**Promoting human rights through sport and the Olympic ideal**

**Questionnaire**

*This questionnaire forms part of consultations undertaken by the Human Rights Council Advisory Committee with* ***States Members of the United Nations****,* ***international*** *and* ***regional organizations****,* ***national human rights institutions****,* ***civil society organizations*** *and* ***other relevant stakeholders****, with a view to preparing a study on the possibilities of using sport and the Olympic ideal to promote human rights for all and to strengthen universal respect for them, pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution 24/1.*

**Background**

In its resolution 24/1 of 26 September 2013, the Human Rights Council requested the Advisory Committee to prepare a study on the possibilities of using sport and the Olympic ideal to promote human rights for all and to strengthen universal respect for them, bearing in mind both the value of relevant principles enshrined in the Olympic Charter and the value of good sporting example, and to present a progress report thereon to the before its twenty-seventh session of the Council (September 2014).

In this context, the Advisory Committee decided, at its twelfth session held in February 2014, to designate a drafting group[[1]](#footnote-2) in charge of the preparation of this study. The drafting group will present a draft progress report to the Advisory Committee before its thirteenth session (August 2014), with a view to submit it to the Council in September 2014.

The resolution also requested the Committee, in its preparation of the study, to seek the views and inputs of States Members of the United Nations, international and regional organizations, national human rights institutions, civil society organizations and other relevant stakeholders in this regard. The drafting group therefore elaborated the hereunder questionnaire. Respondents are advised to reply only to questions that are applicable to them.

**QUESTIONNAIRE**

1. How is sport used in your country to promote human rights? What are the best practices being applied?

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

*“Placing sport at the service of the harmonious development of humankind, with a view to promoting a peaceful society concerned with the preservation of human dignity” is embedded in the Olympic Charter and as such forms part of the International Olympic Committe’s fundamental principles.*

*As a result, the IOC and the constituents of the Olympic Movement at large apply a growing quantity of resources in the areas of development through sport, helping to promote youth, formal education, culture, healthy lifestyles, sustainability, gender equality, understanding among peoples and peace. The projects developed, beyond granting vulnerable communities their right to leisure, support human rights at large.*

*Countless initiatives with this objectives and scope have been implemented by the IOC and relevant partners over the last two decennials. Recent, non- exhaustive examples of what is possible include:*

***Projects addressing stigma and discrimination by highlighting the abilities of women and girls / people with disabilities***

* ***Social and physical rehabilitation in Afghanistan and Cambodia driven by the ICRC and the IOC***

*In partnership with the IOC, the ICRC has integrated sport into its physical rehabilitation programme in Afghanistan, which is targeted at paraplegics who have become victims of land mines and explosive remnants, polio or other events. Sport, and in particular tennis, basketball, table tennis and archery, have a positive impact on the physical and mental rehabilitation process of paraplegics, as it can help to re-build self-esteem and promotes re-integration into society. Sports events are also used to raise awareness of preventive measures, treatment and the rights of people with disabilities. Moreover, local physiotherapists have been trained to integrate adapted sport into their rehabilitation programmes.*

*A similar initiative is being implemented in Cambodia, a country heavily affected by land mines and, therefore, with a high number of people suffering amputations. The Cambodian project focuses on the expansion of female basketball wheelchair teams composed of patients from an ICRC rehabilitation centre, while fostering social integration for women with disabilities. It also aims to identify future vocational training and employment opportunities for these women. The ICRC is working with the newly-created Cambodian National Basketball Federation and the National Paralympic Committee to coordinate its project and helping to develop a national team.*

***Projects providing access to sport to marginalized communities***

* ***IOC Sports Kit – in partnership with WFP and UNHCR***

*The IOC has developed a sports kit which contains basic sports and recreational material for about 300 kids, such as various balls, bibs, caps, shirts and chalk to mark the field. This equipment is sufficient to set up organised sports activities in very diverse settings such as in schools as well as in camps and settlements. Since their creation in 2009, the kits have been welcomed by over 650,000 children and young people in schools supported by the World Food Programme (WFP) as direct beneficiaries, and around one million people if one also considers the community around them. Countries where the programme has been successfully implemented with the WFP include Afghanistan, Cambodia, Haiti and Kenya. In addition, the IOC, Worldwide Olympic Partner Samsung and UNHCR have joined forces to distribute the kits to more than 180,000 young people living in camps for refugees and internally displaced in 20 countries throughout Asia, Africa and Latin America.*

* ***Giving is Winning – an IOC-UNHCR campaign at the Summer Olympic Games***

*Since 2004, the IOC and UNHCR have organised a “Giving is Winning” programme in the run-up to and during the Summer Olympic Games. The IOC, National Olympic Committees, Sports Federations, sponsors, athletes, members and other supporters of the Olympic Movement have joined this world-wide solidarity campaign and donated large quantities of sports and casual clothing which are then distributed to people in need in refugee camps. Since its inception, the campaign has collected over 170,000 items of clothing, or close to 36 containers, which have reached refugees in 23 countries.*

