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Porto, Portugal

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18^{ème} Conférence du Conseil de l'Europe des Ministres responsables du sport

Porto, Portugal

9 octobre 2024

**DECLARATIONS BY HEADS OF DELEGATIONS AT PLENARY
SESSIONS [CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY]**

**DÉCLARATIONS DES CHEF.FES DE DÉLÉGATION EN SÉANCES
PLÉNIÈRES [SEUL LE PRONONCÉ FAIT FOI]**

prepared by / Préparé par

Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport



Accord partiel élargi sur le sport

Session 1

Collaborative governing: time to adapt the rules of the game?

Session 1

Gouvernance collaborative : est-il temps d'adapter les règles du jeu ?

POLAND / POLOGNE

Dear Mr Chairman, Minister Duarte, ladies and gentlemen,

Firstly, thank you very much for your wonderful hospitality.

Thank you very much for tackling such an important and topical subject. In my view, the key issue regarding good governance is to ensure the transparency of the functioning of sports organisations, including transparent decision-making processes as well as accountability mechanisms for sports bodies.

While respecting the autonomy of the sports movement we, as representatives of public authorities, must develop a legal framework and standards to ensure that sports organisations are reliable and accountable partners.

The second issue I want to talk about is the representation of women in governing bodies of sports organisations. According to research in the field of management, the greater the diversity in decision-making bodies of an organisation, the more effectively it operates. Polish female athletes achieve great successes in the international arena. Yet, this is not fully reflected in female representation in the management of Polish sport. Only four out of 69 Polish sports federations have a woman president.

Also, for this reason, the Ministry of Sport and Tourism has drawn up an amendment to the Act on Sport. It will require introducing a mandatory 30 percent gender parity in the governing bodies of Polish sports federations, counteracting gender discrimination in the sports community, and supporting pregnant athletes and young mothers. I believe that the proposed solutions will increase the democracy and quality of decision-making processes in Polish sports organisations.

As Minister of Sport and Tourism I also strive to ensure that all organisations and institutions responsible for the development of sport in Poland have a clear vision of long-term objectives and priorities of the country's sports policy. We are currently working on a new strategy of sport development in Poland until 2040. It is important to engage the sports community in the process. Together, we will determine what negative trends we want to reverse, and what areas require support and stimulation.

The strategy document will also include an analysis regarding the hosting of the Olympic Games in Poland. The Olympic Games in Paris have shown that there can be a different, more sustainable approach to organising an event of that scale. It was a wonderful celebration of sport, I congratulate France on taking full advantage of the potential of this event. We will want to use this experience when working on the concept of organizing the Olympic Games in Poland.

Of course, in this context it is important to improve the sports performance of our athletes. In line with the principles of sustainable development, funds allocated to competitive sport must be spent as effectively as possible so that they translate into better sporting results.

However, no expense should be spared on grassroots sport. In this field, the continuous increase of funding will help offset negative trends and is the best investment into the future. It is also significant to correctly identify key barriers to physical activity and to make decisions based on research and data.

Therefore, this year we have conducted fitness tests among nearly 3.1 million students aged 10 to 19. The aim was to determine their physical activity level. The results obtained have been compared to those of the surveys carried out in 1989, 1999 and 2009. Unfortunately, they have shown a constant deterioration in children's motor skills.

The programme will be continued to regularly monitor fitness level of the entire population of children and adolescents in Poland. We will be happy to share our results and compare them with similar surveys conducted in other countries. I firmly believe that we, as ministers responsible for sport, must respond and initiate changes in the approach to children and youth sport, including school sport. This will be the main priority of the Polish Presidency of the EU Council in the first half of 2025.

Thank you for your attention.

PORTUGAL

As organizações conseguem trabalhar melhor em rede, se cada uma souber as suas responsabilidades, as suas funções e os objetivos a atingir.

Para tal, é importante que todas as organizações sejam envolvidas nas tomadas de decisão desde o início. É fundamental conhecer o processo, fortalecer o compromisso e responsabilizar todos e cada elemento no seio das organizações.

Se pudermos dar um exemplo, Portugal está a construir um plano de desenvolvimento desportivo para os próximos 3 ciclos olímpicos. Identificou 17 Ministérios, além do primeiro-ministro e 41 Secretarias de Estado, com impacto direto ou indireto no desenvolvimento desportivo no País. Já foi realizada uma reunião de lançamento do projeto, explicando a todos os objetivos e as fases processo. Cada um dos departamentos do Governo, indicou um ponto focal. Após esta fase, o Grupo de trabalho, vai envolver todos os departamentos através desse ponto focal.

Desta forma, pensamos nós, todos os departamentos do governo serão ouvidos e envolvidos e será mais fácil trabalhar, em rede, para alcançar compromissos necessários.

Idêntico procedimento será efetuado com todos os stakeholders do movimento desportivo, incluindo uma visão externa internacional.

Parece importante realçar que cada organização deve ainda sentir-se confortável com os recursos que tem à disposição para responder positivamente aos desafios. Afetar os recursos adequados às responsabilidades de cada organização (tempo, pessoas, meios financeiros, etc), depende da liderança. Sem o compromisso da Liderança desde o início, tão pouco será possível trabalhar em rede em prol do desenvolvimento do desporto.

SAN MARINO / SAINT-MARIN

Mr. President,
Honourable Ministers,
Dear Colleagues,

it is a great honour and immense privilege for me to be here today on this important occasion to represent, as Minister of Sport, the Republic of San Marino.

In recent times, we have seen numerous scandals internationally that have undermined the credibility of sport, highlighting the need for greater transparency and accountability. As stated in many venues, when sport loses integrity, it betrays its deepest values.

Even a State of just 61 square kilometres is not immune to such occurrences, which is why, since my recent appointment in the San Marino Government, I have been thinking carefully about the main challenges standing in the way of truly collaborative sports governance. Although the issue is complex and there is no one-size-fits-all solution, I am convinced that two principles should guide our actions: sharing and involvement. These are not mere concepts, but core values that, if applied consistently, can transform the way we govern and experience sport.

Precisely sharing and involvement are the principles that will guide, above all else, the spirit of the Republic I represent, which, in recent years, has shown that through valuable collaboration among institutions, federations and sports associations it is possible to achieve significant results in this area. I am certain that, through the synergistic and joint work of institutions and those who have made sports their work and mission, we will be able to achieve even more ambitious goals.

Sharing and involvement, however, should not be limited to the walls of home: we are, here, today as parts of a larger and more ambitious project. The moments of meeting and training must be the starting point for each state to make its experiences available, including through the finalization of specific programs of international exchange in sports.

In this context, it is crucial to continue to promote international collaboration, creating a network for the exchange of experience, knowledge and resources. Small States, in particular, have much to offer in this context. We often share similar challenges, but our size also allows us to be agile and innovative. We need to strengthen the existing alliances among us and continue to stimulate our mutual growth. I am convinced that small States can become, even in the world of sports, a model for much larger countries.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate the importance of sharing and involvement. Sport is a complex car, which is driven by the contributions of governments, sports organizations, athletes and volunteers. If we want this car to reach its destination, we need to build solid roads together, made up of shared ideas, experiences and knowledge. Only in this way can we ensure a more equitable, inclusive and successful future for sports, where collaboration is not just an aspiration but a concrete reality.

TÜRKIYE

Honorable Ministers and Senior Officials of Council of Europe Member Countries,
Distinguished Representatives of International Sport Community,
Dear Participants, Youth Delegates,
Ladies, Gentlemen,

I would like to extend my gratitude to EPAS and Portuguese authorities on the occasion of organizing 18th Council of Europe Conference of Ministers Responsible for Sport.

The 17th Ministerial Conference hosted in Antalya just after the pandemics has provided a much-needed momentum to sports initiatives and collaborations in Türkiye as well as across Europe and beyond.

I sincerely hope that the outcomes of this conference will also yield positive results for the entire European sports community and beyond Europe as well.

I also think that the inclusion of youth delegates is a very encouraging development, reflecting our commitment to engaging the next generation in shaping the future of sports.

Dear Participants,

We still have several challenges that impede the adoption of a collaborative governing approach.

I think one of the primary challenges to strengthening collaboration in sports is the lack of communication among stakeholders.

We need to cultivate open dialogue platforms like EPAS which can serve as bridges between governments and organizations, facilitating the dissemination of best practices.

Another significant challenge is the lack of international alignment.

Cultural and economic differences make it difficult for each country to participate equally in governing of sport.

In this context, it is vital for international bodies to take an active role.

They can support a fair harmonization of diverse national realities, promoting a spirit of integration within the sports community.

