
8th Commonwealth Sports Ministers Meeting Communiqué

Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

4 August 2016

The 8th Commonwealth Sports Minister Meeting (8CSMM) was held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil on 4th August 2016. Delegations from 32 member countries attended the meeting. The meeting was opened by Commonwealth Secretary-General, the Rt Hon Patricia Scotland QC, and chaired by the Hon Sussan Ley, Minister for Health, Aged Care and Sport, Government of Australia.

The meeting took place in the context of the recent adoption of the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, as well as a marked increase in sport integrity issues. Accordingly, the meeting focused on the contribution that sport can make to the new global development agenda, with an emphasis on promoting healthy lives and well-being for all. The meeting also considered the negative impact of sport integrity issues on sustainable development, and options for effective Governmental responses.

Sport and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

Ministers welcomed recognition in the 2030 Agenda that sport can be ‘an important enabler of sustainable development’. They committed to align sports architecture, and sport-based policy and strategy, to the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) framework and associated targets. Ministers:

1. Noted that the 2030 Agenda represents the agreed global plan to achieve sustainable development, and committed to develop, resource and champion policies and strategies to maximise the contribution of sport to this agenda.
2. Reiterated that with appropriate government leadership sport can make effective and cost efficient contributions to development outcomes in the areas of health (SDG 3), Education (SDG 4), Gender (SDG 5) and in reducing inequality (SDG 10). They also highlighted the importance of access to safe and inclusive spaces for sport, physical activity and active lifestyles in working towards inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities and human settlements (SDG 11).
3. Agreed that the conceptualisation of Sport for Development and Peace (SDP) should be expanded to encompass an increased focus on the contribution sport can make to economic development, employment and economic diversification, as defined by SDG 8.
4. Recognised sport as a sector within which it is critical to strengthen justice for all, reduce all forms of violence and build effective, accountable institutions, the key targets of SDG 16.
5. Recognised the key role of sport as a tool to engage and support young people, in particular those who are hard to reach, economically marginalised or live in geographically remote areas.
6. Committed to facilitating cross-government and multi-sector collaborative action to maximise the contribution of sport as an enabler of sustainable development, and acknowledged that this will manifest differently in different contexts. They recognised that, in working to scale

the contribution of sport to sustainable development and peace, specific attention should be paid to the ‘means of implementation’ integral to SDG 17.

7. Emphasised the need to ensure the cultural appropriateness and contextual relevance of policies and strategies to enhance the contribution of sport to sustainable development, underscoring the opportunity to increase the use of traditional and indigenous sports.
8. Noted with concern that physical inactivity is the fourth leading risk factor for global mortality, causing approximately 3.2 million deaths per year, and highlighted the need to embed participation in sport and physical activity within preventative health policy and strategy.
9. Emphasised the importance of a holistic approach to the promotion of sport and physical activity, specifically stressing the requirement for people to be active through the life cycle, especially older people.
10. Agreed that health- and education-related investment and sharing of good practice are required to raise awareness of the benefits of sport for health, enhance community-level sport participation, including in the school environment, and embed sport and physical education in urban planning considerations.
11. Committed to implementing policy and strategy to enhance the participation in sport of people with disabilities, and to use sport as vehicle to drive social inclusion for marginalised groups.
12. Emphasised the need for wide ranging investment in sport as a tool for development, including the need to mobilise private sector investment and international partnerships to scale impact.
13. Reiterated commitments to strengthen mechanisms to monitor sport participation, in line with established guidelines on physical activity levels for health, to ensure that progress can be quantified.
14. Highlighted the need for an increased focus on innovative research methods and culturally appropriate research design and data collection, in particular from small and developing states, and therefore the importance of promoting additional sport-policy research from academics, experts and institutions based in such countries.
15. Welcomed and endorsed the guidelines and toolkits produced by the Commonwealth Secretariat to support Governments to strengthen SDP policy and strategy:
 - *Commonwealth Analysis Report: Sport for Development and Peace and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*; and,
 - *Commonwealth Policy Guide on Enhancing the Contribution of Sport to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*.
16. Commended the continued value of the Commonwealth Secretariat’s SDP policy analysis, capacity building and technical support, noting the Commonwealth’s leadership in advancing the contribution of sport to the sustainable development agenda. They requested that the Commonwealth Secretariat continue to provide technical assistance to member countries to strengthen SDP policy, strategy and monitoring and evaluation tools. Ministers requested that this support be extended to include assistance to strengthen implementation mechanisms.

In addressing sport and sustainable development, Ministers emphasised that protecting the integrity of sport is a critical underpinning factor. Efforts to address sport integrity issues must be interconnected and embedded in advancing Sport for Development and Peace.

