

Major Sporting Events The Crossroads of Security and Socio-Economic Development

Regional Conference for the Americas
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Event Report



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Introduction

The Organisation of American States (OAS) and the International Centre for Sport Security (ICSS) entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in 2013. Since then they have been working together to initiate a regional program to enhance the positive impact of major sporting events and sports at-large in the Americas through collective and multisectoral collaboration. Bringing together the fields of security and development, the OAS and ICSS partnership seeks to raise awareness among OAS member states and international stakeholders on how different sectors can work together to prepare and secure major sporting events, protect their integrity and to maximize the socio-economic development opportunities they may generate for host cities and countries.

In this context, the OAS Secretariat for Multidimensional Security (SMS), through its Inter-American Committee Against Terrorism (CICTE) jointly worked with the ICSS to organize and implement the first regional conference for the Americas “Major Sporting Events: the Crossroads of Security and Socioeconomic Development”. The conference took place from June 25-26, 2015 in Washington, D.C., at the OAS Main Building. This served as the inaugural event between the two entities and brought together high-level government officials from Ministries of Sport, Tourism, Development, Security, and Human Rights as well as representatives from the Olympic movement, international and regional organisations, academic community, international development agencies, and private sector. Participants explored topics ranging from regional security policies to good governance and the protection of vulnerable groups within the context of major sporting events. Over the course of two days, representatives from the governments of the region discussed ideas and policies which can impact the way major sporting events are planned, protected, financed and to ensure their legacies are maintained.

Day One

Welcoming Address: Luis Almagro, Secretary General, OAS

During the opening ceremony for the conference, the OAS Secretary General, Luis Almagro, delivered the welcoming address. He recognized sport as a positive force in society for socio-economic development as it brings together the community, civil society, government leaders, and the private sector. He also brought attention to the security vulnerabilities that major sporting events can create due to the high concentration of people and media attention, which is one of the main pillars of the focus for CICTE’s Security for Major Events program. Almagro called for cooperation and information sharing among government stakeholders in the region so that an integrated approach at the intersection of sport security, development, and human rights protection can be bolstered. In addition to a focus on the importance of physical security for major sporting events, he highlighted the momentum that these opportunities generate for the facilitation of short, medium, and long-term economic growth if sporting events are planned for sustainability and are inclusive of multiple sectors.

He also announced the exploration of the creation of a Center of Excellence between the ICSS and the OAS to help accomplish these goals. As an instrument for discourse among leaders in industry and

government, the Center of Excellence on Major Sporting Events will develop and promote initiatives that protect sport beyond national borders. The Center will provide opportunities for policy-makers at Ministerial and CEO levels from different sectors – Sport, Development, Planning, Finance, Security, Tourism, Human Rights, Health, Transport, Foreign Affairs and Cities and leading academic bodies – from the Americas to share experiences on the preparation of major sporting events and socio-economic development through sport. The Center will also provide policy-makers with information on funding opportunities to support the strengthening of the sport sector and provide legacy.

Welcoming Address: Mohammed Hanzab, President, ICSS

Following the OAS Secretary General's opening remarks, ICSS President Mohammed Hanzab addressed the audience by welcoming everyone to the conference and thanking the OAS for its partnership. He expressed commitment to making the Center of Excellence a reality between the two organizations. He also echoed similar points of the Secretary General in terms of the opportunities that major sporting events present for positive socio-economic growth as well as recognizing that they can be catalysts for reforms in all sectors of society. He added that major events provide opportunity to civil society and NGOs to raise their voices on gender issues, social inclusion, labour standards and respect for human rights, with effects that can go well beyond the host country.

President Hanzab also expressed that if organized well, major events, and sport at large, can be used to promote peace and economic relations which in turn creates new opportunities for international and inter-cultural dialogue, reduce crime and, in certain instances, help prevent extremism and radicalization.

Keynote speech: Ivan Dibós, member of the International Olympic Committee

Ivan Dibós, member of the International Olympic Committee, delivered the first keynote speech for the conference. He recognized sport as a human right and as a medium of education which can be a tool for change and development. As a representative of the International Olympic Committee, he discussed the Olympic movement's goal as one which seeks to contribute to a better and more peaceful world by focusing on youth in sport. He mentioned leadership, effort, respect, discipline and the ability to work in groups as essential characteristics of athletes.

