

Commonwealth Advisory Body on Sport (CABOS)

Chair's Statement

October 13, 2017

The Commonwealth Advisory Body on Sport (CABOS) held its annual meeting from the 11th to 13th October, 2017 on the Gold Coast, Australia the venue for XXI Commonwealth Games to be held in April 2018. CABOS is the Commonwealth's key sport policy body and is made up of senior government officials and sector experts.

An important focus of the 2017 CABOS meeting was to prepare policy guidance for the 9th Commonwealth Sports Ministers meeting to be held on the Gold Coast in April 2018. The 2017 CABOS meeting commenced with a Commonwealth Sport Policy Stakeholders Roundtable co-convened by the Commonwealth Secretariat and the Commonwealth Games Federation. The roundtable brought together CABOS members, leaders from national Commonwealth Games Associations and stakeholders from the Oceania region. The Roundtable focused on the roles and responsibilities of different stakeholders in protecting the integrity of sport and human rights in a sporting context.

Measuring the contribution of sport to sustainable development

1. CABOS advised that improving data collection to allow informed measurement of sport policy and its contribution to sustainable development must become an increasing focus for governments and sporting organisations alike. CABOS emphasised that at present availability of data and capacity to collect information varied significantly across Commonwealth countries. Where data is being collected it is often disparate and indicators are organisation or project specific, making it difficult to aggregate and assess national policy implications across the Commonwealth and against the SDGs.
2. CABOS therefore recommended that there may be a need to establish or strengthen national frameworks to coordinate and harmonise data collection and evaluation processes. CABOS emphasised that these mechanisms should be multi-stakeholder in nature and work to engage and coordinate sport, government, business and civil society actors.
3. The primary focus for measurement frameworks should be on harmonising data collection on the return on investment in sport.
4. CABOS considered the value of developing common international indicators to measure the contribution of sport to the SDGs. It emphasised that this work must draw on the existing SDG indicator framework. CABOS stressed that the complexity of this task

meant that a long term approach should be taken that drew on current assets and data availability across the Commonwealth. Ideally, this undertaking is multi-stakeholder in nature to harmonise the efforts of government, sport, civil society and business. To do this advocacy and raising awareness on the SDGs for sporting organisations is required.

5. To contribute to advancing the measurement of the contribution of sport to sustainable development CABOS committed to:
 - Develop for the consideration of Ministers a plan to map existing national sport policies and measurement and evaluation frameworks against prioritised SDGs and targets; and,
 - Report on the progress of this mapping and the development of practical guidance and indicative indicators at the 10th Commonwealth Sports Ministers Meeting in 2020.

Role of Governments in Protecting and Promoting Human Rights in Sport

6. CABOS emphasised that international human rights obligations of states and the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs) are highly applicable to sport. The right to participate in sport and physical activity, as well as the impact of sport on the protection and promotion of human rights, underscored their importance.
7. CABOS reiterated that the ‘protect, respect and remedy’ framework central to the UNGPs was highly applicable to sport policy. CABOS emphasised the need to formulate practical approaches to support:
 - states fulfil their obligation to protect human rights *in and through* sport;
 - the responsibility of sporting organisations to respect human rights; and,
 - the need to provide access to remedy for those who have had their rights affected *in or through* sport.
8. CABOS recommended undertaking a comprehensive mapping of human rights guidelines and principles relevant to sport and aligning this to the SDG framework in order to set out the obligations and responsibilities of sport policy actors.
9. Building on this base, CABOS emphasised mainstreaming sport-related rights into national policy and strategy is a critical step. CABOS underscored rights-based considerations must be central to sport policy and strategy and implementation. CABOS encouraged governments and sport actors alike to make these processes accessible, using simple language and accessible approaches that cover the *places* where sport takes place, the *people* involved and how sport was *resourced*.
10. CABOS recognised the value of work on human rights and mega sporting events and emphasised the importance of this issue for sporting activity that takes place in Commonwealth communities every day. Accordingly, CABOS recommended a two track approach, that guiding principles and tools to protect and promote human rights in sport mega events as well as across sport in general be elevated for the consideration of Commonwealth governments.

11. To contribute to supporting governments protect and promote human rights in sport

CABOS committed to:

- Mapping the international human rights instruments relevant to sport; and,
- Develop a policy guidance document on protecting and promoting human rights *in* and *through* sport for the consideration of Ministers.