Protecting the integrity of sport

Ministers expressed strong concern about the seriousness of threats to the integrity of sport. They forcefully reiterated that governments and non-governmental sporting organisations have a shared responsibility for protecting the integrity of sport. They also committed to working collectively to address these issues. Ministers:

17. Reiterated that sport in the Commonwealth must be governed in a manner that upholds the values of the Commonwealth as set out in the Commonwealth Charter.
18. Emphasised that sport integrity issues are complex, global and increasingly interconnected, and therefore, in each jurisdiction, governments, sporting organisations and other relevant stakeholders must implement robust responses that draw on agreed international frameworks and adhere to national legal and policy frameworks. Where these frameworks are insufficient, they should be strengthened.
19. Encouraged the Commonwealth to continue to be a leading voice on ensuring recognition of issues of inequality and discrimination in sport, and the safeguarding of sport participants, as significant threats to the integrity of sport.
20. Reaffirmed their strong commitment to combat doping in sport and protect the rights of the clean athletes and whistle-blowers, emphasising that governments are key stakeholders in the anti-doping movement.
21. Underscored that taking action in community and grassroots-level sport must be integral in the collective response to protect the integrity of sport. They noted that working with the next generation is a critical and effective way of influencing change.
22. Committed to progressing from words to action on integrity issues. They emphasised the urgency for the allocation of appropriate human and financial resources, encouraged information-sharing between stakeholders, and committed to leveraging Commonwealth collaboration, and enhancing government policy responses. They recognised the need to ensure consequences for non-compliance and sport integrity violations.
23. Welcomed and endorsed the principles presented in the Commonwealth Advisory Body on Sport's *Policy Guidance to Commonwealth Governments on Protecting the Integrity of Sport*, in the areas of governance, safeguarding of participants, manipulation of sporting competitions, equality and anti-doping.
24. Recognised that the *International Charter of Physical Education, Physical Activity and Sport*, the *UNESCO International Convention against Doping in Sport (2005)* and the *World Anti-Doping Code (2015)* provide the highest level of international consensus on policy responses to sport integrity issues. Ministers acknowledged that, rather than duplicate these efforts, the Commonwealth's response should be to support member governments to engage in these processes.
25. Encouraged sports stakeholders to work in partnership with law enforcement, anti-corruption structures, and legal architecture within member states, along with the Commonwealth Secretariat and CABOS, to address the negative impact of corruption in sport, pursuant to SDG 16.
26. Welcomed plans to launch a new initiative - *Commonwealth Sports Integrity Champions* - to mobilise high-achieving athletes and eminent individuals to ensure the long-term legitimacy of sport and advance the contribution of sport to sustainable development.

Overall, in the face of the current range of urgent threats to the integrity of sport, Ministers strongly reaffirmed their commitment to advance collective and vital action. Ministers committed to strengthen integrity frameworks at national level and also to work collaboratively to find solutions at the international level.

Maximising Commonwealth cooperation on sport policy issues

Ministers emphasised that, in line with the Charter of the Commonwealth, there are significant benefits to be gained through maximising Commonwealth cooperation on sports policy issues, within a global context. Ministers:

27. Recognised the value of Commonwealth cooperation in aligning with and influencing global developments on sports policy issues. Ministers noted and supported the development of a common framework for monitoring the implementation of the *Declaration of Berlin* and the *International Charter of Physical Education, Physical Activity and Sport*. Ministers requested that the Commonwealth Secretariat continues to engage with UNESCO to ensure that Commonwealth positions on sports policy issues inform the agenda, discussions and outcomes of the *6th International Conference of Ministers and Senior Officials Responsible for Physical Education and Sport (MINEPS VI)*.
28. Welcomed with gratitude the ongoing expertise and advice provided by the *Commonwealth Advisory Body on Sport (CABOS)*, and approved the proposed revisions to the CABOS Terms of Reference, including changes to further strengthen the role of governments within CABOS.
29. Noted the development of *Transformation 2022: The Commonwealth Games Federation Strategic Plan 2015-2022*, and supported the steps outlined to increase cooperation within the Commonwealth Sports Movement.
30. Underscored the particular relevance of sport in the lives of many young people and endorsed the recommendation from the Commonwealth Youth Sport for Development and Peace (CYSDP) working group to create and promote innovative and inclusive SDP youth engagement structures at a national level. Ministers committed to seeking opportunities to use key national and international sports events as hubs to engage young people and young athletes through youth leadership and youth development sessions.
31. Thanked and commended the Government of Australia and the Commonwealth Secretariat for their hosting and facilitation of a successful Meeting, and welcomed their continued commitment and support in hosting the 2018 Commonwealth Sports Ministers Meeting in the margins of the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games.

Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 4 August 2016