Dibós went on to discuss how major sporting events can be designed as an investment in the future, bringing long-term benefits for the countries who host them, such as socio-economic advancement, new infrastructure, improved communications, an increase in tourism and improved environmental sustainability. He cited cities like Barcelona and London, where tourism increased significantly after their hosting of the Olympic Games. He also mentioned London's Olympic stadium, which rejuvenated the community in which it was built and spurred the construction of schools, hospitals, and parks.

He said that the hosting of a major event should be seen as a great responsibility and commitment and strategically organized in a team format so that they can generate lasting benefits for future

populations. He quoted Nelson Mandela by saying that “sport can create hope where once there was only despair.”

Objectives: Massimiliano Montanari, Chief of Cabinet, ICSS

Massimiliano Montanari, Chief of Cabinet at the ICSS, delivered the objectives for the conference:

- To protect the power of sport; to safeguard all the opportunities, including the geopolitical impact, that major sporting events and sport at-large can generate.
- To explore the establishment of a Center of Excellence, which will be a place where peers from different sectors can meet and share information and develop new visions together to ensure the success of major sporting events of common interest.
- To provide a forum for generating ideas between the security, development, good governance and human rights sectors for the protection of major sporting events.
- To discuss how to ensure that major events and sports are always managed in an environment of transparency, good governance, and security.

With regard to major sporting events, he emphasized the intimate relation between security, development and human rights protection by recalling the 2005 report "In Larger Freedom" issued by the UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, reminding the participants that major events cannot be successful and generate the expected impact if all these conditions are not met.

Montanari concluded by presented a message prepared for the Conference by Mr. Wilfried Lemke, Special Adviser to the United Nations Secretary-General on Sport for Development and Peace Lemke (message included on page 15)

Panel One: National and Regional Security Policies for the Protection of Major Sporting Events

Panel: Chaired by Lord John Stevens, Chair, ICSS Advisory Board

- Darío Ruiz, Secretary, Ministry of Security, Argentina
- Alan Bersin, Assistant Secretary for Policy, Department of Homeland Security, United States of America
- Juan José Andrade Morales, President of AMERIPOL

Key Points:

- Sporting events are critical to economies and the international community. They can knit communities together, but organizers must ensure that these are secure if we expect them to boost economic and social development.
- After the Boston Marathon a great lesson worth recounting is that the resilience of sport fans is absolutely critical - developing a mentality that after an attack has happened, the answer is not to run but to assist.

- Cooperation between police forces and security authorities of the countries of the Americas is vital to achieving good prevention practices. Just like crime has no boundaries, neither should police forces. This has been proven by bodies such as INTERPOL or EUROPOL.
- There is a need for permanent capacity building to homogenize police procedures and strategies, as well as to promote the use of intelligence for prevention.
- In the preparation stage of a major sporting event, organizers should attempt to screen out known or suspected criminal actors or terrorists, starting through a system of advanced passenger information. Attempts to identify and to prevent the entry of those who can be anticipated to intend harm to a sport event is a governmental function that is carried out with the help of the private sector.
- The entry into the facility or the stadium (physical inspection of fans who enter a facility) is the most challenging element of the security regime. It is vital to keep dangerous items out of the facility (explosives, firearms or other mechanisms designed to cause mass harm or mass panic.)
- It is important to use technology in a more rigorous and comprehensive fashion to screen out weapons, explosives and dangerous people. This can be achieved through investing and perfecting the metal detection technology, as well as facial recognition technology.
- The human dimension and the importance of police must not be underestimated, however organizers must deputize the fans to become “police officers” to alert authorities of peculiarities or patterns that do not have a place at sporting events. By mobilizing people, it will multiply the presence of police officers, to be aware and on the lookout.
- The issue of the *‘barras bravas’* (supporters groups) has to be addressed through the admission right that the clubs have as they are the main organizers of the events. The State has to demand minimum parameters and security standards that the clubs have to abide by.
- The police often have to deal with the consequences of giving the violent a place of power that they should never have in the first place (the ability of making illegal profit out of these events and selling illegal tickets). That is where the real challenge is.
- Human trafficking is a key issue to address when it comes to organizing secure major sporting events.