I cannot go without mentioning that another challenge is human rights violations, occupations, and blockades.

Distinguished Participants,

Engaging all stakeholders in the decision-making process is a fundamental principle of collaborative governing.

Sports federations and governments can enhance the openness of decision-making processes through participatory structures, thereby strengthening the environment of trust.

We are going through an era where artificial intelligence, digitalization and technology reshape our governing practices, allowing us to expedite collaboration.

I believe that inclusivity must also be at the forefront of our efforts.

By embracing disadvantaged groups within the sports, we can create a more equitable and enriching governing environment for all.

I would like to state that we have declared this year as the Year of Mobility in Türkiye as an important indicator of the value we attach to sports for all.

We are also taking significant steps to continually improve the accessibility of sports based on equality of women and men in our country.

These efforts ensure that sports are accessible to everyone, while promoting greater participation of women in sports.

Dear Participants,

Encouraging partnerships between sports organizations and sectors like education, health, and technology can elevate sports as a crucial vehicle for sustainable development.

A strong example of inter-sectoral collaboration in Türkiye is “Türkiye Sports Talent Scouting and Guidance Program” launched in 2018.

With this project, it is aimed to establish a culture of doing sports in the society as a requirement of healthy life, to make children and young people love sports and to train high-level athletes by identifying talented ones.

This remarkable initiative, developed through the cooperation of the Ministry of National Education and the Ministry of Youth and Sports, with the partnership of private sector, stands as a testament to the power of collaborative governing of sport in Türkiye.

I would also like to mention our other Project named “One Hundred Percent (%100) Support from Universities to Turkish Sports in Higher Education”, which is an important example for dual career launched in 2019.

In line with the agreement reached with a total of 75 foundation universities, we have provided scholarships to national athletes who have excelled in international competitions in Olympic and Paralympic sports in the last four years.

This initiative not only promotes athletic excellence but also supports an inclusive governing model that empowers athletes in their educational and professional journeys.

Furthermore, in recent years, we have enacted legislative amendments aimed at enhancing collaboration among sports federations, clubs, and other stakeholders to ensure more sustainable governing of sport.

Dear friends, it is high time to adopt the rules of the game for collaborative governing.

To achieve this, we need to strengthen our cooperation and act together by sharing our good practices.

So we need more contributions of international organizations like EPAS.

Thank you.

CZECH REPUBLIC / REPUBLIQUE TCHEQUE

Dear chair, dear ministers, dear colleagues,

It is a great pleasure to be here in Porto for the Conference of Ministers responsible for sport. I would like to thank the Portuguese authorities and the Council of Europe for hosting us and for preparation of this conference.

We also greatly appreciate the selection of today's topic, since collaborative governance is essential for the development of sport at all levels, while recognizing the objectives and capabilities of various stakeholders.

States aim to have a healthy and active population, ensure equal and safe access to sport and physical activities for everyone, and, of course, produce successful top-level athletes.

On the other side, we have sports federations. Their goals may align with ours, but these federations also need to focus on the development of their organizations and achieving success through their athletes and sport in general. Naturally, they need to economically sustain their operations.

Our common goals and differences are the reason why we must foster mutual understanding. Our policies must support state priorities, while also creating an environment that enables the growth of sports organizations. This can be achieved through close cooperation between public authorities and sports federations.

We would like to share a few examples from Czechia. To ensure that all relevant voices are heard when forming our policies, we cooperate with stakeholders on various levels and stakeholders representing diverse interests. We work closely with our advisory board and expert groups from both the public and private sectors, as well as with political representatives. Every policy document approved at the governmental level undergoes the review by public institutions, in order to achieve the consensus.

We also organize seminars and meetings for our stakeholders several times a year. These sessions allow us to present our plans, to provide education, and engage them in meaningful exchanges about our work.

We find this approach very useful on the national level, as it broadens our perspectives and integrates stakeholder views into our work. Ultimately, we do not prepare these policies for ourselves, but for the development of Czech sport. Inclusion of diverse views makes it easier for us to promote and implement our actions.

I would like to emphasize that from our point of view, events like this conference are invaluable for enabling discussions with stakeholders involved in sports area on international level.

Thank you.

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GREECE / GRECE

No text submitted

LITHUANIA / LITUANIE

No text submitted

SERBIA / SERBIE

No text submitted

FINLAND / FINLANDE

Ministers, Colleagues,

First, I would like to thank the EPAS secretariat as well as the Portuguese hosts for organising this conference and for their outstanding hospitality during these days in the beautiful city of Porto.

Today's topic of good governance plays an essential part in the autonomy of sports.

Apart from the responsibility that the sports movement itself bears, the responsibility of the environment in which sport operates, national governments and the international community all play an instrumental role in building good governance. Respect for human rights, democracy and the rule of law as well as commitment to the multilateral system and its instruments keep in check poor governance in sports – such as corruption, self-interest and sports laundering.

With that being said, Finland's view is that all of us who work in sports need to be more vigilant, bring up and actively intervene in problems and shortcomings in sports administration, and put into effect adequate sanctions. To this end, both governments and the sports movement already have various tools, international and sport-specific instruments. We must implement them more effectively. Here, the role of governments is to put national legislation and the steering of the sports movement in order.

As we know, effective implementation requires close cooperation. It can be used to tackle the occasional value dispute and attitude problems, if we understand that work is being done for the benefit of sports and those working in sports, not to line our own pockets or to accumulate power.

In Finland, we have built structures in tandem with informal dialogue over the course of years. One example is the Advisory Board on Sport Ethics, which is an organ for cooperation and coordination between the public authorities, the sports movement and the civil society. Good governance is one of the Advisory Board's key themes during this term.

Our Ministry has also created responsibility/sustainability criteria for government grants. In good governance, they include requirements for open and transparent values, principles and practices, the participation of all organisation members in activities and decision-making, and prudent financial management and responsible fundraising. We expect organisations to have clear rules of procedure, including rules for conflict of interest and anti-corruption. The criteria also incorporate measures to train all actors to understand good governance and to continuously develop it, and to assess and monitor the measures. The sustainability programme adopted by the Finnish sport community is in line with the criteria. Both have been developed side by side in a spirit of good cooperation, and shared training opportunities have been organised for organisations.

Lastly, good governance in sport continually faces new challenges. Looking ahead, Finland deems EPAS cooperation in good governance important, and we support the examination of the revision of recommendations on the promotion of good governance in sport and on the principle of autonomy of sport in Europe as well as the whole draft resolution.

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NETHERLANDS / PAYS-BAS

No text submitted

UNITED KINGDOM / ROYAUME-UNI

The UK is clear that athletes across global sport should be able to compete on a level playing field. It is the shared responsibility of the entire international sport community to ensure this is possible.

Sport should be welcoming, inclusive and fair for all. That is why the UK very much welcomes this Conference's focus on sport governance, and our continued global collaboration across countries and stakeholders on this vital theme.

We feel that the UK has a strong track record of active participation in international sport governance, both within Europe and across global sport. While we recognise that sport is independent and autonomous, we also feel strongly that Governments (and indeed multilateral organisations such as the Council of Europe) have a clear role in articulating ethics, standards and principles in sport Governance. This is clearly important to protect the interests of our athletes and the public. That is why a collaborative approach is essential.

One of our key initiatives in recent years has been our Code for Sports Governance, launched in 2016 and updated in 2021. This Code sets out the standards all our domestic sports organisations must meet in return for public funding. This includes standards on transparency; diversity and inclusion; accountability; and financial integrity. It has been an important initiative in the UK to drive up standards of Governance, and is available to download on the UK Sport and Sport England websites, if of interest to other member states.

We are also looking at a new model of collaborative Governance in respect of football, where we are working with our football authorities to create a new Independent Football Regulator.

English football is an essential part of the social fabric of the United Kingdom. It is a global success story, and one of our greatest cultural exports. However, too often fans have had to fight back against unsuitable owners; have had to battle to keep their club's name, colours and badge; have seen their club try to join a closed league of select clubs like we saw with the European Super League; or even seen the risk of their club disappearing altogether.

Unfortunately, the English football industry has not gone far enough in tackling these issues, despite many opportunities to do so. That is why we are establishing a new Independent Regulator and a new set of rules to protect clubs, empower fans and keep clubs at the heart of their communities. We are determined to work with the football authorities to deliver a sensible, proportionate regulatory regime that protects our footballing heritage for future generations.

GERMANY / ALLEMAGNE

Ich danke Ihnen, Herr Minister Duarte, sowie der portugiesischen Regierung herzlich für die Gastfreundschaft hier in Porto und für die Ausrichtung dieser Konferenz.

