defense would be voluntary or mandatory.

5. Bentley did not appeal the July 20, 2026, Resolution.

6. The proposed voluntary defense against Liam Smith did not materialize, and the Committee's authorization had been expressly subject to its continuing jurisdiction and authority to enforce the mandatory obligation.

7. Following a formal petition by Team Hernández, the Committee issued the September 2, 2026, mandatory negotiation order.

8. Bentley appealed the September 2 order, and the Complaint and Grievance Committee denied that appeal in its October 22, 2026, Award.

9. The October 22 Award affirmed the September 2 order, lifted the stay, directed the parties to confirm their intention to proceed, and remanded the matter to the World Championship Committee.

10. The purse-bid proceedings resulted in a successful bid of US$200,000 by Warriors Boxing, represented by Leon Margules, with an 80/20 division in favor of the Champion.

11. Hernández confirmed his willingness to proceed and executed the required documentation.

12. Bentley did not provide the required written confirmation and did not execute and submit the required bout agreement within the initial post-Award deadline.

13. The WBO afforded Team Bentley an additional final opportunity to comply by October 26, 2026, at 4:00 p.m. Atlantic Standard Time.

14. Team Bentley raised objections concerning proposed contractual and logistical terms, but no competent WBO authority issued an order suspending the operative deadlines or the mandatory championship obligation.

15. The final deadline expired without Bentley providing the required written confirmation and executed bout agreement.

16. Passport information and logistical communications did not constitute compliance with the substantive requirements imposed by the Award and subsequent WBO directives.

17. Bentley publicly promoted a proposed contest against Shane Mosley Jr. scheduled for November 7, 2026, without authorization from the competent WBO authority, and that proposed contest did not supersede the mandatory championship obligation.

18. The Committee finds that Bentley failed to comply with the final directives governing the implementation of the mandatory championship contest, notwithstanding notice, appellate review, and additional opportunities to comply.

XVIII. REGULATORY CONCLUSIONS

Based upon the foregoing findings, the Committee concludes:

1. The WBO World Championship Committee possessed regulatory authority to enforce the outstanding mandatory championship obligation and to issue the September 2, 2026, negotiation order.

2. The October 22, 2026, Award finally resolved Bentley's appeal of that order, affirmed the mandatory negotiation process, lifted the stay, and remanded the matter for implementation.

3. The Award and the subsequent WBO directives remained operative unless and until modified, reversed, or stayed by a competent authority.

4. Bentley's failure to provide the required written confirmation and execute and submit the required bout agreement by the final deadline constituted noncompliance with the operative championship directives.

5. The proposed Mosley Jr. contest, which had not been authorized by the competent WBO authority, did not displace or supersede Bentley's mandatory obligation to Hernández.

6. The Committee's determination is not based upon Bentley's decision to appeal, nor upon the mere announcement of another contest, but upon his failure to comply with the final and operative championship obligations after the conclusion of the appeal proceedings and the additional opportunity afforded to him.

7. The WBO is vested with authority under its Regulations to take appropriate championship action when a World Champion fails to comply with applicable championship obligations and directives.

8. The continued recognition of Bentley as WBO World Middleweight Champion, under the circumstances established by this record, would be inconsistent with the orderly administration of the Championship and the protection of the rights of the Mandatory Challenger.

9. The declaration of vacancy is an appropriate regulatory measure to preserve the integrity, continuity, and orderly administration of the WBO Middleweight division.

XIX. PROTECTION OF THE MANDATORY CHALLENGER AND SUCCESSFUL PURSE-BID PROMOTER

The WBO mandatory championship system exists to ensure that qualified contenders are afforded the opportunity to compete for the World Championship in accordance with the Organization's Regulations.

Hernández was formally designated Mandatory Challenger by the July 20, 2026, Resolution. His position was reaffirmed through the September 2 negotiation order and the October 22 Award.

The purse-bid proceedings resulted in a successful bid by Warriors Boxing, represented by Leon Margules, establishing the promoter and financial terms for the mandatory championship contest.

The WBO has an institutional responsibility to protect the legitimate interests arising from its mandatory championship procedures, including those of the Mandatory Challenger and the successful purse-bid promoter, subject always to the WBO Regulations and applicable rulings.

Allowing a Champion to disregard a final mandatory order and the resulting purse-bid process, without an official stay or modification by a competent authority, would undermine the reliability

of the WBO championship system and impair the legitimate expectations of those who participate in it.

The Committee therefore finds that the continued enforcement of the mandatory system and the protection of the Championship's integrity require appropriate regulatory action.