Panel Two: Financial and Societal Impact of Major Sporting Events

Keynote Speech: Carlos Gutiérrez

Former US Secretary of Commerce, Carlos Gutiérrez, provided the keynote speech for the panel on Financial and Societal Impact of Major Sporting Events. He spoke of the importance of sport and its ability to empower often marginalized groups and promote human capital. In addition, he recognized the capacity of sport to influence national and regional productivity.

Gutiérrez discussed the important economic impact of major sporting events and cited numbers which show that the sports industry is growing by 5% annually. He also noted that it remains unclear how much and for how long sporting events can impact an economy because we do not know how to measure the impact. He noted the relevance and significance of continuing to study this aspect of mega events in the wake of the FIFA scandal. He notes that the forum of this conference is an opportunity to be absolutely transparent about these issues and thanked ICSS for providing it.

Secretary Gutiérrez went on to draw attention to labor rights violations and other forms of exploitation in conjunction with major sporting events preparations.

Panel: Chaired by Shaun McCarthy, Executive Director of the ICSS Enterprise

- Manuel Portilla Diéguez, Subdirector of Physical Culture, CONADE, National Commission for Physical Culture and Sport, Mexico
- Marcela Escobari, Executive Director, CID Harvard Kennedy School
- Rose T. Rakas, Director, Office of Regional Sustainable Development, USAID

Key Points:

- There is no consensus on how to define and measure the sport industry.
- New research is highlighting connections between export-oriented economics and sport as a medium of economic diversification.
- Strategic investments in preparation for hosting major sporting events can increase community acceptance of an event and have a positive impact on a community post-event.
- A major sporting event, and the infrastructure it sparks (such as multi-use stadiums), does not just bring financial impact to a community, it also encourages citizens to be active, to practice different sports, and elevate sport within a country.
- Measuring the socio-economic impact of sport-related development projects must involve partnering with local organizations.
- Establishing long-term relationships at the community level through sporting programs and sport federations is an important foundation for maximizing socio-economic impact of major sporting events.

Panel Three: Regional Legacy of a Cricket World Cup: The Caribbean Experience

Panel: Chaired by Gillian Bristol, former Ambassador of Grenada

- Bambang Ismanto Adna, Minister of Sports and Youth Affairs, Suriname
- Bernard J. Nottage, Minister of National Security, Bahamas
- Earl Harris, Assistant Director, Strategic Services, CARICOM IMPACS

Key Points:

- Threat assessments were integral to the security preparations of the 2007 Cricket World Cup.
- CARICOM IMPACS (Caribbean Community Implementation Agency for Crime and Security) was responsible for the security of the teams, the media, and other officials.
- CARICOM's Joint Regional Communications Centre (JRCC) and the Regional Intelligence Fusion Centre (RIFC) were sub-agencies of CARICOM IMPACS, formed to support the 2007 Cricket World Cup.
- The Advanced Passenger Information System was an integral part of the security planning for the event.

- There are diverse security needs to consider when organizing a major sporting event across multiple countries, in this case the Caribbean islands, and Suriname, which is part of the South American continent.
- It is important to find use for facilities after they are constructed for a major sporting event. It can be a catalyst to bring other events to host countries where facilities may already exist.

Panel Four: Protecting Human Rights and Vulnerable Categories in the Context of Major Sporting Events

Keynote speech: Angelica Goulart, National Secretary of Brazil for the Promotion of the Rights of Children and Adolescents

The National Secretary of Brazil for the Promotion of the Rights of Children and Adolescents, Angelica Goulart, gave the keynote speech for the opening of this panel.

She discussed the experience of Brazil in terms of guaranteeing the rights of minors in the context of hosting a major sporting event, in this case, the 2014 FIFA World Cup. In response to the mobilization of a large number of people concerned about the issue, Brazil created the “Agenda of Convergence: Protect Brazil.” She noted that the use of the word *convergence* symbolized the bringing together of all the concerns and elements around protection and the holistic demands around the sexual exploitation of minors. The Agenda brought together different entities within the government of Brazil, civil society groups, and international organizations.