***Projects addressing life skills and teaching values contributing to constructive behaviours and respect of human rights***

* ***Sports for Hope Programme – setting up Olympic Youth Development Centres (OYDCs) in Zambia and Haiti****By setting up OYDCs in developing countries, the IOC aims to provide young people and communities with positive sports and lifestyle opportunities, offer modern and professional training facilities to the athletes of the entire region, and spread the Olympic values of excellence, friendship and respect.*
* ***Preventing youth violence in Colombia – a joint project of the IOC and War Child***

*The IOC has teamed up with NGO War Child for a two-year project, reaching out to more than 7,000 children and young people in 39 schools in the indigenous and Afro-Colombian  communities in the rural zones of Corinto, Northern Colombia. Multi-sport activities are being used, along with a methodology that combines the development of life skills with the promotion of peaceful coexistence, to enhance social cohesion and to prevent violence among children and the community. Specifically trained community sports leaders are in charge of implementing the programme. Tournaments and sports festivals will also be organised.*

* ***IOC-UNHCR Sport and Education programme in Namibian refugee settlement***

*The IOC, together with UNHCR, implemented a Sport and Education programme for young people in the Osire refugee settlement in Namibia which hosts some 8,500 refugees, 40 per cent of whom are between the ages of 10 and 30. The programme was designed to get this group more involved in organised sport in an effort to alleviate some of the major problems affecting young people and especially women in Osire, namely teenage pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections such as HIV, and substance abuse. By linking the sporting activity to educational programmes on topics such as sexual and reproductive health and computer classes, the IOC and UNHCR were looking to provide the young people with meaningful recreational activities and the necessary tools to make informed decisions in life.*

*Beyond the implementation and showcasing of field projects of this type, members of the Olympic Movement and organizations involved and interested by sport for development and peace also have the possibility to leverage tools as the recently proclaimed International Day of Sport for Development and Peace (6 April) to promote sport and physical activity as a tool for social change; promote quality physical education for all children and youth and advocate among governments for the need to invest in sport.*

*The first edition of the Day has been celebrated by various National Olympic Committees, International and National Sports Federations, sports clubs, governmental and non-governmental organizations, neighbourhood associations and other entities and volunteers worldwide, who, along with the IOC, believe in sport as a tool for social change.*

*Along with this tool, the IOC also uses its seat as Permanent Observer to the UN to raise awareness and advocate in favor of the universal access to sport for all, the values it promotes, and for the important social changes it can generate.*

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

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

1. advance the cause of peace ?

*Sport stands for dialogue and understanding which transcend all differences.*

*The Olympic Games, the Olympic Athletes and in particular, the Olympic Village, by breaking down the barriers of cultural differences, are a powerful example of peaceful interaction.*

*At the advocacy level, the reintroduction in the modern Olympic Games, of the concept of “Olympic Truce” established in the Ancient Games during Olympic Games and enforced by governments through the dedicated UN Resolution adopted prior to each edition of the Games since 1993, contributes to the search for peaceful and diplomatic solutions to the world’s conflicts*.

*Over the years, this concept has inspired Olympic Games Organising Committes to implement various symbolic and concrete initiatives promoting peace during and beyond the Games:*

* *Prior to the Sydney 2000 Summer Olympic Games, a soldier from the Timor Leste peacekeeping force and a UN volunteer took part in the Olympic Torch Relay. Also at the Opening Ceremony, the South and North Korean delegations paraded together under the flag of the Korean peninsula.*
* *The concept of the Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympic Games Olympic Truce programme was developed in close cooperation with the Four First Nations. Having the Head of State as Patron of the Olympic Truce at an Olympic Games gave the concept its highest profile since it was reinstated in 1992.*
* *In the run-up to the London 2012 Summer Olympic Games, the Organizing Committee and the UK Government, delivered a dedicated educational programme that offered every young people in every school and college across the country, the chance to take part in sports and cultural activities encouraging peace in their schools and communities.*
* *The Olympic Truce was also an important and consistent part of the Sochi 2014 Winter Games with the development of a special education and culture programme. The Russian International Olympic University, which opened its doors to students from across the world, is a symbolic incarnation of the Olympic Truce ideals.*

*It has also become a custom that athletes, Government Representatives as well as the Olympic Movement Officials sign a Peace and Friendship Wall at the beginning of each Olympic Games during a ceremony dedicated to the Olympic Truce.*

*The examples of field projects listed under question 2 demonstrate that beyond the Olympic Games, sport and the Olympic Ideal can help build understanding and reconciliation in areas of crisis.*

1. promote development?

