



Commonwealth Advisory Body on Sport (CABOS)

Chair's Statement CABOS Annual Meeting June 11-12, 2013

The Commonwealth Advisory Body on Sport (CABOS) met in London, United Kingdom on June 11-12, 2013. The 14-member group, appointed by the Commonwealth Secretary-General, advises the Commonwealth Secretariat and Commonwealth governments on sport policy, particularly with respect to Sport for Development and Peace (SDP).

The focus of this meeting was on areas highlighted for CABOS attention by Commonwealth Sports Ministers¹, namely efforts to advance SDP in the Commonwealth and sport integrity issues. At this meeting CABOS also reflected on enhancing cooperation with the Commonwealth Games movement, the on-going sustainability of the Commonwealth Secretariat's sport-related work and the potential of the newly formed Commonwealth SDP Youth Working Group.

Commonwealth Secretary General Kamallesh Sharma opened the meeting by acknowledging the commitment of members, their governments and organisations in supporting the work of the CABOS. The Secretary-General highlighted the correlation between the central issues on CABOS' agenda and the key values of the Commonwealth, specifically democracy and development. In the context of these agenda items the Secretary-General outlined the Commonwealth Secretariat's new strategic plan underscoring that SDP has been included as a focus within the youth development pillar.

This CABOS meeting was preceded by targeted sport expert meetings involving CABOS members, representatives of partner organisations, identified experts and members of the academic community.

CABOS emphasised the importance of continuing and expanding progress and cooperation in the area of SDP and urgent need for Commonwealth action on sport integrity issues. To this end CABOS recommended that the issue of resourcing be raised with Heads of Government. Members committed to advance this discussion through their own avenues, and requested support from the Secretary-General on raising the same at CHOGM.

¹ Commonwealth Secretariat (2012), *Sixth Commonwealth Sports Ministers Meeting Communiqué*, Commonwealth Secretariat, London.

Recommendations

CABOS members made the following recommendations to the Commonwealth Secretary-General and invited the Commonwealth Secretariat to circulate these to member governments and identified stakeholders.

1. Post-2015 Development Agenda

CABOS recognised the on-going work of the UN system, governments and civil society stakeholders in framing the Post 2015-Development Agenda. CABOS considered the process to date including *The Report of the High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda*² and advocated that sport-based approaches can make an important contribution to the five “transformative shifts” called for to advance the global development agenda and illustrative goals³.

CABOS highlighted the growing body of research demonstrating that, if used appropriately, sport can play a role in achieving positive development outcomes. Reflecting on their substantive experience and expertise advocating for sport’s contribution to development, CABOS undertook to produce a measured, evidence-based contribution to on-going consultations on framing the Post-2015 agenda. CABOS requested the Commonwealth Secretariat to facilitate its submission to relevant consultative platforms in the Post-2015 process.

2. Moving from Advocacy to Action in Sport for Development and Peace (SDP)

CABOS noted key Commonwealth and international declarations recognising the contribution sport can make to development objectives⁴ and welcomed the efforts of national governments to strengthen SDP policy frameworks and implementation mechanisms. Members made special note of the contribution community-based and localised programmes have made in building international momentum in this area and the need to involve practitioners in policy making processes.

CABOS reinforced their position that a multi-sectorial, cross-departmental approach offered the most effective approach to maximise sport’s contribution to development. CABOS recognises and endorses that to scale effective sport-based approaches investment from other sectors is critical, but in doing so underscored that sport stakeholders need to increase investment in SDP initiatives to

² United Nations (2013) *A New Global Partnership: Eradicate Poverty And Transform Economies Through Sustainable Development - The Report of the High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda*, United Nations, New York.

³ *A New Global Partnership*, p. 7.

⁴ See for example Commonwealth Secretariat (2011), CHOGM 2011 Communique, *Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting*, Perth, Australia, 28–30 October 2011; and, United National General Assembly Resolution 67/17, *Sport as a means to promote education, health, development and peace*.

demonstrate further impact. CABOS emphasised the important role sport authorities must play in coordinating SDP initiatives within the context of broader national development plans and agreed international development goals.

