



## **UN Office on Sport for Development and Peace Sport for Development and Peace International Working Group**

**1<sup>st</sup> Plenary Session  
Geneva, Switzerland, 5 May 2010**

### **Minutes**

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**Secretary:** Mr. Poul Hansen, Head of UN Office on Sport for Development and Peace, SDP IWG Secretariat.

**Presiding Officer:** Ms. Debbie Lye, Head of International Development, International Inspiration Programme Director, UK Sport.

#### **I. Attendance:**

1. The Working Group held its inaugural plenary session on the 5 May 2010 in Geneva, Switzerland.
2. The session was attended by representatives of the following countries: Argentina; Australia; Austria; Azerbaijan; Bahrain; Brazil; Bulgaria; Canada; Cyprus; Ecuador; Germany; Ghana; Hungary; Lebanon; Madagascar; Monaco; Netherlands; Nigeria; Norway; Poland; Russia; South Africa; The Holy See; Tunisia; Turkey; and United Kingdom.
3. The following United Nations organizations were represented: United Nations Office on Sport Development and Peace (UNOSDP); United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF); International Labour Organization (ILO); United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).
4. The following inter-governmental organization was represented: Commonwealth Advisory Body on Sport (CABOS).
5. In his opening statements, Mr. Wilfried Lemke, Special Adviser to the UN Secretary-General on Sport for Development and Peace welcomed participants including the Hon. Akua Sena Dansua, Minister for Youth and Sports of Ghana and Ambassadors present. Outlining the history of the SDP IWG, he explained the decision made in Beijing, August 2008, at the time of the launch of the final SDP IWG report was to transfer the SDP IWG to the UN system. The Secretariat of the SDP IWG was hosted by Right To Play from 2004-2008. In December 2008, the UN General Assembly approved that the work would continue to be managed directly from the UN Office on Sport for Development and Peace in Geneva. Given that UNOSDP is not funded by the UN Regular Budget, the priority was to identify funding sources for the work of the SDP IWG. Initial support was contributed by Canada and the UK.

## **II. Adoption of the Agenda**

The Working Group adopted the provisional agenda, prepared by the secretariat.

## **III. Adoption of Rules of Procedure (Agenda item 2)**

The group considered the Rules of Procedure and the following observations were clarified:

- SDP IWG Members can include technical and scientific experts who can contribute in their delegations and can also propose such experts as observers.
- Meetings of the SDP IWG Plenary Executive Board and Thematic Groups may take place in member countries with the invitation of a host country.
- Rule 6 is meant to read donor 'countries'. While other donors may come forward, it would not be envisaged that they be part of the executive board. A minimum amount with regard to donations is not specified.
- A broad range of representation of countries is desirable to ensure that the SDP IWG is not solely donor driven. Representation from each geographic region is desired with a view to organising regional meetings and encouraging regional exchange and integration.
- The secretariat will revise Annex A of the Rules of Procedures to ensure that regional groupings are correctly listed.
- The amended rules will be submitted to the Legal Office at the UN. The Rules can then be considered as the tentative Working Document until adopted at the next Plenary Session.
- Highlighting the importance of UN agencies participating under substantive issues of the SDP IWG, and hence contributing to the discussion, UNESCO provided a presentation highlighting the work of the Inter-Governmental Committee on Physical Education and Sport (CIGEPS).
- UNESCO will work constructively towards a relationship with SPD IWG. It was emphasized that with a view to 'UN delivering as One', it was important to avoid overlap of mandate and tasks of agencies. The meeting took note of the intervention.
- Norway announced that it will make a financial contribution of €180,000 per year for three years, with a special interest in Sport and Gender. The meeting welcomed this announcement.

## **IV. Election of Officers (Agenda item 3)**

The Working Party elected Mrs. Debbie Lye (UK) as Chairperson and Dr. Akua Sena Dansua (Ghana) as Co-Chairperson. Regional representatives (rule 24) were also elected: Africa: Tunisia; Americas: Brazil; Asia: Bahrain; Europe: UK; Oceania: Australia.

## **V. Presentation and adoption of 'Sport and Child & Youth Development' Thematic Working Group Strategic Plan 2010-2011 (Agenda item 4)**

The Strategic Plan on 'Sport and Child & Youth Development' which has its basis in the SDP IWG report published in 2008 was presented. The recommendations have been taken directly from the report and the Strategic Plan which is intended to outline how the SDP IWG will assist Member States in implementing a selection of the recommendations within a two year timeframe.