XX. RECOMMENDATION TO WITHDRAW BENTLEY'S RECOGNITION AND DECLARE THE CHAMPIONSHIP VACANT

In light of the complete factual and procedural record, the Committee determines that Bentley failed to comply with the operative mandatory championship directives and the final implementation requirements arising from the October 22, 2026, Award.

The Committee has considered the seriousness of withdrawing recognition from a World Champion and recognizes that such action should be exercised with due regard to the applicable Regulations, the procedural history, and the interests of all parties.

Nevertheless, the Committee also recognizes that a World Championship cannot be administered in a manner that permits a Champion to retain recognition while disregarding final and binding championship obligations.

The Committee therefore unanimously recommends that:

1. Denzel Bentley's recognition as WBO World Middleweight Champion be withdrawn;
2. The WBO World Middleweight Championship be declared vacant;
3. The vacancy be effective immediately upon ratification by the WBO Executive Committee; and
4. The WBO proceed in accordance with its Regulations concerning the administration of the vacant Championship and the determination of the appropriate championship pathway.

For clarity, this recommendation does not automatically elevate Hernández to the status of WBO World Middleweight Champion. The vacant Championship shall be administered in accordance with the applicable provisions of the WBO Regulations, including the procedures governing vacant World Championships.

XXI. UNANIMOUS ACTION OF THE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP COMMITTEE

Having considered the complete factual and procedural record, the prior WBO resolutions and directives, the October 22, 2026, Award, the submissions and communications of the indispensable parties, and the applicable WBO Regulations, the World Championship Committee, on October 29, 2026, unanimously voted to recommend the withdrawal of Bentley's recognition as WBO World Middleweight Champion and the declaration of the Championship as vacant.

The Committee's recommendation was based upon Bentley's failure to comply with the operative mandatory championship obligation and the final directives issued to implement the October 22 Award, notwithstanding the notice, appellate review, and additional opportunity to comply afforded to him.

The Committee accordingly submitted its recommendation and supporting record to the WBO Executive Committee for its consideration and final action.

XXII. SUBMISSION TO THE WBO EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The World Championship Committee's unanimous recommendation, together with the complete factual and procedural record, was submitted to the WBO Executive Committee for its independent consideration.

The materials submitted included the prior WBO rulings and resolutions, the relevant correspondence and supporting documentation, the October 22, 2026, Award of the Complaint and Grievance Committee, the positions and submissions of the indispensable parties, and the applicable provisions of the WBO Regulations of World Championship Contests and the WBO Appeals Regulations.

The submission was made for the purpose of allowing the Executive Committee to independently consider and determine whether to ratify and affirm the recommendation of the World Championship Committee.

XXIII. UNANIMOUS RATIFICATION AND AFFIRMANCE BY THE WBO EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

On October 30, 2026, the WBO Executive Committee, having duly considered the World Championship Committee's recommendations, the complete factual and procedural record, including all prior WBO rulings and resolutions, the October 22, 2026 Award of the Complaint

and Grievance Committee, the positions and submissions of all indispensable parties, the relevant correspondence and supporting documentation, the applicable provisions of the WBO Regulations of World Championship Contests and the WBO Appeals Regulations, and all other matters properly presented for its consideration, hereby **UNANIMOUSLY RATIFIES** the recommendation adopted by the World Championship Committee on October 29, 2026, and **AFFIRMS** its determination to withdraw Denzel Bentley's recognition as WBO World Middleweight Champion and declare the WBO World Middleweight Championship **VACANT, EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY**.

The Executive Committee's unanimous action constitutes its independent consideration, approval, and ratification of the Championship Committee's recommendation and the resulting championship determination.

The WBO President submitted the Championship Committee's recommendation and supporting record to the Executive Committee for its consideration.

Accordingly, as of October 30, 2026, the WBO World Middleweight Championship is hereby declared **VACANT, EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY**.

XXIV. FINAL DETERMINATION

For the reasons stated in this Resolution, and following the unanimous ratification and affirmance of the WBO Executive Committee on October 30, 2026, the following determinations are hereby made:

1. **Denzel Bentley's recognition as WBO World Middleweight Champion is hereby withdrawn, effective immediately.**

2. **The WBO World Middleweight Championship is hereby declared VACANT, effective immediately as of October 30, 2026.**

3. The vacancy shall be administered in accordance with the WBO Regulations governing vacant World Championships.

4. No automatic elevation of Hernández to full Champion status is created by this Resolution. His rights and status shall be addressed pursuant to the applicable WBO Regulations and any further determination issued by the competent WBO authority.

5. The WBO retains jurisdiction over the administration of the vacant Championship and any further proceedings required to preserve the integrity and orderly activity of the Middleweight division.

