



armindo araujo <armindoaraujo46@gmail.com>

Proposed Press Statement

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Para Bruno De Pianto <bruno@motorsport-italia.com>, Armindo Araujo <armindoaraujo46@gmail.com>

Morning Bruno, morning Armindo,

I hope you're both OK. I understand that Bruno's going to speak to the FIA to see what he can do, but in the mean time, please see below some options for the press release. The sections in black are fairly standard and non-controversial, but the sections in italics / different colours are to be discussed. Please let me know what you'd like to do.

Best wishes, Katie

Ola a todos,

It's Armindo here. I'm sure most of you are surprised to hear from me right now, but I'm afraid I have some news that I wanted to tell you all personally. Unfortunately, Miguel and I won't be able to compete in ADAC Rallye Deutschland.

During the season break between New Zealand and Finland, I picked up a back injury from coming off my motorbike. Everything felt OK as we headed into Finland, but after the big jumps on the Finnish gravel, I realised that it was more serious than I thought. Provided I get it fixed as soon as possible, there shouldn't be any long-term damage, but driving again before I'm fully recovered could create a much bigger problem.

During Rally Finland I started to get back pains, landing over some of the bigger jumps. I can't pinpoint how or where this started, but ever since the rally finished it's been causing me more and more discomfort. Having spoken to my physio, he says that if I don't want to make the injury worse, I need to rest and certainly can't compete in Rally Germany.

This season has been highly pressurised from start to finish. I only found out following Monte-Carlo that I would get the opportunity to compete in the full 13 event WRC Calendar with a works-supported team instead of doing only seven events as a privateer. This was one of the best pieces of news that any driver can have. However, the pressure has been significant and it's been a big change for me. This transition has finally caught up with me and after speaking to my team in our Rally Finland debrief and more since returning home, we've mutually decided that it's better for me to take some time out, relax and regain my focus on the sport and how I approach it. I hope it's fair to say that I've always been motivated and determined in my career and I've been working with the same team now for many years – we even won two Group N world titles together! However, there's always a point where you have to admit that something isn't quite right and I hope that we've accepted that point at just the right time and that in future I'll be able to come back stronger than ever!

This doesn't mean we're out of your lives though! :-)

All of the fans have been fantastic all year and I hope they'll be equally supportive of whoever replaces me in WRC Team MINI Portugal in Germany. For my part, I'll be passing on all the advice I can and hope to see some top times from the MINIs out in the Mosel vineyards. Don't forget it's WRC Team MINI Portugal so I have a very personal interest in seeing the team get good results.

Germany is one of my favourite rallies and I had my best result last year out in Trier so I'm disappointed not to be able to get back out on the stages. This isn't the last you've seen (or heard) of me! Don't worry,

we'll keep you up-to-date about how I'm getting on and I'll be back as soon as possible.

For now, 'boa sorte' to whoever takes over – they better take good care of my MINI or they'll have me to answer to!

Bye – but only for now,

Armindo