Des Weiteren geht mein Dank an Herrn Berge (Stellvertretender Generalsekretär des Europarates) und das EPAS-Sekretariat für die Vorbereitung der Konferenzthemen sowie für den Resolutionsentwurf.

Vielen Dank auch an die Sprecherinnen und Sprecher für die interessanten Beiträge.

Sehr verehrte Kolleginnen und Kollegen, sehr verehrte Damen und Herren,

ich möchte mich nun zu der im Referenzdokument angesprochenen Idee einer verstärkten „collaborative governance“ äußern.

In der Tat bildet der Sport eine Schnittstelle zwischen Politik und der Zivilgesellschaft. Der Sport kann vielfältige positive Wirkungen entfalten, von denen die Gesellschaft als Ganzes profitiert. Ich denke hier zunächst an die Förderung von Gesundheit und Wohlbefinden, Zusammenhalt, Gleichstellung, Integration und Inklusion, Wertevermittlung, aber auch an die positive Reputation für das ganze Land durch sportliche Erfolge oder die gelungene Ausrichtung von Sportgroßveranstaltungen. Das alles ist schließlich der Grund dafür, dass der Sport von öffentlicher Seite umfangreich unterstützt wird. Der Sport wäre so, wie wir ihn kennen, ohne diese öffentliche Förderung schwerlich denkbar.

Der „Sport“ ist allerdings vielschichtiger und komplexer als oft gedacht. Um die gewünschten Wirkungen, die ich eben erwähnt habe, tatsächlich erzielen zu können, bedarf es in der Tat eines konstruktiven und vertrauensvollen Zusammenwirkens zwischen der Regierung und dem Sport – und darüber hinaus zum Teil auch mit weiteren relevanten Akteuren aus verschiedenen Sektoren. Es gilt, die an verschiedenen Stellen vorhandene fachliche Expertise zu nutzen, um sachgerechte Entscheidungen treffen zu können.

Auf der anderen Seite möchte ich nicht verhehlen, dass ich Ansätzen wie „co-decisionmaking“ und „co-responsibility“ tendenziell skeptisch gegenüberstehe.

Zwar verbindet Regierungen und Sportorganisationen – wie eben gesagt – grundsätzlich ein gemeinsames Interesse an der Stärkung des Sports. Allerdings können im Detail gleichwohl unterschiedliche, manchmal auch gegenläufige Interessenlagen und Verantwortlichkeiten bestehen. Ich denke, Sie alle, verehrte Kolleginnen und Kollegen, wissen nur zu gut, wovon ich spreche.

Sportorganisationen genießen – wie auch andere zivilgesellschaftliche Institutionen – eine verfassungsrechtlich geschützte Autonomie und sind in erster Linie gegenüber ihren Mitgliedern in der Pflicht.

Staatliche Behörden wiederum haben das öffentliche Interesse zu wahren. Deshalb sind sie gegenüber allen Bürgerinnen und Bürgern dafür verantwortlich, dass öffentliche Fördermittel von gut und verantwortungsvoll geführten Institutionen wie Sportverbänden sachgerecht und effizient verwendet werden. Sie haben insofern auch eine Kontrollaufgabe.

Ohne eine klare Trennung der Verantwortlichkeiten besteht deshalb die Gefahr von Intransparenz, mangelnder Legitimation und der Verschiebung von Verantwortung, somit von „bad governance“.

Kurz zusammengefasst: Wir sind generell sehr dafür, den Dialog zu intensivieren und insbesondere bei größeren Vorhaben auch geeignete Strukturen für eine engere, auch sektorübergreifende Kooperation verschiedener Akteure zu schaffen. Wie diese dann genau auszusehen hat, hängt dann von der konkreten Aufgabe und Zielsetzung ab. Demgegenüber stehen wir Instrumenten wie „co-decisionmaking“ und „co-responsibility“ – gerade aus Good Governance-Gesichtspunkten – kritisch gegenüber. Gleichwohl wäre insoweit die Vorstellung von Best-Practice-Beispielen interessant.

Vielen Dank für Ihre Aufmerksamkeit!

HOLY SEE / SAINT-SIEGE

Mister Minister,

The Delegation of the Holy See welcomes this Council of Europe Conference of the Ministers responsible for Sport and wishes to thank the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport (EPAS) and the Portuguese authorities for convening this meeting.

In light of the value-nurturing capacity of sport, my Delegation would like to now list three ways by which it has the power to transform society.

The first is by promoting social inclusion. An excellent example of this is how sport can help a society to more fully integrate and appreciate the capacities of persons with a physical or intellectual disability. Parasports show us the value and the right of all people to participate fully in society. In this way, inclusive sport functions as a prophetic and transformative message for our society. This is equally true for other individuals and groups that are tragically excluded from full participation in society.

By ensuring that refugees and migrants, for example, have access to participate, sport can become a platform for welcoming and integrating these communities that suffer from many challenges but who also hope for a better future.

The second aspect of the transformative power of sport is its capacity to promote peace. As Pope Francis reminds us, "Sport has always favoured universality characterized by fraternity and friendship among peoples, understanding and peace among nations, out of respect, tolerance, harmony of differences. Every sporting event, especially those of the Olympics, where representatives of nations with histories, cultures, traditions, faiths and different values meet, can become a channel of an ideal force capable of opening new and sometimes unexpected paths in the resolution of conflicts arising from human rights violations."¹

The third way sport has the capacity to transform society is through its spiritual dimension. Pope John Paul II described sport as a form of "gymnastics of the body and of the spirit"².

Indeed, "Athletic activity [...] highlights not only man's valuable physical abilities, but also his intellectual and spiritual capacities. It is not just physical strength and muscular efficiency, but it also has a soul and must show its complete face."³

From this perspective, the Church fully appreciates the value of sport and encourages all such experiences that contribute to the personal and collective development of human beings, made in the image and likeness of God. In conclusion, it is the hope of my Delegation that sport might always be a platform that allows people to find joy in their lives and to become messengers of that social harmony to which each person is called to contribute.

Thank you for your attention.

¹ FRANCIS, Address to the leaders and athletes of the Italian National Olympic Committee, 19 December 2014.

² JOHN PAUL II, Address to the Milan Soccer Team, 12 May 1979.

³ JOHN PAUL II, Address to the International Convention on the theme "During the time of the Jubilee: The Face and Soul of Sport", 28 October 2000, 2.

ICELAND / ISLANDE

Minister Duarte, other ministers and conference guests

The role of sports has throughout time been of great importance. During the time of the Covid-19 pandemic it was even more evident how important sports are for our society, particularly children and young people. In modern societies the role of sport is and should be evolving and collaborative governing has never been more current than now.

Collaborative governing in sports is not just a concept; it is a powerful approach that brings together public and non-state actors to achieve common goals and deliver impactful services to our communities. Through collaboration, we can harness the strengths of government agencies, sports organizations, community groups, and the private sector—to create a holistic framework that supports athletes, promotes inclusivity, and fosters community engagement. Also acknowledging different views, varying approaches and processes.

When we work together, we can ensure that sports serve as a catalyst for positive change, addressing social issues and enhancing the quality of life for all citizens. We must also bear in mind that collaboration requires commitment and open dialogue. It is essential that we create spaces for all voices to be heard, where stakeholders can come together to share ideas, identify challenges, and co-create solutions. We must embrace transparency and accountability in our partnerships, ensuring that our collective efforts are aligned with the needs and aspirations of the communities we serve.

In conclusion, collaborative governing in sports is not just a strategy; it is a commitment to building stronger, healthier, and more inclusive communities.

We would like to use the opportunity to thank our Portuguese hosts for their warm welcome and the beautiful setting for the conference here in Porto. We would also like to reaffirm our support to the work carried out by the Council of Europe in sports and the priorities set out in the resolution of the Conference.

OBSERVERS / OBSERVATEURS**SPORTS RIGHTS OWNERS COALITION (SROC) / COALITION DES PROPRIETAIRES DE DROITS SPORTIFS**

The positive results and statements that came out of the conference yesterday on the 10th Anniversary of the Macolin Convention demonstrated that many outcomes, deemed to be impossible at the start of the process, have indeed happened – and continue to happen.

We should draw upon this positivity to help preserve integrity in sport and improve governance by going further in the relationship with the gambling industry. In most jurisdictions, and unlike all other areas of sport business, where contractual relationships are in place, sport provides the raw material for a huge amount of revenue for bookmakers, without sporting events organisers receiving any fair return.

With a few exceptions among member states, notably in France and Portugal, gambling operators are free to offer bets of any type, on any sport, without the sports organiser's permission – and without any return. This, in itself, is an invitation for match fixing, since bets can be placed on outcomes that can easily be manipulated without raising attention, such as kicking a ball out of play or hitting a ball into the net.

