

## **Communiqué from the Commonwealth Sports Ministers' Conference**

### **Introduction**

Government ministers responsible for sport in the Commonwealth met on 24 July 2002 in Manchester on the eve of the XVII<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Games. Participants affirmed their commitment to the development of sport and sporting co-operation in three key areas.

### **Anti-Doping - Ministers:**

- fully recognised that the use of banned drugs in sport is cheating, undermines the integrity of sport and must be countered at national and international levels;
- are committed to ensuring a doping free environment in sport by establishing effective national anti-doping programmes, recognising the importance of comprehensive testing (including out of competition testing) and promoting anti-doping research;
- expressed their support for the work being undertaken by the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) and encouraged all Commonwealth nations to take part in the consultation exercise on the World Anti-Doping Code (WADC), providing feedback to WADA in a spirit of openness, transparency and accountability;
- are committed to the principle of the World Anti-Doping Code to ensure collective action on anti-doping and to provide a powerful weapon in the fight against doping in sport. Ministers stressed that the proposed international agreement on anti-doping in sport needs to be flexible and inclusive and take into account the political, legal and cultural diversity of participant nations;
- welcomed the ongoing international discussions on ways to strengthen the partnership between sport and governments, their commitment to WADA and the recognition of anti-doping measures worldwide.

### **Social Cohesion - Ministers:**

- fully recognised the important role that sport can play in helping to promote social development as well as addressing the exclusion of disadvantaged groups in society;
- are committed to promoting mutual understanding and interaction within and between communities through sport;
- are committed to developing activities within their own countries that increase participation amongst groups traditionally under-represented in sport to ensure more equitable participation in sport;
- recommended Commonwealth nations to develop coherent sporting strategies at local, national and international levels to help promote community cohesion;
- recommended co-operation across sectors within the Commonwealth Secretariat to harness the potential of sport.

### **Women in Sport - Ministers:**

- are committed to developing a sporting culture that enables and values the full involvement of women in every aspect of sport;
- are committed to creating a positive environment in which all women have an equal opportunity and adequate resources to be involved in all areas of physical activity and sport of their choice and at their chosen level and capacity;
- are committed to improving and promoting opportunities for women in sport at every level - whether as participants, competitors, coaches or administrators;
- recommended active co-operation between sport and health, education and gender agencies at national and international level and, in particular, within the Commonwealth Secretariat.

### **Conclusions – Ministers:**

- invited the CHOGM Committee for Co-operation through Sport (CCCS) to take forward the conclusions of the meeting and to present an action plan to address these conclusions at the next Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in 2003;
- encouraged the CCCS to continue its work in promoting stronger sporting links and practical co-operation between Commonwealth nations;
- agreed that meetings of Commonwealth Ministers of Sport are valuable and should be held regularly in conjunction with each Commonwealth Games;
- invited the CCCS, in conjunction with the Secretary General of the Commonwealth, to take forward the positive case for financial support for sport, as a tool for social cohesion, from international development agencies.