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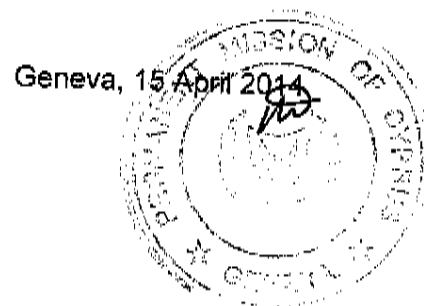


**Permanent Mission of the Republic of Cyprus
Geneva**

Ref.: 24.11.006.013 (1000/1)

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Cyprus to the Office of the United Nations at Geneva and other International Organizations in Switzerland presents its compliments to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and with reference to the latter's Note Verbale dated 11 March 2014, concerning the questionnaire of the Secretariat of the Human Rights Council Advisory Committee on "promoting human rights through sport and the Olympic ideal", has the honour to enclose herewith the relevant information as received from the competent Authorities of the Republic of Cyprus.

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Cyprus to the Office of the United Nations at Geneva and other International Organizations in Switzerland avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights the assurances of its highest consideration.



To:
Secretariat of the Human Rights Council Advisory Committee
c/o Ms. Meena Ramkaun
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Promoting human rights through sport and the Olympic Ideal

1. How is sport used in your country to promote human rights?

Department of Primary and Secondary Education:

The New Curriculum reinforces Physical Education (PE) as a lifelong process for every child. Physical Education serves as a means to promote health, human development, healthy competition and to facilitate social inclusion. The PE Curriculum inspires every child to believe in themselves and to be active for life. It encourages children to be aware of diversity be tolerant and strive for fairness.

Physical Education New Curriculum requires that all children participate in various sports aiming to, develop in them a team spirit, a sense of solidarity and respect for rules.

The PE Curriculum is formed in such a way to allow every child the right and the opportunity to take part in various sport activities and improve themselves based on their characteristics and ability. It prohibits discrimination on the grounds of race, gender, disability, religion and beliefs.

Cyprus Sport Organisation:

The general concept of the Cyprus Sport Organisation (CSO) for sport participation is that "Everybody has the right to participate in sport". CSO makes sure, through its specialized programs that every citizen of Cyprus (despite origin, gender, religious belief, economic status, and physical ability) has the right to participate in sport, whether that is in the competitive format or for recreation.

What are the best practices being applied?

Department of Primary and Secondary Education:

1. Indicative lesson plans, including clear success indicators, support teaching practices.
2. In - service education and especially school based training and support contribute to teachers' best practice.
3. Sport activities within the school focus mostly on:
 - practice,
 - inclusive and cooperative activities,
 - different learning styles,
 - variety in forming and reforming teams,
 - a social and moral behavioural code
 - promotion of human rights, equality, equity, respect for diversity, tolerance and fairness.
4. Less focus on competition.

5. Programmes in cooperation with the local Sport Federations:
The local sport federations and the Department of Primary Education cooperate and run several programs. Many children have the opportunity to get acquainted with sports and take part in different activities. The aim of the programmes is to motivate

children to join sport clubs and participate in sport activities after school hours. Some of the programmes include summer and winter sports such as tennis, table tennis, badminton, swimming, sailing, rowing, canoe, ski, etc.

6. «Active School Breaks» (Primary Education):

Pilot programs, run in schools, encouraging children to take part in physical activities during break time. Physical activities, especially non-competitive, are organised for all children, young and older, based on their abilities. «Active School Breaks» has led to the reduction of school delinquency and bullying.

Cyprus Sport Organisation:

CSO runs National Programs that target all citizens of Cyprus:

1. "Sport for All" is a National Program that runs all over Cyprus and targets people from the age of 8 up to the age of 90 years old. Sport for All runs numerous sports, from team sports, martial arts, aerobics and specialised programs for the elderly. It also runs classes for people with disabilities. There is a minimum cost for participating and in many cases participation is completely free based on certain criteria.
2. "The National Scheme for the Support of Developmental Sport", finances the sport academies of all federations to make sure that all youngsters aged 8-18 years old have the support to engage competitively in the sport they like.
3. "Social Cohesion" is a program implemented by CSO. It includes activities for groups such as prisoners, religious minorities, people with disabilities, and for those at centers of addictive substances (drugs, alcohol etc).

CSO's 16 owned sport facilities are accessible to all citizens of Cyprus.