It is indisputable that betting itself is the driving force behind the manipulation of sports competitions. Even if many of these bets are being placed with illegal or unlicensed operators, there is a wealth of empirical evidence to demonstrate that huge numbers of these bets are also being placed with legally licensed betting companies.

Surely, it would make much more sense for sports organisers, athletes and gambling operators alike to work together, collaboratively, to define the legitimate types of bets for each sport and to ensure that accurate, official data is being used to establish odds and to determine the outcome of bets. A well-defined relationship with the gambling industry would not only protect the commercial interests of operators, but would help sports organisers to better manage and fund the integrity measures necessary to support this commerciality.

Member States should be encouraged to examine the leadership of countries like France and Portugal in regulating the relationship between gambling and sport. Or to look further afield to examples in the United States, by enforcing commercial conditions on the granting of gambling licences to operators to procure official data from rights owners directly, rather than through unauthorised third parties.

A genuine, collaborative relationship between sport and the gambling industry across the world could help underpin integrity, improve governance and pave the way to greater success for the Macolin Convention in its second decade.

INTERNATIONAL SPORT AND CULTURE ASSOCIATION (ISCA) / ASSOCIATION INTERNATIONALE DU SPORT ET DE LA CULTURE

Huge influx of third-party investments and complex commercial ownership structures are the reality in the entertainment sport sector. It is a growing sector with physical passive entertainment and with a significant consume of resources and heavy climate footprint.

In the grassroots and recreational sport sector, the priorities are to assist citizens to be physical active, to promote social, physical and mental health. This sector is driven by democratic based civil society organisations with volunteer commitments of many thousands of citizens. It is a sector learning future generations to balance personal well-being with sustainable planet well-being.

These two very different sectors of sport are not a continuum with entertainment sport at one end and grassroots participations sport at the other end. These two very different sectors are not strongly inter-related in a so-called pyramid structure.

For years we have used collaborative governing models not reflecting available data and knowledge. One example: Big sport events and successful elite athletes performances have been claimed to promoting and increasing sport participation. Over decades - massive data and research have proven this is not the case. Big sports events are not a driver for increased sport participation.

That's facts. Maybe not convenient facts, maybe not what is wished – but the reality. Collaborative governing, policies, economic support should be based on and reflect the reality – in the sport sectors it means that the different sport sectors should be governed and supported very differently.

ISCA will the coming two years run an initiative where we will illustrate, promote and present the reality of the very diverse European sport sectors and sport models. We will be happy to include collaborative governing models reflecting the diverse reality in the sport sectors.

We are very happy to see this theme is on the agenda at this ministerial conference. And that the EPAS is rethinking the way public authorities and the sports movement co-ordinate and co-operate, and guaranteeing governance models that meets the needs of the sport sectors.

That is needed if we want that sport also in the future touches a high portion of the European population. If we want to treat the various sport sectors equally, they have to be served and governed very differently.

EUROPEAN PHYSICAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION (EUPEA) / ASSOCIATION EUROPEENNE D'EDUCATION PHYSIQUE

La convention montre l'importance du sport dans nos sociétés. Le sport fait sans doute partie d'un des domaines de la culture humaine les plus partagés dans le monde.

Il est reconnu comme étant un lien important entre ceux qui le pratiquent. Sa pratique apporte des dimensions éducatives fondamentale dans nos société moderne et il a un impact positif sur nos vies.

Pourtant des enfants et des jeunes ont accès de façon inégalitaire et les plus pauvres et en particulier les milieux populaires.

Pour réduire ces inégalités le temps obligatoire d'éducation physique à l'école est très important.

Pourtant dans la convention ne fait pas référence dans la gouvernance au lien nécessaire et important entre le monde du sport et l'éducation physique. La charte Européenne fait mention de l'importance de l'éducation physique comme clés de développement de l'accès à tous et toutes au sport.

En affirmant à nouveau l'importance du développement de l'éducation physique comme un droit fondamental comme le souligne l'Unesco, le monde du sport et de l'éducation physique doivent construire des espaces de discussions et d'échanges.

L'Europe se doit de montrer l'exemple de bonne pratique et proposer dans cette conférence des ministres des sports de suivre la recommandation du dernier rapport de l'Unesco en proposant au moins 3h d'EPS pour tous les élèves.

Les comités nationaux olympiques sont l'une des instances du sports les plus large et représentative du monde du sport. Il serait intéressant qu'un représentant du monde de l'éducation physique soit présent pour travailler ce lien.

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EU ATHLETES (New name as of 01.10.24: European Athletes and Players Association, EAPA)

No text submitted

Session 2

Good Governance: moving the goal post forwards?

Session 2

Bonne gouvernance : comment se rapprocher du but ?

ANDORRA / ANDORRE

Monsieur le Secrétaire Général adjoint,
Excellences,
Mesdames et Messieurs,

Je voudrais tout d'abord remercier le Gouvernement Portugais et le Secrétariat du APES pour l'organisation de cette conférence, et de nous donner l'opportunité de partager nos bonnes pratiques de la bonne gouvernance dans le sport.

En Andorre, la bonne gouvernance sportive repose sur la proximité entre le Secrétariat d'État aux Sports, les entités sportives et les athlètes, rendue possible par la petite taille de notre pays. Cette proximité favorise la communication, l'accès à l'information et la gestion des besoins des différents acteurs sportifs.

Avec une population de 85.000 habitants, l'Andorre compte plus de 10.000 athlètes fédérés, 41 entités sportives, un centre technique sportif, ainsi que des installations qui accueillent des événements sportifs de haut niveau, tels que des matchs de basketball et de football, entre autres sports, de championnats nationaux et internationaux, comme la ligue espagnole.

Toutes les démarches administratives, telles que les demandes de subventions et de bourses pour les athlètes, la gestion des calendriers sportifs et des résultats, sont centralisées sur une plateforme numérique. De plus, nous rencontrons régulièrement les dirigeants et les athlètes pour résoudre leurs questions. Chaque année, une réunion avec les fédérations et les athlètes boursiers affiche un taux de participation de plus de 85 %.

Chaque mois de novembre, les entités soumettent leurs demandes de subventions via une plateforme numérique. Ensuite, des réunions sont organisées pour évaluer les objectifs sportifs, les calendriers et les projets spécifiques de chaque fédération. Cette proximité permet aux entités de mieux comprendre les critères d'attribution des subventions et de connaître les personnes responsables de l'étude de leurs dossiers.

En collaboration avec les fédérations, nous avons également mis en place des règlements pour l'attribution des bourses aux athlètes, adaptés aux spécificités de chaque sport.

Il convient également de signaler l'importance de l'Agence antidopage andorrane, créée pour répondre aux obligations souscrites par l'Andorre au moment de devenir un État partie à la Convention du Conseil de l'Europe contre le dopage, en 2006.

Nous avons aussi développé le programme Sport-Études, qui permet aux jeunes talents sportifs d'augmenter leurs heures d'entraînement sans nuire à leurs études, grâce à une coopération étroite avec le Ministère de l'Éducation et les écoles.

Enfin, en matière de bonne gouvernance, nous introduirons en novembre un protocole de prévention des abus sexuels, incluant la formation de délégués de protection de l'enfance pour chaque fédération, en suivant les recommandations de l'APES et du comité de Lanzarote à cet égard.

Ainsi, bien que le contexte andorran soit particulier, il offre des pratiques exemplaires exportables à d'autres pays.

Merci de votre attention.

BULGARIA / BULGARIE

Honorable Ministers,
Distinguished Delegates,
Guests and Observers,
Dear young people,

I would like, first and foremost, to express my compliments to the Portuguese authorities for the organization of this conference and to thank for the warm hospitality.

It is an honor for me to speak to all of you on the topic of good governance in sport. It is also a privilege because over the last couple of years Bulgaria has been working hard and consistently with its counterparts (public bodies and sport federations) at national and international level to improve the sports governance framework.

Good governance occupies a central place in the policies and activities of the Ministry of Youth and Sports. We strive to adhere to the highest principles of good governance by ensuring transparency in the public expenditure, promoting the values inherent to sport, introducing accountability rules for sports organizations and working together with our partners to tackle pressing issues such as, discrimination, doping, match-fixing, corruption, harassment against children and women, etc. Let me give you two examples: first, under the Physical Education and Sports Act the renewal of a license of a sports federation or a national sports organization is conditional upon their preceding compliance with the humane principles of sport and sport ethics and the implementation of the necessary actions to prevent the use of doping and violence before, during and after sports events; and second, from this year sports federations are required to publish information on their websites regarding the funds spent received under the Olympic training programmes and the programmes for the development of elite sport for Olympic and Non-Olympic sports administered by the Ministry.