She discussed the different phases of preparing the agenda, including a preparatory phase which brought together the Presidency of the Republic (where the Ministry of Human Rights was integrated), the ministries of education, employment, labor, social involvement, tourism, justice, sport, health, foreign relations, and defense. Due to the federalist system in Brazil (federal, state, local), local committees were formed to look at the situation of vulnerable populations, especially children, in terms of all the channels and social networks that could exacerbate the vulnerabilities. As a result of the committee work, campaigns ran ranging from public service announcements about human rights and media blitzes about how to report violations via cell phone.

Goulart went on to discuss the difficulty and the importance, of making the protection of vulnerable categories a priority during the planning stages of major events, despite economics and security typically dominate the discussion. This resulted in an integration of violations awareness and reporting methods during the event. She highlighted the question of security as a permanent and important challenge that we must focus on, but that we also must educate security agents on human rights and the protocol for treatment of these issues. She provided the example of Brazil’s national operation which mobilized to disarm networks that engage in things like pedophilia via the internet, and Operation Agatha which works with border agents to identify violations.

During the Confederations Cup, 12 months prior to the World Cup, they were able to test, and then applied them officially during the World Cup. There were a total of 9,700 denouncements of violations made during the Confederations Cup, and in the World Cup there were 11,000 denouncements called in. In the 12 cities that hosted, there were 3000 denouncements. She pointed out that although challenges remain for future hosts and events, this working methodology can continue to be useful.

Panel: Chaired by Prof. Pedro David, Former ICTY Judge

- Marcos Díaz, Vice-Minister of Sport, Dominican Republic
- Fabiana Gorenstein, UNICEF Representative, Brazil
- Lisa Delpy Neirotti, Associate Professor, The George Washington University

Key Points:

- The international community has joined forces to establish guidelines for justice at all levels. Sport can be used as a vehicle that contains not only principles of social equality, but also of friendship and solidarity amongst all people.
- National public policies must guarantee sports as a fundamental right.
- The governments are the entities who should guarantee that every event and the sports industry as a whole do not violate human rights.
- The experience shows that it is fundamental to integrate the areas of security and social development. This will ensure that sports are a catalyst and will bring up a positive agenda for the protection of childhood and the tourism industry.
- Sport is a reflection of society, which is why it also raises issues related to negative human behaviors.
- The bidding process has to involve respect of human rights from the very beginning, ensuring that all procedures are transparent.
- Model partnerships become successful with the involvement of all stakeholders. Protection of children in Brazil 2014 was a success due to the ongoing partnership between UNICEF, the Federal Government and ICSS within the framework of its Save the Dream initiative.
- Concerns were raised on the issue of child trafficking by fake agents and opportunists.

Panel Five: Impact of Sport in the Tourism Industry

Panel: Chaired by Maryse Robert, Director of the Department of Economic Development, OAS

- Syntia Bennett Solomon, Subdirector of the Honduran Institute of Tourism, Honduras
- Fernando Cáceres, National Director of Sports, Uruguay
- Lisa Delpy Neirotti, Associate Professor, The George Washington University

Key Points:

- In 2014, tourism accounted for 9% of the global GDP and 6% of the world's total exports.

- To leverage the benefits that can come from sporting events, the tourism sector has to be involved in the organization of the event from the very beginning and must also have clear objectives to develop during the event. This is particularly beneficial as far as creating a better image or changing the image of a destination and building infrastructure for the tourism area.
- Communities must be involved in the planning of major sporting events, both to be able to capitalize and to gain human capital.
- Major sporting events have the potential to congregate an entire population to pursue a common project. This gives the opportunity to undertake a development initiative that is aligned with regional and national development projects.
- Public-private partnership is essential during all the planning and organizing process, from the bidding, the design and the sustainability of major sporting events.
- A Sports Tourism Commission should be constituted at a state level or at a city level, that allows a sports facility audit in order to determine current facilities and then overlay that with potential events. A way to start is to hold small regional events, using what you already have available that does not necessarily require a large arena.
- In the bidding process, an important question raised is tourism related (hotels, rates, transportation system). Often sports entities do not feel comfortable bidding because they do not have this information. The tourism entities should have those answers ready. If these two sectors work together, they are able to prepare a package to be successful.
- Major sporting events are demanding, however, because of the benefits that they bring, there needs to be a debate within sports committees to revise some of the competition methods. The development of these events needs to be decentralized.
- Athletes are tourism ambassadors. They meet and they talk, and if they talk proudly about their countries, it's always going to be beneficial.
- Sport can and should be used as a catalyst for education, health and conflict resolution.

