

Third Commonwealth Sports Ministers' Meeting

The third Commonwealth Sports Ministers' Meeting discussed issues of mutual importance and strategically addressed the application of sports programs in assisting the health, social and economic development of the 53 countries and 18 territories of the Commonwealth.

Ministers:

1. noted the progress being made by Commonwealth member countries, the Commonwealth Secretariat, the Commonwealth Games Federation and the World Anti-Doping Agency on the implementation of the Athens Action Plan, addressing the key areas of:
 - women in sport
 - capacity for countries to host major events, and
 - anti-doping.
2. noted the UNESCO International Convention Against Doping in Sport was adopted by member states on 19 October 2005 and agreed to take steps to ratify the Convention as soon as possible, with all aiming to do so by the end of 2006.
3. recognised the importance of major sporting events and that the success of such events is an integral part of sports development at all levels, and endorsed the proposals set out in the Commonwealth Secretariat and Athens Action Plan update report on major events.
4. endorsed the Commonwealth Advisory Body on Sport (CABOS) report of January 2006, and the role of CABOS in further developing and advocating the evidence base for sport.
5. agreed to promote the benefits of sport and physical activity, by encouraging:
 - sport and health ministries to work together to implement the WHO strategy
 - physical activity and health education to be part of school life
 - the use of sport to teach life skills and healthy behaviour.
6. agreed to promote education through physical education and sport, by:
 - encouraging national sports policies to include the recognition and importance of physical education and sport
 - working with education ministries to:
 - i. recognise and value the contribution of physical education and sport to academic goals and citizenship
 - ii. deliver high quality physical education and sport as part of the curriculum
 - engaging students and parents directly
 - using sporting role models in schools.
7. agreed to use sport to develop leadership and participation in the community by encouraging:
 - relevant education and training to build capacity in communities
 - the development of a coordinating mechanism to enable partners to work together
 - the development of programmes suitable to the needs of participants and communities.

8. agreed to build inclusive communities through sport by:
 - developing low cost high impact programmes that address diverse local needs
 - engaging local communities and developing volunteers
 - developing a local support network
 - recruiting sports stars as role models.
9. agreed that these objectives will be achieved by enhancing communication and coordination across government departments and key organisations, and ensuring that each programme meets its objectives.
10. noted progress on a five year longitudinal study being conducted by the Commonwealth Institute that is examining 1 000 primary school children in respect to exercise, as well as physical, social and psychological health.
11. noted the Malaysian Minister for Sport, Datuk Azalina Dato Othman Said, intends to host a sports meeting in 2006.
12. agreed to meet again in Beijing prior to the 2008 Olympic Games.

Melbourne
14 March 2006