**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?**

Major sports events can be used as a catalyst to implement child protective strategies and to strengthen cooperation among various stakeholders to mitigate harm. In this respect, there is a need to involve and build partnerships with key stakeholders, such as the International Olympic Committee and host countries, with a view to ensuring child protective environments before, during and after major sports events.

It is paramount that human rights (including child rights) impact assessment be included in the bidding criteria of major sport organizers, such as the International Olympic Committee. These bidding criteria could be identified and become enforceable in close cooperation with other key stakeholders, such as host countries, the business sector, and relevant NGOs.

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 ?
2. promote development?
3. combat all forms of discrimination?

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

Major sports events, such as the Olympic Games, can place children at a greater risk of being victims of sexual exploitation, with the arrival of thousands of additional tourists in a festive environment, thus increasing the number of potential abusers. However, these events can also be used as an opportunity to raise awareness on the risks that they can entail in relation to sexual exploitation of children, and on the need to put child protection as a priority in tourism, travel and sports.

The real scope of the sexual exploitation of children in the context of major sports events remains difficult to determine due to many factors, such as the lack of comprehensive studies and available data on victims and perpetrators, and the lack of understanding and misperception of the issue by key actors. The criminal nature of the activity, the impunity, and the fear of the negative repercussions that such disclosures may have on sports events or the tourism industry also represent major challenges in accessing information.

Countries that have recently hosted major sports events, such as Poland and South Africa, have deployed efforts to minimize the risks faced by children to fall victims of sexual exploitation. These efforts include: the adoption of specific legislation, the monitoring of touristic and sports zones, the launching of awareness-raising campaigns, and the implementation of training programmes for concerned stakeholders.

It is important to take stock of these recent efforts, good practices and lessons learned in order to minimize the risks faced by children to fall victims of sexual exploitation in the context of major sports events. Through coherent, sustainable and integrated protection strategies we can mitigate risk factors and develop ethical, responsible and child protective sports and tourism.

Host countries of major sports events, such as Poland and Brazil, through their engagement in prevention campaigns, have proven that a country will not be stigmatised by committing itself in the struggle against the sexual exploitation of children in the context of major sports events. On the contrary, it shows their commitment to ethical, responsible and child protective sports and tourism, and reiterates their engagement towards the promotion and protection of child rights. States must be encouraged to continue and intensify efforts in this regard.

Through extensive and sustainable international cooperation and partnerships with different stakeholders, including the International Olympic Committee and the business sector, we can reduce social tolerance, combat impunity, and better protect children from becoming victims of sexual exploitation (for more details, see answer to question no. 2 above).

In my capacity as UN Special Rapporteur on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, I have been advocating strongly for comprehensive child protection systems which integrate sustainable prevention strategies. For more details, see the thematic Report of the Special Rapporteur on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography on the protection of children from sexual exploitation in travel and tourism.[[2]](#footnote-3) See also the summary note of the side event organized by the Special Rapporteur in the context of the 25th session of the HRC, in March 2014, on the issue of protection of sexual exploitation of children in the context of major sports events.[[3]](#footnote-4)

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

Long term campaigns are important to involve major sport organizers in a sustainable way before, during and after major sports events. ECPAT, Terre des homes, and the Oak Foundation have conducted important initiatives and media campaigns to combat sexual exploitation of children in major sports events.

The “Don’t Look Away Campaign”, led by ECPAT, foresees awareness-raising activities in the countries hosting major sports events, such as the World Football Cup 2014 in Brazil. More importantly, the campaign also addresses the demand factor.The European Union and the Government of Brazil have engaged in this campaign, thus acknowledging the serious challenges that major sports events represent in relation to the sexual exploitation of children.

The long term campaign on the effects on children of major sports events in which Terre des Hommes and the Oak Foundation have engaged is also a commendable initiative. For more information on these initiatives, see the summary note of the side event organized by the Special Rapporteur in the context of the 25th session of the HRC, in March 2014, on the topic of protection of sexual exploitation of children in the context of major sports events, and presentations made by ECPAT and Terre des Hommes on the above-mentioned initiatives.[[4]](#footnote-5)

**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

OR

Secretariat of the Human Rights Council Advisory Committee

c/o Ms. Meena Ramkaun

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

Palais Wilson, Room 4-060, Fax: +41 22 917 9011

United Nations Office at Geneva,

CH-1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland

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)
2. A/HRC/22/54 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Children/Pages/Otheractivities.aspx> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. [Ibid](http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Children/Pages/Otheractivities.aspx) [↑](#footnote-ref-5)