

Strasbourg, 14 September 2020

EPAS(2020)48

Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport (EPAS)

12th meeting of the Consultative Committee

Council of Europe/ Palais de l'Europe
Room 14
Avenue de l'Europe, F-67075 Strasbourg

Tuesday, 8 September 2020
10:00 – 12:30

Working language: English

Meeting Report

1. Opening of the meeting

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed the participants in the room as well as those taking part via video-link. He invited them to briefly introduce themselves. All 25 CC members were present.

Panathlon International, represented by Mr Pierre Zappelli, participated in the meeting as an observer without the right to vote.

2. Adoption of the agenda

Draft 2 of the agenda was adopted as proposed. No comments were raised.

The CC decided :

- to adopt draft 2 of the agenda as it appears in document EPAS(2020)32.

3. Report and statement

The chair presented the following report on the CC activities¹:

Lessons from the corona situation:

Although we have all suffered a dramatic cutback in our activities for the past 6 months, I think it is safe to say that we have learned a lot from the crisis.

We have seen how important sport and physical activity is for everyday life, our social life, wellbeing, and health on a daily basis. All across Europe, the sudden stop of our routines and schedules has led to waves of innovative solutions, from online instruction and coaching made by people previously unknown to sport, to group exercise in the park and a quite impressive quest for using nature as the sporting field.

At the professional and elite sport level, the crisis has highlighted that sport as an entertainment product still depends heavily on the presence real people, real audiences, real fans, to create the atmosphere and the passion that drives the business model. The world is not just virtual - yet.

And it is as if the insistent calls for autonomy of sport are not as loud now at a time where most of the sport sector – from the grassroots to the top – is heavily dependent on rescue packages and safety regulations made through state intervention. I say this with a twist of irony, because the autonomy of sport is most often used by those who wish to protect the business model of sport rather by those who fight to strengthen community life and association life.

But I believe we can agree that association freedom is under pressure, although for very good reasons, and we must keep a watchful eye that governments don't exploit this emergency to make long-lasting restrictions on free assembly once the health crisis is behind us.

Another major trend in the past year:

The corona crisis is not the only contagious phenomenon we have seen in recent years. Another, much more positive and inspiring, is the rise of the athlete voice across the world. A growing number of elite sport women and men now engage publicly in debates on matters that regard their working conditions in sport or wider societal issues, especially human rights issues.

We have heard warnings against the growing politization of sport. But is it really a growing politization if athletes speak their mind? Throughout the history of sport, its organisation leaders, heads of state,

¹ The statement was provided by the outgoing chair, Mr Jens Sejer Andersen.

ministers, sponsors and media companies have been very active driving the politization of sport, and why shouldn't athletes try to influence the direction the sport and their communities is taken.

As long as athletes stick to campaigns that are compatible with human rights and the fundamental values of sport, it is hard to argue they should remain silent.

One outstanding example of athlete courage is the open letter signed by over 500 Belarusian athletes and workers in sport. Instead of hiding from the violent repression exercised by the Belarusian government these days, the athletes are openly confronting it. These athletes stand for true Council of Europe values, and that is why the CC Bureau unanimously invites you to join a statement in their support. Sorry that it came out very late, you will soon have the opportunity to discuss it.

European Sports Charter:

Both the COVID-19 crisis and the rising athlete activism has underlined the importance of having a good foundation established under the work of EPAS and the whole Council of Europe in sport.

The Consultative Committee has joined the calls for a revision of the European Sports Charter, and the Bureau would like to compliment the secretariat for a very inclusive process, good to see the engagement from cc members. At the join meeting following our plenary, we will discuss the charter in much more detail, so

IPACS

The inclusivity in another cooperation process has been less impressive. The International Partnership Against Corruption in Sport remains a relatively closed party to which only certain sports organisations are invited. At the CC Bureau, we have noted with pleasure how the EPAS secretariat keeps working for more openness and transparency in IPACS, and we are also happy to see that all nations in the world are now invited to join the anti-corruption efforts. However, there are a number of stakeholder groups – most importantly independent athlete groups – that are still barred from taking part.

It is a great pity, because it can hardly be expected that the big integrity challenges in sport will go away without partnerships that transcend a number of other interests.

As the CC has repeatedly called for access to IPACS meetings, but was not allowed, I managed to get a seat in the Danish delegation at the so-called General Conference of IPACS in Abu Dhabi in December. You have all received my report from the meeting, but let me just stress my personal conclusion: Unlike any other sector in society, sport is asked by the governments to sort out its own corruption and crime problems, and that strategy has little or no chance of success. Turkeys don't vote for Christmas.