XXV. RIGHT TO APPEAL AND AVAILABLE APPELLATE PROCEDURES

Team Bentley shall have the right to seek appellate review of this Resolution by electing one (1) of the following two (2) separate and independent appellate procedures, at its discretion:

OPTION ONE: BINDING ARBITRATION PURSUANT TO THE FEDERAL ARBITRATION ACT

Team Bentley may elect to submit this matter to binding arbitration pursuant to the Federal Arbitration Act ("FAA"), Title 9 of the United States Code, consistent with the procedural framework established through the federal litigation in *Trout v. Organización Mundial de Boxeo, Inc.*, 965 F.3d 71 (1st Cir. 2020), and the subsequent proceedings before the United States District Court for the District of Puerto Rico.

Under this procedure:

1. Each party shall independently select one (1) arbitrator;
2. The two selected arbitrators shall mutually appoint a third arbitrator, who shall serve as Chairperson of the arbitration panel;
3. Each party shall be responsible for the compensation of the arbitrator independently selected by that party;
4. The compensation of the Chairperson shall be allocated sixty percent (60%) to Team Bentley, as the moving party, and forty percent (40%) to the WBO; and
5. The party that does not prevail shall be responsible for the applicable legal fees associated with the proceedings.

The arbitration panel shall independently review and adjudicate the dispute pursuant to the FAA, the applicable WBO Rules and Regulations, and the governing legal principles.

This procedure is consistent with the arbitrator-selection framework addressed in *Trout* and the subsequent federal proceedings, while preserving an independent and balanced method of

selecting the arbitration panel. The cost-allocation provisions stated above shall govern the proceedings arising from any election of this option.

OPTION TWO: APPEAL BEFORE THE WBO GRIEVANCES COMMITTEE

Alternatively, Team Bentley may elect to submit an appeal to the WBO Grievances Committee, which shall be comprised of an independent panel of arbitrators appointed by the WBO Executive Committee.

Under this procedure:

1. The appeal shall be reviewed and adjudicated by the appointed independent panel;

2. The proceedings shall be conducted pursuant to the WBO Appeals Regulations and the WBO Rules and Regulations; and

3. Team Bentley, as the moving party, shall not be required to pay filing or administrative fees for the appeal.

SEPARATE AND INDEPENDENT ELECTIONS

The foregoing constitutes two distinct and alternative appellate procedures. Team Bentley may elect either Option One or Option Two and shall not be required to pursue both procedures. The election of one procedure shall constitute the selection of the applicable appellate forum for review of this Resolution.

CONTINUING FORCE AND EFFECT OF THIS RESOLUTION

Notwithstanding the availability of the foregoing appellate procedures, and unless and until an official ruling is rendered by the competent authority having jurisdiction over this Resolution modifying, reversing, or issuing a stay of its proceedings or operative effect, this Resolution shall remain binding, enforceable, and in full force and effect.

Accordingly, the declaration of vacancy and the resulting championship determination shall remain operative and shall be implemented for purposes of the proper administration, continuity, and orderly activity of the WBO Middleweight division.

The mere filing, initiation, or pendency of an appeal shall not, by itself, suspend, modify, or otherwise affect the operative effect of this Resolution. Any modification, reversal, or stay must arise from an official ruling issued by the competent authority having jurisdiction over the matter.

Nothing herein shall be construed as limiting the right of Team Bentley to pursue either appellate procedure identified above, or as prejudging the merits of any appeal that may be properly submitted.

XXVI. INCORPORATION BY REFERENCE AND FORMAL NOTICE OF THE OFFICIAL RECORD

For purposes of this Resolution, the World Championship Committee and the WBO Executive Committee hereby formally acknowledge, recognize, and take notice of the documents, rulings, resolutions, orders, awards, correspondence, submissions, communications, and other materials identified below, all of which form part of the official administrative and adjudicative record of this proceeding.

Each of the identified items is hereby **incorporated by reference into this Resolution, in its entirety and with full force and effect**, as though its complete contents had been expressly set forth and reproduced herein. The incorporation applies to the full substance, contents, findings, determinations, directives, procedural history, and relevant factual matters reflected in each respective record item, and not merely to the description or reference appearing in the list below.

The Committees further take formal notice of the existence, issuance, contents, and procedural significance of these records insofar as they relate to the matters adjudicated herein. Such notice is taken for purposes of establishing the procedural history, identifying the matters previously considered or determined by the competent WBO authorities, and supporting the findings, conclusions, and determinations set forth in this Resolution.

For the avoidance of doubt, the documents and materials listed in this Section are referenced and incorporated as components of the official record. Their identification herein is sufficient to designate them as part of the record incorporated by reference.

