W2RC DAKAR RALLY 2025

01 – 17 January

Date:	**Sunday, 12th January 2025**	Time:	**11.45 hrs**
Subject:	**STEWARDS DECISION N° 33**	Document No:	**2.35**

From: The Stewards

To: Competitor **No 203** Name: **TOYOTA GAZOO RACING**
Crew **LUCAS MORAES / ARMAND MONLEON**

Number of pages: 3 *Attachments: -*

The Stewards, having received from the FIA Sporting Delegate video evidence, having heard the crew members and the Team Manager (Mr. Uwe SCHMIDT), have considered the following matter, and after due deliberation determine the following:

Fact: The video evidence shows that, during the neutralisation zone on SS5, a person handed over a mobile phone to the navigator, who took it, looked at it, showed it to the driver and returned it to this person after 43 seconds.

Offence: Breach of Art. 2.18, Art. 9.1.1, Art. 9.1.3, Art. 53, Art. 57.1 of FIA 2025 CCRSR

- **Decision: Disqualification Competitor Car No 203 from Dakar Rally 2025,** which is **suspended until the end of Dakar 2025** subject to no further breach of similar nature committed by the competitor during this period.

- **To impose a 1-hour time penalty on the Competitor Car No 203 on Selective Section 5.**

Reason:

During the hearing, the crew members admitted the fact. They explained that at the neutralisation zone a totally unknow person approached them and handed over a mobile phone. The navigator declared that in the heat of the race he took it, without realising the possible consequences. Navigator apologised, recognizing the mistake.

The Stewards decide that there is no doubt that, in assessing this situation, it is necessary to take into account where this video footage was captured. It took place in the Neutralisation Zone, Selective Section 5.

First of all, as regards the on (non-)possession of the right to have means of communication, it should be taken into account that in this case the CCRSR distinguishes between two situations: the Selective Section and the Road Section.

It is clear that in this case, what was captured in the video footage did not take place on the Road Section but on the Selective Section.

Art. 9.1.1 of the FIA 2025 CCRSR states that any radio or electronic means of communication, or any other device not expressly permitted in these regulations or in the Supplementary Regulations, is forbidden on board the vehicles.

Art. 9.1.3 states that during Selective Sections telephones may only be used from outside the vehicle and must be switched off at other times.

The rules set out in the above-mentioned Articles of the Regulations clearly define what is prohibited. They do not single out the (non-) ownership of the means of communication as a basis for assessing situations differently.

V1 Art. 9.1.7 details the mandatory procedures that priority crews (as well as the first 10 crews in the classification of the previous Stage) must carry out with their phones and watches. They must place all their mobile phones and watches (unless those authorised as per Art. 9.1.6), which must be switched off, in pouch provided and sealed by the organiser at the first TC DSS of the Stage. At the stop point of the last ASS of the Stage, the Crew must ask an official to remove the seal. The pouch may be stored in the vehicle's cockpit.

It is understood that the entire content of the CCRSR must be interpreted consistently and with the whole volume in mind, and not by singling out any single article. Only in this way can the rules contained in the CCRSR and the purposes for which they were created be correctly interpreted.

All that is contained in the above-mentioned articles of the CCRSR is a clear indication of the purpose for which the rules are established.

It is clear that the purpose of those rules is to ensure that from the start to the finish of the Selective Section (and for the purposes of the present case, that includes the Neutralisation Zone within the Selective Section), all crews comply with the prohibitions on the use of means of communication imposed on them. Thus, ensuring equality of all competitors and crews and fair competition for sporting results. As regards the crews listed in V1 Art. 9.1.7, these crews will also be subject to additional restrictions on the use and sealing of their phones.

Considering the factual situation and the explanations given by the Competitor's representative and the crew members during the hearing, it should be recalled that, in accordance with Art. 1.1.5 of FIA 2025 CCRSR, anything that is not expressly authorised by these regulations is forbidden.

This means that the presence of a mobile phone in the hands of crew members (irrespective of the form of ownership of that phone, etc.) shall be considered as a violation of the aforementioned regulations.

The Stewards decide that in this case the crew of car No 203 committed an infringement by not complying with the requirements of Art. 9.1.1 and Art. 9.1.3 of FIA 2025 CCRSR.

Considering the factual situation in light of the rules laid down in Art. 53 of the FIA 2025 CCRSR, the behaviour of the crew members must also be considered as an infringement of the rules. This Article states that displaying information and transmission of data or information to a competing crew by radio, telephone or any other means is strictly forbidden during Selective Section.

In this case, the explanations of the crew members and the competitor's representative that the crew cannot take responsibility for the fact that a stranger is showing them something are to be considered critically. The Stewards cannot confirm or deny the crew members' claim that they do not know the person in question. But this does not change the legal assessment of the situation. What is important is to assess the actions of the crew members themselves. The navigator took the person's mobile phone, handed it over to the driver, they both used it to analyse the information on the phone screen and then returned it to the same person.

The stewards decide that in this case the crew of car No 203 committed an infringement as it did not comply with the requirements of Art. 53 of FIA 2025 CCRSR.

Considering the factual situation in the light of Art. 2.18 and Art. 57.1 of the FIA 2025 CCRSR, the behaviour of the crew members also constitutes an infringement of the rules.

The explanation given by the Competitor's representative at the hearing (that the Parc Ferme rules applicable in the Neutralisation Zone should be interpreted differently from the Parc Ferme rules in other cases, simply because the Neutralisation Zone, unlike the usual Parc Ferme, can also be entered by members of the media, whose behaviour is beyond the control of the members of the crew) is to

be considered critically, since, as already mentioned earlier in this decision, it is necessary to assess the conduct of the members of the crew themselves in this particular situation.

The Stewards decide that in this case the crew of car No 203 committed an infringement by not complying with the requirements of Art. 2.18 and Art. 57.1 of FIA 2025 CCRSR.

The Stewards consider that there has been a serious breach of several articles of the regulations in this case.

On the penalty to be imposed. The Stewards consider that the penalty to be imposed in this case is disqualification. However, given that the stewards have reason to believe that the crew will not repeat this type of infringement, there is reason to suspend the disqualification until the end of the event. It is also necessary and fair to impose a time penalty in this case.

The decision is based on the FIA 2025 International Sporting Code Art. 11.9.1, Art. 11.9.2.a, Art. 11.9.3. a, Art. 11.9.3.f, Art. 12.3.1, Art. 12.4.1.h., Art. 12.4.1.m, Art. 12.9.1 and Art. 12.4.6.

Competitors are reminded that they have the right to appeal certain decisions of the Stewards, in accordance with Article 15 of the FIA 2025 International Sporting Code and Chapter 4 of the FIA Judicial and Disciplinary Rules, within the applicable time limits.

Arnas PALIUKENAS
FIA Chair of the Panel of Stewards

Omar ZAROUR
FIA Steward

Saleh ALEM
ASN Steward

This decision was notified to the Competitor's officially nominated representative as below:

Name (in block letters):	**UWE SCHMIDT**	*Date:*	**12.01.2025**
Position within the team:	**TEAM MANAGER**	*Time:*	**12:00**

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