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**International Conference on the fight against the manipulation of sports competitions  
– Promotion and Implementation of the Macolin Convention**

Strasbourg (France), 20-21 September 2016

**Conclusions**

The objective of the *International Conference on the fight against the manipulation of sports competitions - Promotion and Implementation of the Macolin Convention* (the Conference) was to encourage Council of Europe Member and observer States, as well as countries that were involved in the negotiation process and all those interested worldwide, to prepare for the implementation of the *Convention on the Manipulation of Sports Competitions* (the Macolin Convention).

The Conference took place at a particularly opportune moment, enabling participants to discuss, at a strategic level, how to promote the ratification process of the Macolin Convention via:

- Increasing the impact of on-going technical assistance projects;
- better synergies between actors with regard to priorities needing to be addressed;
- rationalised efforts focusing on the most important and urgent issues in order to obtain tangible results and to obtain political decisions.

**Main outcomes of the conference**

***Working session 1: Present situation***

Considering the risks it bears for the society, the economy and ultimately for the rule of law, the manipulation of sport competitions is a crime that must be combatted and a curse to be eradicated without compromise or delay.

The criminals involved in sports manipulations are well financed; they operate across international borders and are well co-ordinated. The increasingly complex nature of this threat is likely to continue to increase, within and across all countries. In order to stop this crime from escalating it requires in reply, equally well-funded, co-ordinated, and internationally connected action.

The Macolin Convention is the ground-breaking legal instrument and the only rule of international law on the subject. Its wide ratification across the globe is an absolute necessity. The convention should become the point of reference for the community of actors committed to fight against sports manipulations and sports corruption, in a common effort to meet these threats head-on.

***Working session 2: National cooperation***

The setting up of national platforms between the relevant actors is the centrepiece of the Macolin Convention. They are the first step in building a truly systemic approach, globally connecting the various stakeholders. They must be established according to what is really at stake when fighting against sports manipulations, which implies understanding the threats,

measuring the risks, defining procedures and processes and generating trust and confidence between the stakeholders.

National Platforms should be given clear competencies and operate within a legal framework enabling strong sanctions and efficient procedures against criminals.

One of the challenges now is for the National Platforms which are already established to strengthen their operational processes, and to encourage more countries to establish their own platforms. In this spirit, the Council of Europe has already set up the *Network of National Platforms*, called the “Copenhagen Group”. This body will help share experience and practices, and consolidate results of thematic topics to be developed by thematic networks, for example the Network of National Regulators which was also set up by the Council of Europe, or existing law enforcement networks.

### ***Working session 3: International cooperation***

There is still considerable room for improvement when it comes to the use of resources in certain areas of the fight against sports manipulation, in order to avoid duplication or over-focus of efforts. Namely, a coherent approach has to be applied to actions, thus offering actors the opportunity to share responsibilities and to deal with fields in which they can add decisive added value and make the most effective impact.

Moreover, information and intelligence-sharing between betting operators and sports partners, and then between these actors and law enforcement, does not at present work effectively or consistently enough. A number of existing working mechanisms rely essentially on the goodwill of the parties but they still face major legal obstacles. Better ways to gather information and intelligence, including encouraging ‘whistleblowers’ to come forward, to protect them, and to ensure that practical use of their reports turned into efficient prosecutions have yet to be developed.

The question of funding integrity measures should also be addressed. While larger sports leagues and federations go beyond the minimum requirements related to implementing rules, regulations and procedures concerning sports manipulations and related offences, financial resources still have to be secured at the lower levels of sport, which is becoming a particular target for criminals.

### **Key measures proposed**

The consensus reached regarding priorities will be vision-driven towards the convention entry into force.

A “roadmap” will provide a reference framework with which the main actors can align their efforts over a two year period. Actions strategically decided will be undertaken by teams or networks focused upon priorities, thus addressing the danger of saturation and waste of resources. The “roadmap” is to be regarded more as a flexible guide than a binding programme.

The target is to make visible progress in order to convince governments and parliaments to ratify the convention. The widest possible mobilisation of international stakeholders towards the implementation of the “roadmap” will provide direct additional support to national actors. It will increase their visibility and enhance their work with regard to their political authorities. The message to be portrayed through this process, the “Macolin Process”, is that the only way to sustain the fight against sports manipulations is to carry out an ambitious and coherent set of actions focused on precise delivery with efficient timing, in line with the convention’s objectives.

The “roadmap” will have to address all identified challenges and to ensure that the convention:

- consolidates the fight against the manipulation of sports competitions as an important contribution to sports ethics and to the defence of the rule of law.
- becomes the legal instrument to address sports manipulations worldwide;

- is implemented through effective and consistent criminal legislation, with appropriate sanctions;
- actively engages actors in participating in international efforts to combat the manipulation of sports competitions;
- establishes a recognised national co-ordination function through the setting up of national platforms;
- provides robust integrity frameworks through formalised multilateral arrangements between actors;
- capitalises on states' and international organisations different experiences, competencies and capabilities through a systemic approach connecting all relevant groups of actors;
- develops and implements a risk-based approach, focusing efforts where they are most needed and have most impact;
- sustains assistance tools for countries, as well as a consistent assessment framework;
- secures budget and other required resources in order to allow sustainable actions to occur;

Critical objectives will be pursued to make the vision a reality, with project groups focusing on areas in which they can make real progress in a relatively short period of time. The work of the project groups will be result-oriented and will focus on the operational and practical implementation of the convention. Deliverables must be built into the implementation timetable in order to provide strategic focus and measurement for the achievement of these critical objectives.