Panel Six: Sustainability and Good Governance of Major Sporting Events

Panel: Chaired by Cindy Smith, Director of the United Nations Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI)

- Matias Bendersky, Chief, Partnerships and Resources Mobilization Unit, Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)
- Giovanni Di Cola, Special Adviser to the Multilaterals Department, International Labour Organization (ILO)
- Dmitri Vlassis, Chief, Corruption and Economic Crime Branch, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)

Key Points:

- Major sporting events have the capacity to boost skills as it relates to volunteers, although they may not directly impact employment.
- Major public events can and must leave a legacy in terms of transparency and anti-corruption.

- UNODC has created a multitude of resources which can be made available to countries hosting major events to safeguard against corruption and promote transparency.
- Current corruption charges in the world of sport might present opportunities to develop regulations which operate at the convergence of the sporting community and the corruption and economic crime enforcement sector.
- Sport can be an avenue for bringing at-risk youth together to teach life skills, which can have an impact on indirect sustainability. The IDB has sport components in citizen security initiatives, which have recorded 70% employment for the youth who participated in their programs.
- Sport for development is a growing field.

Panel Seven: Financial Integrity in Sport

Panel: Chaired by James Carville, Political Commentator

- Michael Hershman, ICSS Advisory Board Member
- Emanuel de Medeiros, CEO ICSS Europe
- Chris Eaton, Executive Director, Sport Integrity, ICSS

Key Points:

- Sport is responsible for 15 million jobs and that equates to 4.5% of the EU workforce.
- The credibility of sport will affect the income of the industry.
- Sport is now perceived as business; it is no longer about regulations and rules on the playing field. It is an enterprise, but sport means more to society than business and it should be treated that way.
- The FIFA corruption scandal is just one of many throughout the history of sport, and this could be a window of opportunity to find solutions.
- The international community, including the sport movement, has underestimated what is needed to be done to improve governance structures of the multi-billion dollar industry.
- The problems with the sport industry today from a financial corruption and governance perspective are curable, and we need to empower new leadership.
- The Financial Integrity and Transparency in Sport (FITS) project was begun by ICSS in 2014 to explore how government and the stakeholder community can come forward to address the threats against the FITS.
- A global set of principles for all sport organizations is being created, and it will be the first of its kind.
- Sport organizations should adopt business principles that demand transparency and accountability.

Day Two

César Luis Menotti, former coach of the 1978 World Cup-winning Argentinian national team said via video that sports, as a cultural phenomenon, gives our South American nations huge possibilities. Countries must be very vigilant in terms of ensuring that sports are appealing to children and youth. He added that particularly soccer is a very valuable tool to educate the youngest, given that in the matches the bad intention is sanctioned, even if it's not an actual fault.

Panel Eight: Emerging and Future Threats for Sport and Major Sporting Events

Panel: Chaired by Shaun McCarthy, Executive Director of the ICSS Enterprise

- Serguei Cheloukhine, Professor of Law, Police Science, and Criminal Justice Administration, John Jay College, CUNY
- Lisa Delpy Neirotti, PhD., the George Washington University
- Ciro Ugarte, Preparatory Department for Emergency Situations and Disaster Relief, PAHO

Key Points:

- Sport has been hijacked by criminals for the purpose of financial gain.
- In addition to the challenges major sporting events present, we must keep in mind all of the positives that they bring, and many of the negatives being discussed during the conference are because of the money flowing into sport.
- We must have a focus on professional management of the funds.
- The biggest challenges to major sporting events is from the health perspective.
- The health of communities can be affected both before and after major sporting events.
- Problems related to health are significant, but the biggest problems are social, economic, and fear factors. For example, South Korea is currently experiencing the largest MERS outbreak in its history, and it will be soon hosting a major event. From a security component, the fear factor of it spreading among the population is the most significant.
- Costs are escalating across the board for hosting major sporting events as the focus on commerciality has superseded the focus on the activity itself. They can be planned and carried out at a minimum cost if the organizing committees make a commitment to do so.