In the SDP IWG report of 2008, there are five thematic divisions:

- Sport and Health
- Sport and Peace
- Sport and Gender
- Sport and Persons with Disabilities
- Sport and Child & Youth Development.

The final one was the theme for this meeting. Three Strategic Areas of Priority within the focus theme were set out:

- Child Protection in Sport
- Sport to Strengthen Child and Youth Education
- Sport to Enhance Transferable Skills and Employment Opportunities

The meeting generally agreed to focus on a select number of specific recommendations with the view to achieving its objectives. There are three main objectives for the Strategic Plan:

- Building awareness and encouraging dialogue on Sport and Child & Youth Development: advocacy and promotional role.
- Benchmark Report for Sport and Child & Youth Development Thematic Working Group.
- Building capacity of National Governments: to deliver the aims and strategic objectives.

Each Objective should encompass key performance indicators to enable measurement of the progress of the SDP IWG. It was agreed to establish benchmarks so that governments' progress can be tracked in this domain. In this context there was agreement that the UNOSDP website will be used to record and track progress (see Agenda Item 5).

## **VI. Child Protection in Sport (Agenda item 4.i)**

The Group welcomed the presentation by UNICEF. The issue of Child Protection in Sport should be framed within the broader Child Rights Convention which creates obligations for its Member States. Children have a right to leisure, play and sport (art. 31), and also have the right to be protected against abuse and violence. Sport can be the cause and conduit of violence and exploitation. There should be more emphasis in sports policy on the need to protect the children and recognize their rights, and less focus on producing elite athletes. The best interests of the child should guide decisions. Examples of violence in sport include trafficking, abuse, sexual violence, child labour, and athletes forced to play when injured. This is a very sensitive subject and challenging to study given that definitions vary from study to study, and country to country. The conceptual framework for this work strand should be to establish a protective environment. There needs to be an open debate in society, which is challenging given that child protection is so often a taboo topic. There should be a zero tolerance policy for violence against children.

The presentation went on to outline the features of a protective environment: Codes of Conduct and ethical guidelines need to be developed. Mega sports events such as the FIFA World Cup can be used to raise awareness. UNICEF will publish a report at the end of May 2010 on violence against children in sport.

The meeting agreed the importance to create protective environments. The Child Protection in Sport priority is clear and there is only one Policy Recommendation: 'Develop policies with specific provisions and implementation plans to prevent the exploitation and abuse of children and youth in sport contexts'.

The question of the definition of 'child' in sport was raised and it clarified that a child is under the age of 18. The same applies in sport unless national legislation sets the age younger.

Another question was whether the practice of soccer academies which remove children from school and often exports them to Europe should be considered as exploitation. The meeting considered that soccer academies may not necessarily be exploitative, but the key is to have a balance between the rights of the child and the desire to develop their full potential as an athlete. This is what the Junior Athlete Education programme as practiced in Australia and the UK tries to achieve.

It is difficult to set a blanket rule for all children and the best interests of the child should always be considered including the child's view on his/her situation.

The meeting noted that an additional point regarding training for professionals working in the field would contribute towards the achievement of the objective. In this context an example was provided by UK Sport's project to involve an international network of countries and NGOs agreeing to International Community Coach Education Standard which include Child Protection.

Concerns were raised that there is no distinction between the training methodologies used at a very young age and with young adults. International Federations have raised the bar of performance so high that small children are given the same type of training as adults at an age when they are not psychologically prepared to manage success and failure.

It was pointed out that sport is a right of every child. Sport can be an effective tool to achieve development goals e.g. the MDGs. It was noted that sport can also be a cause of violence against children and that the Group needs to promote the establishment of protective, safe environments to help children securely develop to their fullest capacity in sport.

The Group concluded by listing the issues to be further explored:

- Ensure sport programmes for children are appropriate to their psychological and physical stage of development – Istvan Balyi's Long Term Athlete Development model is helpful here
- Wider issues around talent identification, development and sport academies.
- The need to be aware of the potential for exploitation of children.
- Reduce the pressures but maximise the advocacy opportunities arising from mega sports events.
- Design talent development strategies which avoid uprooting talented children from home environments to attend residential academies.
- Minimize the pressure on talented young athletes to make academic grades and maintain strict training regimes.
- Focus on sharing good practice from junior athlete career programmes.

Governments need to be proactive in developing guidelines and best practice models. Benchmarking in individual countries will act as a baseline for the collective measurement of progress towards the achievement of this priority.