In addition, I would like to share that we are working on different European projects which touch upon topics related to good governance. One of them implemented in the period January 2021- December 2023 is "ACTION - Governance Sport Codification Convergence". The outcome of the project is a European Convergent Code of Good Governance in Sport disseminated to our sports federations. Another is "MotivAction" which focuses on establishing more effective methods to encourage athletes, referees and coaches to report match-fixing, and developing national action plans and whistleblowing mechanisms. As part of this project, the Ministry elaborated a Handbook on safe reporting of sports manipulations and presented it to a wide range of stakeholders during a conference in April this year. The Handbook envisages the establishment of a single point of contact within the Ministry who will be responsible for handling reports and for protecting the confidentiality of the information.

Last but not least, I would like to say that we are progressing towards establishing a National platform against manipulation of sports events as pursuant to the Macolin Convention. We hope that very soon an agreement will be signed between various interested parties (law enforcement and investigative authorities, sport federations and other institutions) which will allow us to formalize the cooperation with our partners and fight effectively against match-fixing.

As a final remark, achieving good governance in sport is a process which implies everyday efforts by all entities in multiple aspects. National governments with the support of international bodies should set the example and provide guidance and support in order to safeguard sport from potential threats. Sports organizations, on their part, should seek to step up action to strengthen their structures and demonstrate their responsibility for the best development of sport.

Thank you for the attention!

ITALY / ITALIE

Chers collègues,

C'est un grand honneur pour moi d'être avec vous pour partager quelques réflexions sur le rôle du sport dans la société contemporaine.

L'année 2024 est spéciale pour l'Italie : nous avons le privilège de présider le G7, où sont abordés les questions du développement durable, et, du point de vue sportif, nous avons pris le relai de Paris pour les Jeux Olympiques et Paralympiques d'hiver de Milano Cortina 2026.

Pour nous tous, le sport est rencontre, humanité et paix.

Pour nous tous, le sport est culture, porteur des valeurs qu'il faut vivre.

Pour nous tous, le sport est un « droit humain fondamental » ; il est protégé par le Conseil de l'Europe et par de nombreuses constitutions. L'Italie, depuis 2023, a reconnu dans sa loi fondamentale la valeur éducative et sociale de l'activité sportive sous toutes ses formes.

Etant d'accord sur le rôle extraordinaire que le sport peut et doit jouer, nous avons de plus en plus besoin d'une plateforme commune et standardisée pour « mesurer » l'impact des investissements dans le sport et l'héritage des grands événements sportifs.

C'est pour cette raison que l'Italie a adopté le Compte Satellite Sportif, qui permettra, conformément aux recommandations européennes, de quantifier l'impact économique du secteur sportif et comparer les données au niveau continental.

Cela nous permettra de mieux connaître, orienter et optimiser les politiques publiques, notamment à travers une collaboration efficace entre le Conseil de l'Europe, l'Union européenne, l'UNESCO, l'OCDE et le mouvement olympique.

Tous ensemble, nous pouvons faire plus et mieux en adoptant des politiques publiques qui améliorent la gouvernance du sport tout en respectant son autonomie.

Investir dans le sport est bénéfique en termes de bien-être et également pour les finances publiques.

Le paradigme "plus de sport, plus de santé, plus de bien-être individuel et social" peut également s'appliquer aux pays émergents ou à ceux qui offrent moins d'opportunités. Et c'est pour cette raison que le gouvernement italien a lancé une collaboration avec les pays africains dans le domaine du sport, dans le cadre du « Plan Mattei pour l'Afrique », présenté en janvier dernier par le Premier Ministre Giorgia Meloni.

C'est pour cette raison que l'Italie a créé, dans le cadre du G7, un groupe de travail sur le thème du sport et du développement durable, dans le cadre de l'initiative « Partenariat pour l'infrastructure et l'investissement globale ».

Par ailleurs, dans cette phase historique difficile, il est essentiel de continuer à promouvoir les valeurs de l'intégrité sportive. L'Italie et l'agence Nado sont à disposition pour étudier des projets conjoints, notamment grâce à un nouveau laboratoire antidopage que nous inaugurerons l'année prochaine à Rome, une sorte d'héritage olympique et paralympique positif et anticipé des Jeux d'hiver de Milano Cortina 2026.

Je voudrais conclure mon intervention en faisant référence au passage de relais entre Paris 2024 et Milan Cortina 2026. Après Cortina 1956, Rome 1960 et Turin 2006, les Jeux Olympiques et Paralympiques accueilleront en février et mars 2026 3500 athlètes olympiques et paralympiques provenant de plus de 90 nations.

Milano Cortina 2026 est sans aucun doute un exemple vertueux de la manière dont les institutions publiques et le mouvement olympique peuvent travailler ensemble pour garantir le succès du sport et, surtout, laisser un profond héritage social, économique, infrastructurel et environnemental aux générations à venir.

Merci.

MONACO

Monsieur le Président,
 Monsieur le Secrétaire Général adjoint du Conseil de l'Europe ;
 Mesdames et messieurs les Ministres,
 Mesdames et Messieurs,

Permettez-moi tout d'abord d'exprimer ma profonde gratitude envers le gouvernement portugais pour son accueil exemplaire dans la magnifique cité de Porto. Cette ville historique, avec son riche patrimoine culturel, offre un cadre inspirant pour notre Conférence Ministérielle sur la gouvernance sportive.

La bonne gouvernance dans le sport est un sujet qui revêt une importance capitale pour la Principauté de Monaco. Notre engagement dans ce domaine est porté au plus haut niveau de l'État par S.A.S. le Prince Albert II, dont l'implication personnelle au sein notamment du Comité International Olympique témoigne de notre détermination à promouvoir l'intégrité et l'excellence dans le monde sportif.

Au niveau national, le Gouvernement Princier a entrepris des démarches concrètes pour renforcer la gouvernance sportive. Le projet de loi que nous avons récemment déposé auprès du Conseil National, constitue une étape majeure dans cette direction. Ce texte ambitieux vise à restructurer en profondeur l'organisation du sport à Monaco, en s'articulant autour de plusieurs axes fondamentaux, tels que :

- La création d'un Comité national sur le sport : cet organe incarnera notre vision d'une gouvernance collaborative, réunissant les acteurs clés du monde sportif monégasque pour façonner une politique cohérente et inclusive.
- La consécration légale du Comité monégasque olympique : en inscrivant le statut du Comité dans la loi, nous renforçons son rôle central dans la promotion des valeurs olympiques et la coordination du sport de haut niveau.
- L'encadrement des fédérations sportives : ledit projet de loi prévoit un processus d'agrément rigoureux pour les fédérations, garantissant un alignement avec les standards de bonne gouvernance.
- La régulation des associations sportives : l'introduction du « label sport » est une innovation majeure de notre projet. Ce label, basé sur quatre conditions essentielles pour l'obtenir, vise à promouvoir une culture de l'excellence et de l'éthique dans le sport amateur.

à savoir :

- des statuts conformes aux principes de bonne gouvernance, avec un accent particulier sur l'égalité des genres et la lutte contre toute forme de violence ou de harcèlement.
- la garantie d'un encadrement de qualité et irréprochable.
- une couverture d'assurance adéquate pour protéger les pratiquants.
- l'alignement du projet associatif avec notre politique sportive nationale.

Ce label, en phase avec la Recommandation CM/Rec (2018) 12 du Comité des Ministres, ouvrira aux bénéficiaires, notamment, l'accès à une éligibilité aux subventions publiques. Nous voyons cette mesure comme un levier important pour encourager les meilleures pratiques au sein de notre tissu associatif sportif.

En outre, ledit projet de loi impose aux fédérations sportives l'adoption d'une charte déontologique et éthique qui vise à créer un cadre uniforme et cohérent pour l'ensemble du sport monégasque.

Ces initiatives démontrent l'engagement profond et multidimensionnel de Monaco envers une gouvernance sportive exemplaire. Nous sommes convaincus que ces mesures contribueront à créer un environnement sportif plus sain, plus équitable et plus performant, bénéficiant à tous les niveaux de pratique, du sport amateur au sport de haut niveau.

Pour conclure, je tiens à exprimer notre sincère gratitude envers vous tous, pour avoir accordé votre confiance à Monaco en choisissant notre Principauté pour accueillir la prochaine Conférence des Ministres des Sports du Conseil de l'Europe en 2026. C'est un honneur et une responsabilité que nous prenons très au sérieux. Nous nous engageons à mettre tout en œuvre pour que cet événement soit à la hauteur de l'importance cruciale de la gouvernance sportive dans notre société moderne.