The incorporated record includes, without limitation:

1. The relevant VADA notification and analytical findings concerning the Alimkhanuly matter;

2. The December 4, 2025, Show Cause Notice;
3. The January 12, 2026, Show Cause Notice and subsequent correspondence;
4. The February 19, 2026, WBO Resolution concerning Alimkhanuly;
5. The July 10, 2026, notice concerning termination of the suspension;
6. The July 20, 2026, WBO Resolution concerning Alimkhanuly's relinquishment, Bentley's elevation, and Hernández's mandatory designation;
7. The March 25, 2026, sanction letter concerning Bentley–Saavedra;
8. The April 4, 2026, Bentley–Saavedra championship contest record;
9. The communications concerning the proposed voluntary defense against Liam Smith;
10. Team Hernández's petition requesting enforcement of the mandatory championship obligation;
11. The September 2, 2026, mandatory negotiation order;
12. The applicable purse-bid notices and proceedings;
13. The successful purse-bid documentation identifying Warriors Boxing and the US$200,000 bid;
14. Bentley's appeal submissions and supporting materials;
15. The WBO Complaint and Grievance Committee's procedural orders and briefing schedule;
16. The October 1, 2026, stay order;
17. The October 2, 2026, public announcement and related reports concerning the proposed Bentley–Mosley Jr. contest;
18. The October 22, 2026, Award of the Complaint and Grievance Committee;
19. The post-Award communications and directives issued by the WBO;

20. The parties' written confirmations and documentation submitted following the Award;

21. The correspondence concerning passport information and logistical arrangements;

22. Team Bentley's October 25 and October 26, 2026, objections and communications;

23. The October 24, 2026, notice establishing the final October 26 deadline;

24. The October 29, 2026, unanimous recommendation of the World Championship Committee; and

25. The October 30, 2026, unanimous ratification and affirmance by the WBO Executive Committee.

All of the foregoing materials, together with any related records properly forming part of the same proceedings, shall be deemed incorporated into and considered part of the official record underlying this Resolution. Their incorporation by reference shall remain effective for purposes of any subsequent WBO proceeding or appellate review arising from this matter.

XXVII. FINAL STATEMENT

The World Boxing Organization recognizes the accomplishments of Denzel Bentley and the athletic merit required to attain the distinction of World Champion. The Organization's respect for its Champions, however, must coexist with its responsibility to protect the integrity of the championship system and the rights of qualified contenders.

A WBO World Championship is not the personal property of the individual who holds it. It is a distinction entrusted to a Champion by the Organization, subject to the WBO Rules and Regulations and to the responsibilities that accompany that recognition.

The principles reflected in the Preamble to the WBO Regulations underscore the Organization's commitment to an orderly, fair, and credible championship system; the protection of boxers and other participants; the integrity of professional boxing; and the consistent administration of championship contests under established rules and procedures.

A Championship is therefore a regulatory trust. A Champion is entrusted with the privilege and responsibility of holding and defending that title, but that privilege does not create an unrestricted proprietary right to retain the Championship independently of the Organization's regulatory authority or the obligations imposed by its Rules and Regulations.

Those obligations include respect for the mandatory championship system, compliance with final rulings and directives, and recognition of the legitimate rights of qualified challengers. The rights of a Champion cannot be separated from the corresponding responsibilities that make the championship system fair and meaningful.

In the present matter, Bentley received notice of the outstanding mandatory obligation, participated in the relevant proceedings, challenged the September 2, 2026 order before the Complaint and Grievance Committee, received a final Award resolving that challenge, and was afforded additional opportunities to comply with the resulting directives. The determination reached herein is based upon his failure to comply with those operative obligations and not upon his exercise of appellate rights or the mere announcement of another proposed contest.

The World Championship Committee unanimously adopted its recommendation on October 29, 2026. On October 30, 2026, the WBO Executive Committee independently considered the recommendation and the complete record and unanimously ratified and affirmed the Committee's determination.

The WBO must administer its Championships in a manner that protects not only the distinction held by a Champion, but also the integrity of the sport, the rights of mandatory challengers, and the credibility of the Organization's regulatory framework.

Accordingly, the WBO World Middleweight Championship is hereby declared:

VACANT

EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY AS OF OCTOBER 30, 2026.

SO RESOLVED AND RATIFIED.

Issued this 30th day of October 2026.

Respectfully,
Luis Batista Salas, Esq.

Cc: Gustavo Olivieri, Esq./WBO President

Leon Margules, Esq./Team Hernandez/Warriors Boxing

Andy Ayling/Team Bentley

Martin Bowers/Team Bentley