In recognising the challenge of transitioning policy declarations into action CABOS highlighted the ***Commonwealth Guide to Advancing Development through Sport***⁵ as an effective advocacy instrument, guiding framework and analysis tool for governments looking to create an enabling environment for Sport for Development and Peace (SDP). Concurrently, CABOS commended the lead taken by the Governments of Barbados, Rwanda and Sri Lanka in using the Commonwealth guidelines and framework in national SDP planning efforts supported through technical assistance from the Commonwealth Secretariat. CABOS welcomed the Government of Belize referencing this framework in the revision of their national sport policy and invited other countries to follow suit.

3. The Global NCD Crisis

CABOS added its support to the substantive international voice highlighting the global burden and threat of noncommunicable disease. CABOS welcomed the endorsement of the ***Global Plan of Action for the Prevention and Control of Noncommunicable Diseases in 2013-2020*** by the Sixty-Sixth World Health Assembly, specifically welcoming voluntary global targets for a 10% relative reduction in the prevalence of insufficient physical activity⁶.

CABOS echoed calls that in order to achieve this target, promoting physical activity and the use of sport in development must be embedded as a key objective across multiple policy areas.

4. Sport Integrity Issues

CABOS reinforced the forceful and growing alarm of Commonwealth Sport Ministers⁷ and their international colleagues⁸ on the issues affecting the integrity of sport, namely sport governance; match-fixing; and, the safeguarding of sport participants. CABOS emphasised these are sensitive, complex and multifaceted issues that impact across the sporting pathway.

CABOS applauded international efforts addressing these issues and highlighted that the Commonwealth could offer an important contribution, in particular on issues affecting small and vulnerable states. CABOS emphasised that dialogue between governmental agencies, the sports movement and legislative bodies was critical to address these issues and saw the Commonwealth

⁵ Kay, T. & Dudfield, O. (2013), *Commonwealth Guide to Advancing Development through Sport*, Commonwealth Secretariat, London.

⁶ World Health Organisation (2013), Draft action plan for the prevention and control of noncommunicable diseases 2013–2020, *Sixty-Sixth World Health Assembly, A66/1*, Geneva, May 16, 2013.

⁷ *Sixth Commonwealth Sports Ministers Meeting (6CSMM) Communiqué*.

⁸ United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (2013), *Berlin Declaration, 5th International Conference of Ministers and Senior Officials Responsible for Physical Education and Sport (MINEPS V)*, Berlin, Germany, May 28 – 30, 2013.

Games Federation (CGF) as a key conduit for this process in the Commonwealth. CABOS highlighted that in each area effective compliance mechanisms for all stakeholders is required.

As these issues have human rights implications and the potential to impact on member countries' legal and constitutional affairs and governance and institutional development, CABOS requested the involvement of relevant divisions within the Commonwealth Secretariat in supporting this work.

Sport Governance - CABOS undertook to establish a portfolio lead and thematic working group on sport governance issues that would be charged with:

- Developing a statement of Commonwealth consensus with respect to transparent, accountable governance within sport;
- Recommending a monitoring strategy to encourage compliance; and,
- Outlining ways to strengthen cooperation with other relevant bodies.

Match-fixing and illegal and irregular sports betting - CABOS accepted the offer of the Australian Office of Sport to lead and form a thematic working group on match-fixing and illegal and irregular sports betting and requested this group to:

- Develop illustrative policy frameworks for deterring and dealing with match-fixing, regulating sports betting and managing irregular sports betting on major sporting events; and,
- Paying particular attention to issues of relevance to small and vulnerable states in combating match-fixing.

Safeguarding Sport Participants - CABOS accepted the offer of the Caribbean Sport and Development Agency to lead the thematic group on safeguarding sport participants and requested this group to:

- Develop recommendations on establishing national safeguarding in sport policy instruments, recognising integration within existing child protection structures as an effective strategy;
- Advocate to both governments and the sport movement to ensure people working with children and young people in sport are trained in safeguarding; and,
- Interface with regional contact points and the Safeguarding in Sport Working Group, with a specific focus on maximising the potential for that group to provide grass roots input into policy formation.