Nous sommes impatients de vous accueillir en Principauté et de poursuivre ces discussions essentielles pour l'avenir du sport. Cette conférence sera l'occasion de partager nos expériences, d'apprendre les uns des autres et de renforcer notre coopération internationale dans ce domaine vital.

Je vous remercie de votre attention.

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UKRAINE

No text submitted

ARMENIA / ARMENIE

Honorable Deputy Secretary General Mr. Berge,
Distinguished Mr. Duarte,
Distinguished Mr. Husting
Dear colleagues,

I am pleased to welcome the participants and organizers of the 18th Council of Europe Conference of Ministers responsible for Sport.

As the public authority responsible for sport, we are developing a governance model that meets the needs and rights of athletes and other sport stakeholders, spectators and civil society. In this regard, in December 2023 the Government of the Republic of Armenia approved the Strategy on physical culture and sport for 2024-2030 and its Action Plan, one of the important directions of which is the review and qualitative reform of governance in the sport, including introduction of a new format of cooperation with the private sector and stakeholders.

We highly appreciate participatory decision-making process and that is the reason that all stakeholders including those from the civil society were involved in the development of reforms in the sport sector. This year the "Sports Management Center" was also established, and the purpose of which is the unified property management of sports facilities and the effective implementation of various programs in the field of sport.

The Government of Armenia has also increased state funding for sports several times over the past few years. The funding is aimed at developing sports, and for this purpose new sports facilities are being intensively built in Yerevan and the regions of Armenia.

It should be mentioned that Armenia has positive experiences of hosting major sports events. In particular European Adult Weightlifting Championships, IBA Junior World Boxing Championships, World Adult Sambo Championships in 2023, UEFA Futsal Champions League Finals in 2024. Moreover, Armenia will host European Shooting Championships in 2026, Francophonie Games and World Weightlifting Championships in 2027. This systematic process, which also includes the governance, will allow for more experience and best practices to be shared.

I would also like to emphasize that governance structures can change, evolve and adapt to meet the needs of the sport organization and its stakeholders. A number of potential governance principles can be used, but a common set of principles agreed upon by national sports federations is needed to ensure that sports organizations operate effectively.

I am more than confident that our joint efforts will allow overcoming current and coming challenges facing the sport.

Thank you for your kind attention.

SLOVAKIA / SLOVAQUIE

Ladies and gentlemen,

Collaborative governing is essential for achieving the common goals we have, whether this is through governmental institutions, sports organizations, or the private sector. This means that public and private sectors, as well as communities, must work together to reach these shared objectives. Slovakia has already proven that this is possible, for example, in organizing major international events where institutions at both national and local levels successfully cooperated.

A significant shift in this area occurred with the establishment of the new Ministry of Tourism and Sports, which has greatly improved communication with sports federations and the private sector. Currently, we are working on several projects focused on building sports infrastructure, where the public and private sectors are working closely together to deliver modern and high-quality sports facilities.

One of the biggest challenges we face in such management is often the difference in interests. Public institutions are typically oriented towards public welfare and adhering to regulations, while private entities focus on commercial success. These varying approaches make it difficult to find common solutions, especially when resources are unevenly distributed.

Another obstacle is the lack of clear communication channels between the parties involved. Without a regular and transparent dialogue, it is difficult to coordinate actions and ensure that all parties are working towards the same goal. This leads to inefficiencies and slows down the development of sports initiatives.

To address this issue, we are currently working on improving the dialogue between stakeholders and creating spaces where all individuals can meet and share their perspectives and needs. Additionally, we are providing financial incentives for projects based on collaboration between stakeholders, which helps motivate all parties involved to cooperate.

EPAS could play a key role in this by overseeing transparency in processes and promoting ethical measures and accountability in sports projects.

In conclusion, if we want to achieve truly effective sports management, we must focus on overcoming the differences between sectors and building trust through better collaboration. Only then can we create a strong and sustainable sports system for future generations.

Thank you for your attention.

CROATIA / CROATIE

Dear chair(s), ministers, dear colleagues,

I would like to thank the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs for hosting this Conference in beautiful Porto.

I want to express my appreciation to the Council of Europe and EPAS for their continuous efforts in encouraging the use of the Revised Sports Charter as a guide for creating fair, ethical, and accessible sports systems.

Dear colleagues, today we are discussing good governance in sport and adopting an important Resolution, acknowledging that change requires a gradual process, collaborative efforts, and commitment.

The Resolution is an important milestone toward improved governance in sport highlighting the critical role of values-based sport in promoting integrity, transparency, and inclusivity.

To ensure security and fairness in the sports system, the enforcement of laws and general acts of sports organizations is crucial, which in Croatia is overseen by the sports inspection authority.

To improve oversight and ensure the long-term development of sport in Croatia, we have established the National Sports Information System. This system facilitates funding from the state budget to promote greater transparency and includes integrated electronic registries and records, forming the basis for efficient sports management.

With the new Sports Act, we have made significant progress by instituting mandatory registries and records, which guarantee publicly accessible information and facilitate systematic data collection across all segments of sport in our country.

The Act also advances the development of Croatian sport by establishing sports categorization, criteria for assessing the programs for public needs in sport, and improve support for elite athletes through scholarships and pension and health insurance. It also permits all sports activities to be conducted through registered businesses.

Individuals convicted or facing criminal proceedings for offenses against children or minors are prohibited from working in the Croatia's sports system, helping to maintain a safe and abuse-free environment in sports.

Additionally, our National Sport Programme focuses on clarifying the roles and responsibilities of stakeholders, harmonizing and connecting public sports registers, and enhancing the management and administrative capacities within the National Sports System.

I would like to highlight that we have established a coordinating body to combat doping within the sports system, collaborating with all relevant national authorities to implement effective anti-doping mechanisms, and we look forward to seeing these activities launched soon.

Good governance is crucial for the long-term sustainability of sports organizations and for maintaining public confidence in sports events and institutions. However, we occasionally face challenges that can impede this process.

Lack of transparency, weak regulatory frameworks, limited financial resources, and technological challenges can slow progress. By recognizing and addressing these obstacles, we can improve our governance practices and gain numerous key benefits.

Finally, good governance in sport, combined with a collaborative approach, fosters trust and accountability within organizations, enabling them to achieve common goals and navigate challenges effectively.

Dear chair(s), we give our full support to the Resolution and are committed to continuing good governance in and through sport, in line with the European Sports Charter.

Thank you

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AZERBAIJAN / AZERBAIDJAN

No text submitted

SLOVENIA / SLOVENIE

Globally, achieving good governance in sport faces several key obstacles: corruption and financial mismanagement, lack of transparency and accountability within sport governing bodies, political interference, insufficient regulation and enforcement, gender inequality and discrimination, conflicts of interest, commercial pressures, and the prioritization of profits over athletes' welfare.

But how different are all these obstacles to any other sector of society, including the public sector?

Good governance is obviously key throughout our society. It is related to transparency, efficiency, financial stability, social responsibility, and long-term development. In relation to sport, it is also crucial due to principles of autonomy and specificity of sport. We should not forget them as some aspects of sport are different to other sectors of society. Not every sector also educates, socialises, is beneficial for health, or acts as a role-model and brings people together at a large scale. It is therefore necessary to work in collaboration with the sport movement even when it comes to good governance in sport, not against it by imposing excessive or unnecessary requirements.

In Slovenia, for example, we established in 1999 a consultative body to the Government called the Expert Council for Sport to consult on expert matters and provide assistance in decision-making in regard to sport policy. The Expert Council is composed of 17 members and represents different levels of sport movement. The key is that the sport movement can express its needs and be able to comment on strategic and legal acts in the field of sport together with public authorities.

To make good governance in sport a developmental asset, we therefore also need good governance on the side of the public sector. This means legislation where strictly needed, funding based on merit and transparent governing structures which bring together the sport movement and public authorities.

All in all, Slovenia supports that the Ministerial Resolution, which will be adopted later today, highlights collaborative governing as important step to working better together with the sport movement both in the Council of Europe and in the EU. Only such way forward can be a fresh approach to match sports societal importance.

NORWAY / NORVEGE

Sport has a great potential to do good. Unfortunately, we have seen evidence to the contrary in recent years – be it doping scandals, manipulation of competitions, corruption or lack of transparency in sports organisations.

Supporting Fair Play and condemning all forms of cheating and criminal activity in sport is necessary if we want to maintain credibility and a high general interest for sport in society.

