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Draft report on the regional Seminar on “Promoting intercultural dialogue: the role of sport and education in the Balkan region” with FARE

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COMMENTS MADE BY THE GENERAL RAPPORTEUR OF THE CONFERENCE DR. RADIM BUREŠ

All speakers' presentation showed enormous amount of work accomplished in recent years. The governmental representative's presentations proved that respective governments are aware of the problem of racism and violence and take action against it. In number of countries there is existing necessary administrative infrastructure, experience personnel and in some countries a funding scheme with clear selection procedures. It was obvious from governmental representatives presentations that participating government are fully aware about the role of grass roots activities, work of NGOs and broad preventive and educative activities in general in preventing racism and violence in sport. The NGO presentations showed that in all participating countries there are strong and efficient NGOs able to perform large scale activities. Presentations described number of different projects and initiatives had one in common. In many countries in Europe, even the most developed ones, it is not easy to get engaged sport clubs or associations to participate in the preventive work with fans. The presentation of Football Association of Serbia showed that in this respect the region can serve as an example.

Despite friendly and open atmosphere at the meeting I was obvious from many inputs that co-operation between NGOs and governments are not without weaker points. It may not be caused by lack of sensitivity and good will on the side of government. There is still lot of mutual misunderstanding and lack of mutual knowledge between NGO s and governmental bodies. Many NGOs believes that governments and their officials can do everything if only they would wish so. Governments should be pro active, keep the relation with relevant NGO and inform them about their policy, possibilities and intentions. Such information seminar should be held at last once a year.

On the other hand NGO should keep their active openness towards governments, make them constantly informed about their activities, invite them to their events and approach them with their requests.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS MADE BY THE RAPPORTEUR

1. Domestic co-ordination

While NGO are proud on their independence they nevertheless welcome the cooperation with government. It is absolutely clear that creation of certain PLATFORM for coordination, cooperation, exchange of ideas and good practice and even streamlining of activities is crucial. Such platform was call for several times.

If to summarize what is sought from governments:

- Creation of platform for communication
- Co-ordination
- Financial support
- Networking.

Governments should be encouraged to provide above mentioned support for desirable and valuable activities of NGOs. The Council of Europe and EPAS can play an important role promoting domestic co-operation and facilitating good practice exchange.

2. Training

The NGO works in dynamic environment. Experience shows that good projects highly depend on experienced, qualified and charismatic leaders. All speakers proved that they meet these criteria. But sustainability requires finding and developing followers.

As Western Balkan region continues to be more politically stabilized, it will become more difficult fundraising means for activities related to civil society and general preventive activities. The fundraising should become more and more professionalized and will require more professional staff.

Training combining general youth leaders training with specific issues of sport related violence and racism may represent an effective assistance of Council of Europe/EPAS to further development and strengthening of civil society in Balkans.

At the same time the experience gained by many of organizations participating at the seminar may be of a great use and inspiration for similar organizations from other regions.

3. Regular meetings

As mentioned above the arrangement of the seminar with speakers both from NGO and governmental institutions proved to be very effective. The same model can be used more regularly, e.g. biannually as effective tool for promoting grass root measure against racism and violence in sport. This approach can be successfully used also in other European regions (e.g. Caucasus).

ANNEXE I

List of participants

<u>1/ Public Authorities</u>					
<u>Title</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>first name</u>	<u>Fonction</u>	<u>Country</u>	<u>email</u>
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<u>3/ Council of Europe</u>					
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