From our own little word, the CC Bureau worked for two years to amend the Terms of Conference. When we could finally deliver our proposal in the autumn of 2019, it inspired several rounds of debate in the Governing Board Bureau. I think we can conclude that at the end of the day, the result is almost similar to the proposal we all agreed on here in the plenary in June 2019.

The GB Bureau has in fact met much more than in any other year, because the day meetings have been replaced by regular online meetings, 2-3 every month from March to July. Much of the time has been used discussing how the updated Terms of Reference should be applied with regard to membership of the Consultative Committee.

The outcome – the non-renewal of three organisations – went much further than recommended by the CC Bureau. Also we are surprised that the reasons for not renewing each of the organisations are not given in a clear language that identifies why the Governing Board does not wish to renew the mandate.

We did recommend unanimously that the ICSS Europe was not renewed, following well-documented media reports in 2019 on dubious – perhaps even criminal - intelligence operations carried out some years ago. This is an issue that is raised under another agenda item.

All the non-renewed organisations have been asked to join this meeting as observers, and I invite them to reapply for membership when the next opportunity arises.

The next Bureau

Allow me to conclude with a request from the outgoing bureau which will be almost totally replaced, as this house is not in favour of staggered elections.

It is our hope that you today will compose a bureau that will broadly represent the variety of interests gathered around this table. Likewise, we hope the new bureau will define its agenda and consult the CC Plenary at the earliest occasion.

When this bureau gathered for the first time in 2016 (only two members have been replaced since then), we defined a few main issues upon which we would build our political efforts, defining how we would pursue good governance and protect athletes, for instance. Then we presented it a few weeks later to the CC Plenary that was gathered on the occasion of the ministerial conference in Budapest, and we achieved consensus on our main action points.

Our paper from 2016 is not and should not be binding for the new bureau. But we hope that the new Chair, Vice-Chair and Bureau will also seek to involve the Consultative Committee when defining its political agenda for the next election period.

Finally, I would like to thank the Secretariat for its hard work, enthusiasm and high quality cooperation over the past years. Thanks also to the Vice-Chair Michal Buchel – I think our duo has set a good example of how different interests can cooperate in mutual confidence, and moreover it has been a great personal pleasure to work with you.

Thanks also to the Bureau members for constructive and positive interactions, and thanks to the full CC for your commitment in agreement and disagreement. I am grateful for having had the opportunity to act as a chair for four years, but I am equally happy that we have decided to cut the terms of office clear and I wish the new chairperson lots of luck in the fight to get sport behind the Council of Europe values we share: Democracy, the rule of law, and human rights.

The Chair opened the discussion on the statement in support of Belarusian athletes:

<p><i>Draft resolution on Belarus</i></p> <p><u>EPAS CC supports Belarussian athletes in their call for democracy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Appreciating the concerns expressed by the Council of Europe’s Secretary General, President of the Parliamentary Assembly, and President of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, regarding the outcome of recent elections in Belarus and the repression of democratic rights in the country,- Committed to the Council of Europe fundamental values of human rights, democracy and the rule of law, <p>X [number] sports organisations and institutions gathered in the Consultative Committee of the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport (EPAS) under the Council of Europe wish to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- express their admiration for and solidarity with the over 500 athletes and entourage from Belarusian sport who, at risk of personal or professional persecution, have called for free and
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fair elections, release of political prisoners and an end to violent repression of peaceful demonstrations

- call upon sports authorities, governments, athletes organisations, media companies, sponsors and all relevant stakeholders in sport to do everything in their powers to
 - support the athletes' demand for the full restoration of democratic rights in Belarus,
 - protect the political independence and association freedom of sport in Belarus
 - and ensuring that no Belarusian athletes will suffer sporting or legal retributions for their courageous action for human rights, democracy, and the rule of law.

Some CC members questioned whether it is appropriate for the CC to publish such a statement. Concerns were raised on procedural matters (regarding the tight deadline – the statement was sent out one day ahead of the CC plenary meeting – and the addressee of such a statement) as well as on creating a precedence.

Some CC members supported the idea of such a statement and taking a stand, as human rights and democracy are core values of the Council of Europe.

The outgoing Chair proposed that the incoming Chair and bureau shall take this matter into consideration, and then inform the CC members on the outcome of their deliberations.

The CC decided :

- that the new CC bureau should take this issue for further discussions on board.

4. EPAS diversity conference on 2021 in light of the challenges resulting from COVID-19

The secretariat presented document EPAS(2020)20 which proposes three topics; one of which to be chosen in the joint meeting with the GB and addressed in the diversity conference 2021:

- LGBTIQ and human rights in sport in light of the Caster Semenya case
- Hate speech in sport
- Impact of COVID-19 on the access to/ participation in sport

The secretariat invited the CC members to take part in the discussions in the joint meeting with the GB.