We must, therefore, keep up the pressure to fight doping in sport. We must work to curb the manipulation of competitions, and we must combat corruption and secure transparency, democracy and good governance, on all levels in sport.

In our view, there is a clear need for many of the international sport federations to reform their decision-making processes and to step up their work to ensure good governance in their own organisations.

A strong democratic mind-set should be the cornerstone of our sporting federations, both nationally and internationally.

As governments we can encourage the sports organisations, and we can make requests and demands, not least when providing funding.

We can, and we should, make public funding to sport dependent on an open, transparent and democratic sports organisation that also takes responsibility for fighting corruption in sport at an international level.

At the end of the day, it is the sports organisations themselves that must be in the driving seat if we are to see lasting change when it comes to good governance in sport.

There is a lot of work to be done and all countries must find out what will work for them.

Maybe some of the initiatives of the Norwegian sports organisation can serve as inspiration:

- In an effort to develop its work with good governance, internally, the Norwegian sports organisation has established a National Ethics Commission, set up a whistleblowing system, introduced a prosecution committee and formulated a national code of conduct.
- The Norwegian sports organisation has also adopted an international strategy, in which they, among other issues, have committed themselves to
 - o promoting transparency and democratic principles in all decision-making processes in sport,
 - o supporting transparency on financial cash flows, zero tolerance for corruption and effective anti-corruption programmes,
 - o promoting control mechanisms and transparency about findings and irregularities, and
 - o proposing term limits and length of periods of office for high-ranking positions in international sport.

Finally, we would like to underline our support to Ukraine and the Ukrainian people in their fight against Russia's unjustified and illegal attack on their country – and reiterate that Russia and their ally, Belarus, should have no place in international sport as long as the war continues.

SWITZERLAND / SUISSE

Monsieur le Ministre du Portugal,
Mesdames et Messieurs les Ministres,
Chères participantes et Chers participants à cette Conférence des Ministres du sport du Conseil de l'Europe,

J'aimerais tout d'abord, au nom de la Suisse, remercier chaleureusement nos hôtes portugais, en particulier Monsieur le Ministre Pedro Duarte.

L'accueil qui nous est réservé dans cette magnifique ville de Porto est sensationnel.

La Suisse a une longue tradition et un grand amour pour le sport. Plus de 75% de sa population pratique régulièrement le sport et un large public assiste avec ferveur aux grands événements sportifs.

Par ailleurs, grâce à la présence du CIO et de nombreuses fédérations internationales sportives sur notre territoire, la Suisse a le privilège d'être le siège d'une grande partie des acteurs majeurs du monde du sport.

Ces deux éléments confèrent à notre pays des responsabilités en matière de bonne gouvernance dans le sport. Et la Suisse veut assumer ses responsabilités !

Pour cela, le Ministère des sports suisse et Swiss Olympic ont lancé récemment le vaste projet « Ethique dans le sport ». Ce projet repose sur 5 champs d'action, dont le premier s'intitule « développement de la bonne gouvernance ». Des critères de bonne gouvernance à respecter par les fédérations sportives suisses comme la transparence des flux financiers, la présence d'au moins 40% des deux sexes dans les organes dirigeants et l'absence de conflits d'intérêts ont été introduits.

Un autre pilier du projet « Ethique dans le sport » a été la création début 2022 de la Fondation Swiss Sport Integrity, qui s'occupe de la lutte contre le dopage, contre les comportements inadéquats et contre les irrégularités dans le sport.

Il existe au sein de Swiss Sport Integrity un Service de signalement des abus et des maltraitances, qui examine tous les cas qui lui sont signalés.

Notre Ministre des sports veut absolument que la tolérance zéro soit appliquée en matière de violence, de mauvais traitements et d'intimidations dans le monde sportif.

Les organisations sportives devront donc s'engager

- d'une part à être gérée de manière irréprochable,
 - et d'autre part à prendre des mesures pour protéger les athlètes,
- si elles souhaitent solliciter des aides financières de la Confédération.

Mesdames et Messieurs,

La Suisse a récemment signé la Déclaration internationale sur la transparence, la démocratie et les droits humains dans le sport, rédigée à l'initiative du Danemark. Car elle souhaite que le sport soit protégé, puisqu'il apporte des bienfaits multiples à la société.

Les organisations sportives nationales et internationales qui luttent pour améliorer la bonne gouvernance, l'intégrité et l'éthique du sport et donc pour préserver ces bienfaits doivent être soutenues par les pouvoirs publics. Et la Suisse est à disposition de ces organisations sportives !

Merci de votre attention.

CYPRUS / CHYPRE

Honorable Ministers,
Dear Colleagues,

Sport organisations hold distinctive autonomy due to their societal roles, contributing to health, education, and inclusivity. However, many organisations have faced a "legitimacy gap," stemming from corruption, mismanagement, and lack of oversight. Among others this is influenced by three factors: "the misconceived understanding of autonomy", "the absence of term limits", and "unresolved conflicts of interest".

First, the misperception of autonomy can foster a lack of accountability. While autonomy is essential, it's often misunderstood as immunity from oversight, leading to governance structures resistant to necessary reforms. Autonomy should come with responsibility to uphold transparency and integrity.

Second, "the absence of term limits" allows board members to remain in power for too long, consolidating control and creating a sense of "ownership" over the sport, which hinders progress. This lack of turnover excludes young people and women from leadership, limiting diversity and innovation.

Third, "conflicts of interest" arise when decision-makers hold multiple roles or have vested interests, leading to biased decisions. Without strong conflict management mechanisms, personal or financial interests can override the organisation's broader needs.

In Cyprus, we have taken measures to address these issues. In 2018, we introduced a "Code for Good Governance" to guide federations on issues like strategic planning, term limits, and conflict of interest management. However, the voluntary nature of this code has seen limited success, leading us to consider revising it and exploring legislation to address these issues.

Additionally, we have included in our national legislation the majority of the provisions of the Macolin Convention which offers a framework for enhancing transparency and tackling corruption. These guidelines are key to strengthening governance across sport.

To ensure sustained progress, we could consider the establishment of an international supervisory body to oversee governance in sport. Such a body could ensure compliance with governance standards and offer support, especially to smaller federations. But its cost and funding should be carefully considered.

We could also link state funding to governance performance. Only organisations that adhere to transparency and accountability should receive public funds. This approach, already under discussion in Cyprus, ensures responsible use of public money and strengthens oversight.

Supporting smaller sport organisations is essential, as they often lack the resources to improve governance. Initiatives like the GReFORM online training platform, developed with EU funding and led by the Cyprus Sport Organisation, provide training to help these organisations enhance their governance practices. We continue to improve through participation in projects like ACTION and ACTION+ aimed at advancing governance.

Finally, EPAS plays a crucial role by promoting knowledge exchange and best practices among member states, which can support standardized governance models for all sports organisations.

Thank you

OBSERVERS / OBSERVATEURS**CENTRE FOR SPORT AND HUMAN RIGHTS / CENTRE POUR LE SPORT ET LES DROITS DE L'HOMME**

Thank you very much to the hosts and to the EPAS Secretariat for the fantastic programme.

Thank you very much James and Marko for your interventions today.

And congratulations to ASOIF for the important steps taken to further include human rights in the Governance Review.

The first point I would like to raise is that all activities conducted by sport bodies, like any other organisation, have human rights implications:

1. Governance itself
2. Management
3. Marketing and Communication
4. Development and Education including Safeguarding
5. Revenue Generation
6. And last but not least Event Coordination and Delivery

A robust human rights due diligence process, as outlined in Article 6 of the European Sport Charter, allows sport bodies not only to commit to respecting all internationally recognised human rights but also to take very practical and concrete steps to embed respect for human rights in their own activities and operations.

Specifically, a human rights due diligence approach allows sport bodies to develop comprehensive policies to monitor human rights risks, address them in collaboration with all actors, track progress and efficiently communicate externally on the steps taken.

Event delivery is a great start for sport bodies to embed human rights due diligence in its operations.

The Centre for sport and human rights has been working with sport bodies to move from commitment to human rights implementation in mega sporting events.

For example, this year we worked with UEFA to help finalise and deliver the Human Rights Declaration and provide human rights training to workforce and fans welfare coordinators for the Men's EURO 2024 in Germany. We are developing reflections on the work of the EURO 2024 human rights board and planning support for the Women's EURO in Switzerland 2025.

We partnered with IOC and with Paris 2024 to deliver training on non-discrimination for all workforce.

We have been working with European Athletics on processes to develop bidding requirements and a human rights policy.