*Examples listed under items 2 concretely show that, integrated in development projects and delivered jointly with the appropriate specialized partners, adapted sports activities and sport at large can be an effective tools for socio-economic development of communities by :*

* *Instilling values of friendship, fair play, solidarity, excellence, discipline, etc.;*
* *Empowering women and girls in particular by showcasing their abilities;*
* *Contributing to the inclusion of people with disabilities by showcasing their abilities;*
* *Helping social inclusion and integration of marginalized groups;*
* *Helping combat obesity, chronic diseases, HIV & AIDS and instilling healthy behaviors generally;*
* *Through its universality, uniting people, promoting a culture of peace, building trust and establishing bridges between groups in conflict;*
* *Building self-esteem and other important life-skills and values for children and youth;*
* *Helping children and youth to recover from trauma;*
* *The possibilities sports programme have to create job opportunities and skills development;*
* *The possibility sports programmes have to motivate children to enroll in and attend school, and help improve education performances.*

1. combat all forms of discrimination?

*The Olympic Charter states: "Any form of discrimination with regard to a country or a person on grounds of race, religion, politics, gender or otherwise is incompatible with belonging to the Olympic Movement”. As a result, the I0C has always taken a strong stand against racism and discrimination in and around sport. One example is the ban from competing to Olympic Games imposed to South Africa between 1971 and 1988 under the apartheid-era, and the adoption of a resolution against apartheid in sport on 21 June 1988, calling upon its members to “stand firm in the struggle in defence of the Olympic ideals, by observing the principle of a resolute opposition to apartheid in sport”.*

*The values of non-discrimination, respect and inclusion forming the cornerstone of the Olympic Charter are conveyed as core elements of the Olympic Games, that are recognized for their universal dimension. Sport truly is the only area of human existence which has achieved what is known in political philosophy as “universal law”, and in moral philosophy as a “global ethic”. Regardless of where in the world sport is practiced, the rules are the same. They are recognised worldwide.*

*These values are also embedded in the IOC gender equality policy which fights discrimination towards girls and women in and through sport, by tackling both the issues of participation in sport, and representation in leadership positions in sport administrations.*

*As an international organisation with worldwide recognition, the IOC uses national, regional and international platforms and events to advocate increasing possibilities for girls and women in sport.*

*As a result, more sports and disciplines have been opened up to women at all levels and in most countries of the world. In the last 20 years especially, the IOC has pressed for the women's programme at the Olympic Games to be enlarged, in cooperation with the respective International Sports Federations (IFs) and the Organising Committees for the Olympic Games (OCOGs). This development has been further reinforced by the IOC's decision that all sports seeking inclusion in the programme must include women's events. The IOC also started to work on women's involvement at leadership level in sport in 1981, under the initiative of former President Juan Antonio Samaranch, who wanted to have women co-opted as IOC members. As a result, 24 members out of 107 are women.*

*The Olympic Charter was amended to include, for the first time in history, an explicit reference to the need for work in this area:   
"The IOC encourages and supports the promotion of women in sport at all levels and in all structures, with a view to implementing the principle of equality of men and women."   
Rule 2, paragraph 7, Olympic Charter in force as from 07.07.2007*

*One of the main tools used to carry this work is the IOC Women and Sport Commission, whose members are particularly active in raising awareness about gender equality in their respective domains of sports expertise. Other important advocacy initiatives are the yearly IOC Women and Sport Awards and the IOC World Conferences on Women and Sport.*

*The IOC has also addressed the need to further develop educational and training programmes targeting women in sport, by establishing a programme of regional seminars and special assistance for female administrators, coaches, technical officials and journalists in the national and international sports movement.*

*With these supportive measures, the IOC aims to ensure that female representation within the Olympic Movement becomes a reality.*

**HOW IT AFFECTS EVERY AREA**

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

*The IOC and the Olympic Movement at large believe in the positive values of sport and that all human beings should have access to sport. They will thus continue advocacy work in this field as the main challenge lies in the recognition of sport as an effective tool for social change and thus in the global investment made in this field by the governments and other social actors.*

*Needless to say that partnerships with governments and expert bodies in the different field are essential to make a difference.*

*It is also essential that the autonomy of sport organizations be respected politically, to ensure sports organizations have the possibility to implement without hindrance the“global ethic” of fair-play, tolerance and friendship across the differing countries, laws, customs and traditions.*

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

**Deadline for submission of responses to the questionnaire:**

In order to give the Drafting Group the opportunity to take into account the different contributions, all parties are encouraged to submit their responses as soon as possible and at the latest by **11 April 2014**.

Answers can be submitted via email to the following address:

[hrcadvisorycommittee@ohchr.org](mailto:hrcadvisorycommittee@ohchr.org)

OR

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Thank you for your contribution.

For more information on the Advisory’s mandate: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/AdvisoryCommittee/Pages/HRCACIndex.aspx>

1. A/HRC/AC/12/L.4 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)