5. Joint GB and CC meeting

No questions/ issues were raised.

6. Conference of Ministers responsible for Sport

6.1. Follow up to the 15th Council of Europe Conference of Ministers responsible for Sport, Tbilisi, Georgia, 16 October 2018

The secretariat briefly informed the CC about the Tbilisi declaration which is supported by many states and other non-governmental stakeholders. It invited those CC members, which have not yet aligned themselves with it, to do so.

6.2. 16th Council of Europe Conference of Ministers responsible for Sport, Athens, Greece, 5 November 2020

The secretariat briefly informed the CC about the two resolutions on the European Sports Charter and the promotion of human rights in sport to be adopted by the conference. It thanked the CC members for their contributions to the drafting of these two resolutions.

7. Update on new members and renewals of the CC

According to the CC Terms of Reference, CC members have to reapply for their membership renewal of every three years. The Chair informed the CC

- that one CC member (FIFPro) did not ask for renewal of its membership
- three organisations were not renewed by the GB (ICSS, Sport & Citizenship, and Panathlon).

The Chair explained that the decisions did not fully reflect the recommendations of the CC Bureau.

The CC Bureau did recommend the non-renewal of the ICSS, as it found that the ICSS did not live up to Council of Europe values following media reports in Der Spiegel and Mediapart. Even if the ICSS strongly objects to the media reports, both EPAS Executive Secretary and the CC Chair has had meetings and other forms of communication with ICSS and did not find the answers given by ICSS convincing. Nor has the ICSS taken the media to court, as it envisaged during a meeting.

As for the other CC members, the position of the Bureau was that those organisations who had shown too little activity to be regarded eligible, should have had a warning only and be asked to step up their efforts over their next period.

The Chair stressed that, however, it is at the full discretion of the EPAS Governing Board to invite members to the Consultative Committee, and the CC Bureau found no reason to further challenge the recommendation made by the GB Bureau.

The CC currently consists of 25 members.

8. Introduction of the candidates to the bureau

The following candidates were nominated for election to the positions of Chair, Vice-Chair and bureau member:

Chair of the Consultative Committee

Kole Gjelošhaj, ISF

Vice-Chair of the Consultative Committee

Tone Jagodic, EOC

Mogens Kirkeby, ISCA

Member of the bureau of the Consultative Committee

Laura Capranica, EAS

Louis Mustakas, ENSE

James Ogilvie, UEFA

Ioannis Psilopoulos, EFPM

Janez Sodrznik, TAFISA

The candidates briefly introduced themselves.

9. Elections

Hugh Torrance and Pierre Zappelli were nominated as scrutineers.

The candidates received the following votes:

Position	Name of the candidate	# of votes	Abstentions
Chair	Kole Gjelošhaj, ISF	22	2

1 CC member did not take part in the election of the chair.

Vice-Chair	Tone Jagodic, EOC	15	0
Vice-Chair	Mogens Kirkeby, ISCA	9	

1 CC member did not take part in the election of the vice chair.

Bureau member	Laura Capranica, EAS	17	24
Bureau member	Louis Mustakas, ENSE	11	
Bureau member	James Ogilvie, UEFA	17	
Bureau member	Ioannis Psilopoulos, EFPM	10	
Bureau member	Janez Sodrznik, TAFISA	13	

1 CC member did not take part in the election of the CC bureau.

1 CC member cast an invalid ballot.

The new Chair, Vice-Chair and members of the bureau of the Consultative Committee for the period 2020-2021 are:

Position	Name of the candidate
Chair	Kole Gjelošhaj
Vice-Chair	Tone Jagodic
Bureau member	Laura Capranica
Bureau member	Louis Mustakas
Bureau member	James Ogilvie
Bureau member	Janez Sodrznik

10. Date and place of next meeting

Possible dates for the next joint Governing Board and Consultative Committee meetings are:

- 1-2 June 2021
- 15-16 June 2021

Please block these dates in your diary. A decision on the exact date will be taken and communicated at the beginning of 2021 at the latest.

Remark by the secretariat:

The plenary meeting of the Consultative Committee usually takes place in the morning of the first meeting day, when the GB will meet *in camera*.

11. Closing

The secretariat thanked the outgoing Chair Mr Jens Sejer Andersen and the outgoing bureau members for their very active and constructive work to promote democratic values and human rights in sport.

The Chair thanked the CC members present physically and remotely for their participation and closed the meeting.

