



LIETUVOS RESPUBLIKOS SEIMO KONTROLIERIŲ ĮSTAIGA
THE SEIMAS OMBUDSMEN'S OFFICE OF THE REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA

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To: Ms. Meena Ramkaun
Secretariat of the Human Rights Council Advisory Committee
United Nations Office at Geneva

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Dear Ms. Ramkaun,

On 12 March 2014, the head of the Seimas Ombudsmen's Office of the Republic of Lithuania, the Seimas Ombudsman Dr. Augustinas Normantas received the letter asking to submit for responses regarding the questionnaire on promoting human rights through sport and the Olympic ideal. We are pleased to provide some information about our point of view regarding the possibilities of using sport and the Olympic ideal to promote human rights and to strengthen universal respect for them. Please find the attached file with our answers to your request.

Sincerely,

Augustinas Normantas
The Seimas Ombudsman
The Head of the Office

QUESTIONNAIRE

PROMOTING HUMAN RIGHTS THROUGH SPORT AND THE OLYMPIC IDEAL

1. Unfortunately, sport is not used to promote human rights in Lithuania.
2. We suppose that sport has a unique power to attract, mobilize and inspire people. By its very nature, sport is about inclusion and citizenship. Sport plays a significant role as a promoter of social integration and economic development in different geographical, cultural and political contexts. Sport is a powerful tool to strengthen social ties and networks, and to promote ideals of peace, fraternity, solidarity, non-violence, tolerance and justice.
3. Lithuanians practice over 100 branches of sport. Basketball is the most popular sport, then follows football and track-and-field athletics. Apart from these, Lithuanians are mostly interested in car-racing, boxing, figure skating, sport dancing, cycling, and tennis.
4. Sport could be used in an extremely wide range of situations – whether as an integrated tool in short-term emergency humanitarian aid activities, or in long-term development cooperation projects, on a local, regional or global scale.
5. We think that media could be one of the ways in promoting human rights through sport and Olympic ideal, but it is equally important to be very cautious and not to let the media to violate human rights, for example not to let discriminate some people over others.
6. Media is one of the most powerful tools in today's world and it can help to promote human rights through sport undoubtedly. International sporting events have a great power to attract global attention not only because of the excellence of the athletes but also because of the intense competition among nations to host them. In part due to the media interest generated by international sporting events, they have the potential to help in the promotion of human rights through sport.
Besides, the sport's governing bodies can play an active role in advancing respect for human rights and in reducing adverse rights impacts associated with international sporting events.