## **VII. Sport to Strengthen Child and Youth Education (Agenda item 4.ii)**

The Group welcomed the presentation made by UNESCO.

Interest in role of sport to strengthen education outcomes is extremely encouraging. Sport is a powerful educational engine which combines innovation, social cohesion and soft skills. For example, there is growing evidence that sport fosters higher self esteem making youths less likely to resort to anti-social behaviour.

The normative framework for the Right to Education is extremely important. In 1952, UNESCO Member States asked the Director General to develop athlete sports for athletic purposes. Sport was seen as a means of promoting international cooperation and building longstanding peace.

1958 Resolution: recommends all Member States to incorporate physical education and sport in education programmes.

1960,1970s things were tense in terms of international cooperation. While activity continued, cooperation was difficult. In 1976 Ministers and Senior Officials Responsible for Physical Education and Sport (MINEPS) was established.

Policy framework 1978: adopted UNESCO Charter of Physical Education and Sport. Charter asserts access to PE and Sport is a human right.

Inter-governmental Committee for Physical Education and Sport (CIGEPS) was established in 1978 to give more power to the normative framework.

Two world wide surveys were carried out, the first one was published in 1999 and the second in 2009, looking at the situation of PE in schools. They showed that it is vital to provide governments with analysis to ensure their policy making is informed by an international dimension.

The evolution of society has a huge impact on access to sport. Sport still remains marginalized and PE is under threat. There needs to be a concerted effort to ensure that PE is a key component of a Child's life. There are differences between how children develop now and how they may have in the past. Now more time is spent in front of a screen. It is important to keep stressing the importance of refining motor skills.

The group noted the seven policy recommendations and eight programme recommendations, and agreed that it was necessary to distill into a few key recommendations.

The meeting took note of the Australian experiences to use sport as a tool for community development where they have projects in seven countries across the Pacific Region. Often education stops at the primary level. Through well designed projects, issues around obesity, health e.g. anti smoking strategies, are tackled beyond formal education.

The view was expressed that a balance between sports and academic education needs to be created. Traditionalists may fear that youths will spend time in sports to the detriment of their education. Soccer Academies are often not properly set up and curriculums are not approved.

In Canada, education is the responsibility of the provincial governments. Some provinces e.g. Quebec have compulsory PE in schools from kindergarten to junior college with careful monitoring and evaluation which demonstrates that education has social and psychological benefits. In other provinces such as Ontario, PE is not implemented across the province.

The meeting considered whether it should recommend revitalizing PE in schools. In many societies, middle classes are abandoning public schools because they no longer enrich children's education with PE and school sport. In the UK PE has been a low priority. Since 2002 this has turned round and there is a push for 2 hours of PE per week by 2010. 92% of schools have reported they are achieving the target and the bar has now been raised to 5 hours within and beyond the formal curriculum.

The meeting took note that advocacy for PE in schools should be based on a rights based approach. It was also noted that Education Ministries and officials need to be engaged with this issue as what happens in the education system is often outside the remit of Ministries of Youth and Sport.

The group agreed to the:

- Need to pay attention to gender and healthy lifestyle issues.
- Importance of taking a rights based approach.

#### **VIII. Sport to Enhance Transferable Skills and Employment Opportunities (Agenda item 4.iii)**

The meeting welcomed the presentation by ILO outlining when sport is a good intervention for employment; introducing the Youth Employment Network (YEN); and the recent initiative Youth-Youth Fund with a sports component.

It was outlined that the key constraints in the youth labour market are: skill mismatch, lack of labour demand, capital constrains and job search constraints. It was noted that sport is a good intervention if employers perceive that young people have a skill mismatch especially 'soft' or life skills.

YEN is a joint partnership with the United Nations, ILO and World Bank. The initiative was established after the Millennium Summit in 2001.

Youth-Youth Fund was initiated in 2008 in four Western Africa countries (Côte D'Ivoire, Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone) to encourage youth participation. It is a competitive grant scheme with innovative small scale projects. It will be expanding to East Africa in the later part of 2010 with the support of the Danish Government. It will now add sport and employment and is expecting three types of projects:

- Training youths for jobs in sport
- Reintegration of former athletes into the education and employment mainstream
- Skill development through sport

The Group took note of the example South Africa provided, 'a child in sport is a child out of court'. South Africa is looking at introducing young unemployed school leavers to the military where they will have time to train and excel but also get jobs where physical fitness is required.