Appendix 1: Agenda

1.	Opening of the meeting The meeting will be opened by Jens Sejer Andersen, Chair of the CC.	
2.	Adoption of the agenda Action: The CC is invited to <u>adopt</u> this agenda.	EPAS(2020)32
3.	Report and statement 3.1 Report of the Chair 3.2 Statement on Belarusian athletes Action: The CC is invited to comment the oral update provided by the Chair and discuss the statement.	
4.	EPAS annual conference on diversity in light of the challenges resulting from COVID-19 Action: The CC is invited to discuss the proposed topics for the diversity conference 2021.	EPAS(2020)20
5.	Joint GB and CC meeting Action: The CC is invited to exchange views on the agenda of the upcoming joint meeting.	
6.	Conference of Ministers responsible for Sport 7.1 Follow up to the 15 th Council of Europe Conference of Ministers responsible for Sport, Tbilisi, Georgia, 16 October 2018 7.2 16 th Council of Europe Conference of Ministers responsible for Sport, Athens, Greece, 5 November 2020 Action: The CC is invited to take note of the oral update and exchange views on the conference.	
7.	Update on new members and renewals of the CC 7.1. New members Action: The CC is invited to take note of the oral update provided by the Chair/ Secretariat. 7.2. Renewals Action: The CC is invited to take note of the oral update provided by the Chair/ Secretariat.	
8.	Introduction of the candidates to the Bureau Action: The candidates to the Bureau are invited to present themselves to the CC.	
9.	Elections Action: The CC is invited to elect the Chair, Vice-Chair and Bureau of the Consultative Committee	
10.	Date and place of the next meeting	
11.	Closing	

Appendix 2: List of Participants

PLAY THE GAME (CHAIR / PRESIDENT)

Mr Jens Sejer ANDERSEN

International SAMBO Federation (FIAS) (VICE-CHAIR / VICE-PRESIDENT)

Mr Michal BUCHEL

MEMBERS / MEMBRES

European Association for Sport Management (EASM)

Dr Stefan WALZEL

Secretary General

Ms Sarah RUNZHEIMER

European Athlete Student Network (EAS)

Ms Laura CAPRANICA

President

European Athletics

Mr Jean GRACIA

European Elite Athletes Association (EU Athletes)

Ms Paulina TOMCZYK

General Secretary

European Fair Play Movement (EFPM)

Mr Ioannis PSILOPOULOS

General Secretary

European Gay & Lesbian Sport Federation (EGLSF)

Mr Hugh TORRANCE

Co-President

European Network of Sport Education (ENSE)

Mr Louis MOUSTAKAS

Secretary General

European Non-Governmental Sports Organisation (ENGSO)

Ms Kaisa LARJOMAA (head of delegation)

ENGSO Secretary General

Mr Stefan BERGH

ENGSO President
Ms Sara MASSINI
Member of ENGSO Executive Committee
Ms Marie DENITTON
ENGSO Office Director
Ms Ivana PRANJIC
Coordinator of ENGSO Youth working group on sport diplomacy

European Olympic Committees (EOC)

Ms HEIDI PEKKOLA
Deputy Director
Mr Tone JAGODIC
Advisor
Mr Valentin CAPELLI
Policy Officer at EOC EU Office

European Paralympic Committee (EPC)

Mr Ratko KOVACIC

European Physical Education Association (EUPEA)

Mr Martin HOLZWEG
Executive Committee Member (Scientific Advisor)

European University Sports Association (EUSA)

Mr Andrej PISL
Communications and Projects Manager

Fare network

Mr Pavel KLYMENKO
Head of Policy - Global Monitoring and Human Rights

Global Association of International Sports Federations (GAISF)

Mr Davide DELFINI
Membership Manager

International Council of Sports Science and Physical Education (ICSSPE)

Mr Detlef DUMON
Executive Director

International Dance Organization (IDO)

Mr Patrik PEROSA
Advisor to the President

International School Sports Federation (ISF)

Mr Kole GJELOSHAJ
Deputy Secretary General

International Sport and Culture Association (ISCA)

Mr Mogens KIRKEBY
President

Peace and Sport

Ms Pauline JOHANET
External Relations Manager

Special Olympics Europe Eurasia

Mr Christo VELKOV
Vice President

Sports Rights Owners Coalition (SROC)

Mr Mark LICHTENHEIN
Chairman

The Association for International Sport for All (TAFISA Europe)

Mr Wolfgang BAUMANN
Secretary General

Union of European Football Associations (UEFA)

Mr James OGILVIE
EU & Governmental Affairs Manager

OBSERVATEUR

Panathlon International (observer)

Mr Pierre ZAPPELLI
International President

EPAS SECRETARIAT / SECRETARIAT DE L'APES

Mr Michael TRINKER
Deputy Executive Secretary