CABOS also welcomed strategic advice from the Commonwealth Secretariat's Human Rights Unit on this issue and, through the thematic working group and SDP staff at the Secretariat, committed to explore opportunities to include reference to safeguarding in sport within international human rights mechanisms.

Youth and Sport Issues

CABOS considered the implications of the growing youth population across the Commonwealth and

the changing sport and physical activity participation habits of young people. CABOS recommended these issues be on the agenda of policy makers and practitioners alike and that consulting young people in policy development paramount.

To this end CABOS strongly endorsed the formation of the **Commonwealth SDP Youth Focal Points Working Group** and welcomed their full and on-going involvement in CABOS. Moreover, CABOS recommended this working group be recognised within the structures of the Commonwealth Youth Council.

Commonwealth Games Movement

CABOS welcomed the CGF's strategic review applauding their membership's endorsement of 'development through sport' as the 'third tier' within their new strategic vision. CABOS noted the CGF and Glasgow 2014's cooperation with UNICEF to create a revenue stream for this work, and agreements with the hosts of the Glasgow and Gold Coast Games to invest in sport and development as part of their hosting agreements.

CABOS requested that CGF consider linking its development through sport work to the SDP work of the Commonwealth Secretariat, and in particular, advocated for all CGF-linked initiatives to be framed by the key principles for advancing SDP endorsed by the **Sixth Commonwealth Sports Ministers Meeting**⁹.

Sport Policy Issues

CABOS considered sport policy concerns raised by members including gender and sport, and athlete visas in the Commonwealth.

CABOS highlighted their on-going commitment to the fight against doping in sport, agreed to disseminate updates on the **World Anti-Doping Agency Code**¹⁰ and again encouraged Commonwealth countries to ratify the **UNESCO Anti-Doping Convention**¹¹.

Resourcing and Support

Given the progress, international recognition and strategic endorsement of the Commonwealth Secretariat's SDP work CABOS recommended that the Commonwealth Secretariat establish a full-time, embedded staff member in the Commonwealth Youth Affairs Division to lead SDP initiatives.

⁹ *Sixth Commonwealth Sports Ministers Meeting (6CSMM) Communiqué.*

¹⁰ World Anti-Doping Agency (2009), *World Anti-Doping Code*, World Anti-Doping Agency, Montreal.

¹¹ United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (2005), *International Anti-Doping Convention, International Convention against Doping in Sport*, Paris, 19 October 2005.

CABOS also acknowledged with extreme gratitude the significant contributions in staff provision or resources that previous governments hosting Commonwealth Games have made to the work of CABOS and the Commonwealth Secretariat in the area of sport policy development. CABOS encourages the further contributions of Scotland (2014) and Australia (2018). CABOS also expressed its appreciation to the United Kingdom government for its additional programme support for this work from 2011 onwards.

To ensure that this important avenue of support continues, CABOS requests the Commonwealth Games Federation to consider including such expectations as a requirement for future bids to formalise this arrangement.

Fourth Commonwealth Sport Development Conference

CABOS applauded the programme for the Fourth Commonwealth Sport Development Conference and encouraged Commonwealth sport and development stakeholders to attend this important forum. Given the exceptional legacy efforts in place around the 2014 Commonwealth Games, members highlighted this would be a valuable platform to examine maximising the potential of hosting major sports events and undertook to convene their next meeting in conjunction with this Conference.

CABOS Publication

CABOS commended the professional, evidence-based contributions from Commonwealth Secretariat staff, partner organisations and sector experts in support of their deliberations. CABOS requested the Commonwealth Secretariat disseminate this work to member countries and key partner organisations.

Professor Bruce Kidd

Interim Chair

Commonwealth Advisory Body on Sport (CABOS)

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