Canada highlighted the NGO Fight for Peace in Brazil where educational and vocational training are provided. The model was recognized by UNDP and now Fight for Peace has replicated the model in inner city London.

The meeting acknowledged the importance of 'soft skills'. Soft skills have the potential to tackle issues such as democracy deficit, for example, the International Judo Federation (IJF) use Judo to show how a national federation can be set up and run in a democratic manner. Some former international and national athletes have very brief careers after which they often get into crime, drugs or alcohol as they have been used to having money and celebrity both of which are suddenly removed. Training and development in soft skills can help them to adjust to life after fame.

The Group concluded that:

- Physical education and sport can be developmental and can create better skilled persons through quality sporting experiences.
- 'Soft skills' are vitally important in a number of contexts and sport provides an ideal medium within which to develop skills such as problem solving, team working, rules- based behavior, fair play and so on.
- People trained and developed in sport can be more easily reintegrated in mainstream employment and are often in demand by employers.

#### **IX. Monitoring Implementation: developing indicators, collecting data, disseminating information (Agenda item 5)**

The Secretariat informs the session that the UN Secretary General delivers a report to the UN General Assembly in every even year on the issue of Sport Development and Peace. Therefore, the Secretary General will in the near future send out a Note Verbale to all UN Member States requesting countries to report on Child and Youth. The note will encourage member states to report on Child and Youth Development. The Group agreed that this information can be used in the Working Group to track Government progress.

The meeting took note that UNOSDP has a new website with a sub-section on SDP IWG. The Group considered how to use the site to exchange their discussion papers, draft reports, data collections, impact assessment etc.

The idea of developing a report card was discussed and will be further considered based on the experience of CABOS.

The meeting noted that there is a lack of baseline data and there is an important need to focus on this. The Group was encouraged to pool resources amongst international organizations, to draw on some of the data and focus on the general recommendations of the SDP IWG 2008 report.

The Group also took note of the suggestion that vetting procedures for NGOs, Sports Federations, sports academies, private agents etc. should be put into practice particularly in respect of Child Protection policy and practice.

#### **X. Policy briefs with good practice examples (Agenda item 6)**

The meeting took note of the proposal to prepare policy brief background documents which will be drafted on each of the Strategic Areas that the SDP IWG is working on i.e. Child Protection, Sport to Strengthen Child and Youth Education, Sport to Enhance Transferable Skills and Employment Opportunities.

The Group agreed that experts would be invited to review and contribute to the policy briefs with facts and figures based on research. Case studies of successful programmes and policies from different countries would be included.

The aim of the briefs is to ensure that all members of the SDP IWG have access to the same baseline information with regard to policy and in relation to advocacy with governments.

The representative of Azerbaijan provided a presentation of his government's policy implementation. The text can be found on UNOSDP website.

The representative of Brazil presented a case study on their initiative 'Segundo Tempo'. The text can be found on UNOSDP website.

The representative from Nigeria also provided a case study on the importance of sport in Nigeria. The text can be found on UNOSDP website.

The meeting appreciated the contributions and encourages the sharing of more interventions at future meetings and in writing.

#### **XI. Building capacity to support policy development (Agenda item 7)**

The meeting noted that capacity building needs to be addressed at regional and national levels. It is intended that the Secretariat would be able to support governments in both policy development and policy implementation. A number of capacity building activities are included in the Strategic Plan. The Group invited Governments to consider these via email and through a possible future 'members only' section on the internet platform.

Active discussion amongst governments was encouraged to ensure governments are fully supported in policy development by the exchange of knowledge and other assistance.

#### **XII. Summary and conclusions (Agenda item 8)**

The Group agreed with the summaries provided for each of the three Strategic Areas of Child and Youth Development.

The Group agreed that the Secretariat will send out the minutes for comment and input. Participants will have two weeks to comment and return them to the Secretariat. Participants will also receive the amended Strategic Plan, list of participants and the group photo.

### **XIII. Other Business (Agenda item 9)**

No other issues were raised.

### **XIV. Closing of the meeting (Agenda item 10)**

The meeting concluded with thanks to the Chair and Vice-chair and to the participants and encouragement to more Governments to participate in future meetings.

**UN Office on Sport for Development and Peace  
Sport for Development and Peace International Working Group**

**1<sup>st</sup> Plenary Session  
Geneva, Switzerland, 5 May 2010**

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**Group Photo**  
**Sport for Development and Peace International Working Group Meeting**  
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