Panel Nine: Multisectoral Cooperation to organize Safe, Secure, and Sustainable Sporting Events.

Panel: Chaired by Gregory Bujac, OSAC Special Advisor

- James Weston, Chief of Research and Information Support Center (RISC), OSAC
- Bill Raisch, Director of the International Center for Enterprise Preparedness (InterCEP) at New York University
- Rich Cooper – Vice President of Research and Emerging Issues, U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation
- Andrei Passos Rodrigues, Secretary of Major Sporting Event Security, Brazil

Key Points:

- Sporting events are about bringing a diversity of players to the table.
- We need three key elements when we are trying to bring a successful multisectoral element to sport: 1) we need a catalyst, such as the ICSS' role as a convener; 2) we need the right players at the table and identify complimentary needs (business, government, NGOs, international organizations, critical infrastructure, academic institutions); 3) we need a clear purpose (governance structure, robust communication among stakeholders, and a level of trust).
- In order to plan, partner, and prepare, we need to have an all-hazards risk assessment. We do not just need to consider and be prepared for acts of terror, but also acts of mother nature, and growing threats, such as cyber attacks.
- A successful partnership strategy may involve working with a country on another sporting event they may be hosting ahead of a larger major event, such as when Brazil hosted the Confederations Cup ahead of the 2014 World Cup.
- There needs to be an identification of the value-added resulting from a partnership.

Panel Ten: Peace as Legacy of Major Sporting Events

Panel: Chaired by Angela Melo, Director of Division for Youth, Ethics and Sport, UNESCO

- Ivan Dibós, Member of the International Olympic Committee
- Ralph Nelles, Director, Mexican Olympic Committee
- Luciana Nunes, Olympic Truce, Engagement, Organizing Committee for the Olympic and Paralympic Games

Key Points:

- Sports are being hijacked by transnational organized crime, doping, the manipulation of sports competitions and corruption. We need to protect its purity if we want to preserve its power to change society, including promoting dialogue and peace.
- The case of the Olympic Truce in Brazil, the organizers gave priority to addressing the situation of the *favelas*, given that it is not possible to promote a culture of peace if the favelas do not have a peaceful and safer city.
- It is important to address the part that we can advocate for: social peace, non-violent communication, conflict resolution, sportsmanship.
- The success of a major sporting event comes from an effective coordination between government authorities, sports committees and federations.
- Sometimes it is required to enforce peace in order to then inspire values. It is worthwhile to use sports as a scenario to build citizenship.
- Cooperation with projects like Save the Dream is essential to remind the world of the humanity of sports; in this regard it was underlined the importance of events such as the public event which will be organized by Save the Dream in Times Square on 3 November 2015 entitled "Let the Children Play" to support the mission of the Olympic Truce.

Closing Remarks

Closing Remarks were provided by Alejandro Mayorkas, U.S. Deputy Secretary for Homeland Security; Jacinth Henry-Martin, Chief of Staff of the General Secretariat of the OAS, and Lord John Stevens, Chairman of the ICSS Advisory Board. Some key points from their remarks were:

- Dialogues such as the ones we have held during the past two days are essential. Not only do they provide a valuable opportunity to exchange information, but they also help us ensure that the four pillars enshrined in our vision of the OAS (Democracy, Human Rights, Security, and Development), continue to be reflected in all aspects of our work.
- Through sport, we can also engage those people whose lives and livelihoods are at risk, especially youth. We can empower our children and contribute to their well-being.
- The importance of viewing security as an integral part of development, and the need to include the respect of human rights as an indispensable ineludible element of the preparation and organization of any major sporting event. Sport can strengthen community relations and deliver a better understanding and respect for rights and traditions of everyone, while contributing to the building of a cohesive society.
- The representatives of the conference are in leadership roles and must understand that sport and physical activity have huge potential to contribute to the development of a healthier society and recognize the importance of sport for social and economic development. Major sporting events are unique opportunities for development; their legacies can reach all key sectors of society, from education to security, from tourism to human rights, from youth employment to justice administration.
- Planning a major sporting event requires, therefore, an in depth reflection among different sectors. This reflection needs to start at the highest level of our nations and organizations, and include all the levels of policy and decision makers.