And last, we are working with 6 National Olympic Committees from Scandinavia and Northern Europe to develop guidance for sport organisations to integrate human rights through all phases of the event lifecycle. I would like to emphasise the importance of these collaborations. The information and knowledge we are exchanging and the mutual learning opportunities we are gathering are just essential to work towards the convergence of sport and human rights.

Working with all actors, including governments, sport bodies, civil society, NGOs and athletes representatives, provides the Centre with the direct experience to develop tools and guidance that we can share as a public good on our website. Available and accessible to everyone online.

To conclude, I would like to mention two important documents that we published this year:

1. Roadmap to Remedy A series of outputs that provide knowledge, recommendations, and practical tools for sport bodies and Affected Persons and their representatives to raise the standard of access to remedy for abuse cases in sport.
2. Human Rights Playbook which provides comprehensive, practical step by step guidance to help sport bodies develop a human rights strategy.

We are very grateful for these collaborations, we are grateful for the support of the Governments in this room who are members of the Centre for Sport and Human Rights and we look forward to further engaging with all actors in the ecosystem to take practical steps to embed human rights in the governance of sport bodies

PLAY THE GAME

Ministers, colleagues, ladies and gentlemen,

If sport really is an ecosystem, we were reminded yesterday that crime and corruption have invaded this ecosystem and threaten its health.

An ecosystem is characterized by the fact that every little component is intrinsically linked to the other components.

When the threat of match-fixing was first brought into the public domain by Play the Game 20 years ago, it was first linked to gambling, and yesterday we saw how sport and betting is now linked directly and indirectly to slavery-like work camps, human trafficking, dubious sponsorships, cryptocurrency transactions, AI-enforced gambling addiction, tax evasion, money laundering and a few other savoury issues.

The Council of Europe deserves credit for its long-standing efforts in not only raising debates on these challenges, but also to counter them at an operational level through for instance the Macolin convention and the MARS network of state prosecutors.

In this session on sports governance I will draw your attention to a special creature in the ecosystem that seem to be untouchable, a white elephant named “autonomy of sport”.

While association freedom is indeed a fundamental right, it should be reserved for true associations. Many international sports bodies are associations by name and legal status, but they are also multinational corporate monopolies in the global entertainment industry. They should be regulated like any other industry, but they are not.

The regulation should among others contain minimum standards for democratic governance and independent monitoring in return for the generous subsidies that taxpayers send into the sports ecosystem.

Sport is too loaded with conflicts of interests to clean up its own act. The self-assessment tool we just heard about, is just as much a self-protection tool that ill-minded sports leaders can hide behind. I could mention quite a few.

The very number of prominent Olympic leaders that were acclaimed by sport, but brought to justice by public prosecutors in the last decade, shows that self-regulation is failing.

In Macolin ten years ago I had the privilege of delivering a keynote on the need for European governments to take the lead in “establishing an international clearing house for integrity in sport.”

Today, Play the Game asks for even more. Like Deputy Secretary General Bjørn Berge did yesterday, we ask for increased investment and enforcement.

To achieve that, Play the Game has allied with a wide group of senior experts in a project called ClearingSport. In early 2025 we will present a detailed proposal of how an efficient international entity against crime and corruption in sport can become reality. It may seem impossible, but it is indispensable if we wish to clear the ecosystem of sport.

RUGBY EUROPE

Mesdames, Messieurs,

Nous sommes rassemblés aujourd'hui pour aborder un sujet fondamental dans le développement durable de notre système sportif : la gouvernance. Dans un monde où le sport occupe une place centrale, non seulement dans la culture populaire mais aussi comme vecteur de valeurs, il est primordial que la gouvernance sportive soit le reflet de principes essentiels tels que la transparence, l'éthique et la démocratie.

1. La transparence : une exigence de confiance

Dans toute organisation, et plus encore dans le sport, la confiance est la clé. La transparence doit être au cœur de notre système de gouvernance. Elle consiste à rendre accessibles les informations concernant la gestion des ressources, les décisions stratégiques et les critères qui régissent la prise de décisions.

Pourquoi la transparence est-elle cruciale ? Parce qu'elle est le gage d'une gestion ouverte, où chaque acteur – qu'il s'agisse des dirigeants, des sportifs ou des supporters – peut avoir accès aux informations qui influencent la vie sportive. C'est aussi un moyen de lutter contre la corruption et le favoritisme, en garantissant que toutes les opérations sont réalisées dans la lumière.

Pour cela, il nous faut adopter des mécanismes de communication clairs et réguliers, des audits publics et la publication de rapports financiers et d'activité. Cela permet à tous de voir où sont investies les ressources et comment elles profitent au développement du sport.

2. L'éthique : pilier d'un sport responsable

La gouvernance profonde ne peut fonctionner correctement sans un ancrage dans l'éthique. L'éthique sportive va bien au-delà des règles de fair-play sur le terrain ; elle concerne la façon dont nous gérons les institutions, comment nous prenons soin des athlètes, et comment nous interagissons avec nos partenaires et nos fans.

L'éthique implique de toujours respecter les principes d'équité, de justice et d'intégrité. Cela signifie, par exemple, garantir des conditions de travail dignes aux athlètes, protéger leur santé physique et mentale, mais aussi prendre des décisions qui ne sont pas motivées par l'intérêt personnel, mais bien par le bien commun.

Il est de notre devoir de veiller à ce que les conflits d'intérêts soient évités à tous les niveaux, que la diversité et l'inclusion soient une réalité, et que chaque acteur du sport soit respecté pour sa contribution unique.

3. La démocratie : pour une participation de tous

Enfin, il est primordial que la gouvernance sportive soit démocratique. Cela signifie que chaque acteur concerné par le sport – qu'il s'agisse des dirigeants, des entraîneurs, des athlètes ou des supporters – ait un rôle à jouer dans les processus décisionnels.

Une gouvernance démocratique est celle qui écoute et valorise la diversité des voix. Elle passe par la mise en place d'organes représentatifs où les différents acteurs peuvent exprimer leurs opinions et peser dans les choix stratégiques. C'est également promouvoir une participation active des supporters dans les discussions concernant les politiques sportives, et ouvrir des espaces de débat inclusifs et participatifs.

De plus, une approche démocratique favorise la parité, l'égalité des genres et des opportunités dans les instances dirigeantes, afin que chaque individu, déterminant de son sexe, de son origine ou de son statut, ait la possibilité de contribuer pleinement au développement du sport.

Conclusion : Construire l'avenir du sport ensemble

Pour conclure, une gouvernance basée sur la transparence, l'éthique et la démocratie est essentielle pour assurer un avenir durable au sport. Cette approche non seulement renforce la légitimité des institutions sportives, mais elle permet également de créer un environnement plus sain, plus juste et plus respectueux pour tous les acteurs.

En mettant ces principes en pratique, nous pouvons bâtir un modèle de gestion sportive qui inspire confiance, qui protège et valorise les sportifs, et qui associe chaque partie prenante à l'avenir du sport.

Le défi est immense, mais ensemble, en nous engageant pour la transparence, l'éthique et la démocratie, nous pouvons faire du sport un modèle d'exemplarité pour la société.

Je vous remercie.

THE EUROPEAN OLYMPIC COMMITTEES (EOC) / LES COMITES OLYMPIQUES EUROPEENS

On behalf of EOC and EOC EU Office, thank you for the opportunity to comment on the importance of good governance for sport, beyond simple decision-making structures and financial oversight. Poor governance has significant impact on organisational health as well as social and economic repercussions and is critical for the sustainability of sport.

The number of areas of oversight in governance is growing can be overwhelming for smaller organisations; tailored solutions can be expensive for resource constrained sport organisations.

I would like to share an example of one accessible and practical solution to support sports organisations of all sizes which has been developed by EOC EU-Office in partnership with experts and users and funded by EU.

The SIGGS "Support the Implementation of Good Governance in Sport" online tool has been available since 2016 and has already been used by over 150 sport organisations. Now in its 3.0 version, developed with input from expert NGOs, National Olympic Committees (NOCs), Continental Paralympic and Olympic Committees, and the IOC, the tool features just four simple steps. It will be available free of charge by the end of 2024.

Initial version included 15 topics and 4 dimensions, but the updated version, has significant improvements, new areas of focus and up to date technology to ensure a responsive and personalised action plan for each organisation, allowing comparison with similar orgs; it can measure perceptions of governance across the same organisation, or to measure impact of implementation on a longitudinal basis, it will be available in 16 languages.

Original areas included integrity, autonomy, transparency and democracy all of which have significant updates, but also new areas such as anti-racism and anti-discrimination, anti-corruption, sustainability of events, daily ops and communications, safe sport and disability."