2. What are the possibilities of using sport and the Olympic Ideal to strengthen respect for human rights?

Department of Primary and Secondary Education:

The PE curriculum includes specific lesson plans aiming at the promotion of human rights, respect to diversity, tolerance, fairness, cooperation, team spirit and peaceful co-existence. Cross curricular activities also contribute and strengthen respect for human rights. Parents are also encouraged to participate in sport events taking place at school.

Sport events between two or more schools are also organised, and highlight the need for inclusion of every child since mixed teams are formed and therefore all children cooperate and play in a peaceful way.

"Olympic Education":

A variety of Olympic Education Programmes are implemented in schools in all districts. Their main objectives are:

- active engagement of all children in physical activities,
- emotional education,
- acceptance of difference,
- application of fair play and the Olympic spirit,

- familiarisation with the well-known Olympic sports, and
- acquisition of positive attitudes towards life and active living.

It is worth mentioning that pupils aged 16 and 17 (second and final class of lyceum) may choose "Olympic Education" for 4 weekly periods combining theory (1 period) with practice (3 periods). "Olympic Education" is examined at the end of both school years and may be chosen as a module allowing entrance to Universities in Greece to study PE.

3. What are the sports practiced in your country and how far are they all inclusive (for women, youth, vulnerable groups etc.)?

Department of Primary and Secondary Education:

The programs mentioned in question 1B apply.

Cyprus Sport Organisation:

There is a wide range of sports practiced in Cyprus. More than 65 sports are organized through the Sport Federations registered under the CSO. Sports include from the traditional sports (football, basketball, volleyball, track and field etc.), to martial arts (karate, judo, Muay Thai etc.) and to less known sports like sea jet ski, bridge, archery, climbing, softball, bowls and others. All Sport Federations make sure, through their statutes, that the sport activities offered are all inclusive (for women, youth, vulnerable groups etc). Most Federations have academies for the young athletes, while the majority of sports are practiced equally by women and men.

4. In what way can sport and the Olympic Idea become a means to:

a. advance the cause of peace?

Department of Primary and Secondary Education - Ministry of Education and Culture:

Within the school context physical activities and sports are organised in a way that cooperation, problem solving, flexibility, adjustment, respect for diversity, tolerance and fairness are targeted. Every child has to obey the game rules and a standard behavioral code.

Physical activities such as traditional games and traditional dances are organised within the school context as a means for children to become acquainted with their culture. Sport events are also organised to bring together Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot children. One such event is organised under the auspices of the United Nations.

Cyprus Sport Organisation:

Special sport programs aim at strengthening the relationship between the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities, and facilitate the idea of unification. Turkish Cypriot athletes are given the permission to participate in Cyprus National teams, while the Cyprus Football Federation has recently signed a protocol of cooperation with the Turkish Cypriot side.

b. promote development?

Department of Primary and Secondary Education:

Physical activities and sports enhance personal development based on each child's needs, abilities and competences. Schools are linked to Sports Federations and local clubs. On the one hand schools take part in organised programs as mentioned above or invite Sports Federations in school sports events. On the other hand, Sports Federations and local clubs invite children to participate (voluntarily) in sports events, developmentally appropriate for their age. The "Cyprus Amateur Athletic Association" cooperates with schools, identifies talents and also provides equal opportunities to all children to take part in athletic events and stay close to sports free from discriminations.

c. combat all forms of discrimination?

Please refer to question 1.

5. What kinds of challenges are faced in promoting human rights through sport and Olympic Ideal?

Department of Primary and Secondary Education:

More funds are required for the promotion of sport activities after school hours, especially for vulnerable groups and disabled children. We should make sure that every child can benefit from sport and improve their well-being.

Cyprus Sport Organisation:

The challenges refer to factors like the illegal migration and the financial crisis which may in turn create racist ideas inside the society and can therefore be transferred to sport. Sexual harassment and abuse in sport is also a challenge as the CSO receives a number of complaints each year. Finally we need more women participation in decision making positions in sport.

6. How can the media help in the promotion of human rights through sport and the Olympic Ideal?

Media has an essential role in the promotion of human rights through sport and the Olympic ideal because it has the power to shape public opinion. There can be special promotional films to show how sport can unite people, how its societal role can promote social cohesion and acceptance of diversity, and how sport can translate into respecting human rights. Sport is like a microcosm of society in which all social problems can be reflected, and solved through active participation.