**Message from Mr. Wilfried Lemke,
Special Adviser to the United Nations Secretary-General on Sport for Development and Peace**

I send my warm greetings to the event “Major Sporting Events – The Crossroads of Security and Socio Economic Development”, organized by the Organization of American States through the Secretariat of Multidimensional Security and the International Centre for Sport Security (ICSS). Unfortunately, due to a previous institutional engagement I am not able to attend.

My Office, the United Nations Office on Sport for Development and Peace (UNOSDP), based in Geneva and supported by a Liaison Office in New York, provides the entry point to the United Nations system with regard to Sport for Development and Peace, bringing the worlds of sport and development closer together.

Through global partnerships, networking, global advocacy, policy work, programmes and projects on the ground, we at UNOSDP work to raise awareness about the use of physical activity, sport and play as powerful tools in the advancement of development and peace objectives.

In my role as the Special Adviser, I have closely followed the important work of ICSS and the progress of its valuable programmes such as “Save the Dream”, aimed at protecting children from risks related to mega sport events.

While participating in a conference which addresses sport as a tool for socio-economic Development, please remember that everyone should benefit from it: entrepreneurs, employees and the unemployed, citizens and migrants, girls and women, children and persons with disabilities.

Sport is a fundamental right, a universal language and a versatile tool. Its positive impact should be felt equally among nations and within nations by every individual.

I commend the organizers for hosting this important event. I wish you all a productive

About the Organization of American States

The Organization of American States is the world's oldest regional organization, dating back to the First International Conference of American States, held in Washington, D.C., from October 1889 to April 1890. That meeting approved the establishment of the International Union of American Republics, and the stage was set for the weaving of a web of provisions and institutions that came to be known as the inter-American system, the oldest international institutional system.

The OAS came into being in 1948 with the signing in Bogotá, Colombia, of the Charter of the OAS, which entered into force in December 1951. It was subsequently amended by the Protocol of Buenos Aires, signed in 1967, which entered into force in February 1970; by the Protocol of Cartagena de Indias, signed in 1985, which entered into force in November 1988; by the Protocol of Managua, signed in 1993, which entered into force in January 1996; and by the Protocol of Washington, signed in 1992, which entered into force in September 1997.

The Organization was established in order to achieve among its member states—as stipulated in Article 1 of the Charter—"an order of peace and justice, to promote their solidarity, to strengthen their collaboration, and to defend their sovereignty, their territorial integrity, and their independence."

Today, the OAS brings together all 35 independent states of the Americas and constitutes the main political, juridical, and social governmental forum in the Hemisphere. In addition, it has granted permanent observer status to 69 states, as well as to the European Union (EU).

The Organization uses a four-pronged approach to effectively implement its essential purposes, based on its main pillars: democracy, human rights, security, and development.

About the International Centre for Sport Security

The ICSS is a globally-renowned and respected leader in sport safety, security and integrity. The ICSS is an independent and non-profit organisation and at the forefront of efforts to safeguard sport. We play an increasingly integral role in addressing critical issues in sport such as corruption, betting fraud and transparency, as well as major event safety and venue security.

The ICSS team consists of international experts, advisors and specialists; from sectors including law enforcement, international policy, sport, government and anti-corruption; has a wealth of experience and knowledge gained from working within sport and governmental organisations such as the United Nations, UNICEF, INTERPOL, the European Commission, the IOC, FIFA and UEFA as well as national police forces.

The ICSS works with National Olympic Committees, International Federations, governments, cities, leagues, clubs, venue operators, major event organisers and other stakeholders to safeguard sport.

The ICSS collaborates closely with UNESCO, UNODC, UNICEF, World Health Organisation, World Bank, European Union, OECD, Council of Europe, Organization of American States, Commonwealth Sports Ministers, Community of Portuguese Language Countries, NGOs and governments to provide thought-leadership and influence policy and legislation.