Adapting Sport Integrity Guidance to Account for the Diversity of the Commonwealth

12. CABOS emphasised that the diversity of the Commonwealth must be a key consideration in developing common policy positions and coherent action to address the growing threats to the integrity of sport. CABOS strongly emphasised that, in promoting joined up action and common standards on protecting integrity in sport, there is a need to consider different national realities and contexts

13. CABOS reiterated that agreeing a common understanding and definition of threats to the integrity of sport was an important starting point. Members drew on previous policy guidance submitted to Governments to suggest including issues impacting on positive experiences in sport, as well as those manipulating the results of sporting competition, in any common definition.

14. In considering the diversity of the Commonwealth, CABOS reiterated support for the adoption of common standards and principles. CABOS emphasised the need to move beyond guidelines, highlighting the importance of practical mechanisms, structures and reflexive technical assistance. The evolving nature of sport integrity threats mean static publications and guidelines cannot keep up with the sophistication of activity compromising the integrity of sport. Moreover, practical case studies of responses from small and developing states are required to guide future action in these contexts.

15. To contribute to adapting sport integrity guidance for the diversity of the Commonwealth CABOS committed to:

- Developing for the consideration of Ministers a project plan to facilitate a structured examination of sports integrity challenges across member countries, with practical options to offer support to maximise the protection of sport where required.

Strengthening Sport-Related Policy Coherence

16. CABOS emphasised the importance of strengthening coherence between sport policy and other national policy priorities, as well as with relevant international policy frameworks - most notably the SDG framework. CABOS highlighted that different countries, and organisations within member countries, will need to address different trade-offs and synergies in working to align policy priorities better.

17. CABOS emphasised that the strong focus on equality and good governance in the sustainable development agenda was itself a point of coherence. Sport-orientated

stakeholders working to strengthening governance and make sport more equitable and inclusive will through this process contribute to advancing sustainable development.

18. In considering policy coherence, CABOS reiterated that while sport can have positive developmental and diplomacy outcomes, there is also potential for negative outcomes such as corruption, abuse of participants and the promotion of negative attitudes and values. CABOS concluded that governmental responses to this malleability must emphasise creating an enabling environment for sport, but where necessary use regulatory and legislative responses to protect the integrity of sport and human rights in a sporting context.

9th Commonwealth Sport Ministers Meeting

19. Given the breadth of sport policy issues impacting Commonwealth countries, CABOS endorsed policy coherence as a valuable theme for the forthcoming Ministers Meeting. Harmonising efforts to advance the positive contribution of sport to sustainable development with policy responses to threats to the integrity of sport, provides a valuable framework for future cooperation.
20. To this end CABOS endorsed the proposed theme for 9CSMM:
Strengthening policy coherence to maximise the benefits of investing in sport
21. CABOS emphasised that governance issues are central to the policy coherence agenda. It therefore recommended that a broader view of governance, that includes governing to strengthen equality and inclusion of all, should be cross cutting across the meeting agenda.
22. CABOS proposed the following substantive agenda items for 9CSMM:
 - Strengthening the value and integrity of sport through policy coherence
 - Leveraging sport investment as a contributor to SDGs and human rights
 - Enhancing Commonwealth cooperation for the benefit of a cohesive policy agenda

Commonwealth Youth Sport for Development and Peace Network

23. CABOS supported CYSDP's objectives to better involve youth leaders in sport for development in work being done to tackle NCDs. They also endorsed the value of connecting sport for development representatives with National Health Service leaders to support the integration of sport for development among the solutions to reduce the strain on existing public health systems.
24. CABOS suggested Ministers consider favourably CYSDP's proposal for them to visit at least one local sport for development organisation over in 2017/18 to understand the positive impact sport for development can have in tackling NCDs.

Commonwealth Sport Policy Stakeholders Roundtable

25. The outcomes of the Commonwealth Sport Policy Stakeholder Roundtable held prior to the meeting made an important contribution to the deliberations of CABOS.
26. Roundtable participants recommended the development and strengthening of formalised national level mechanisms that facilitate both joined-up action and accountability across government, sporting organisations, civil society and the private sector stakeholders. The Roundtable also emphasised the need to recalibrate definitions and measurement frameworks for success in sport, with greater emphasis on social and environmental measures drawn from the Sustainable Development Goal Framework to expand current definitions focused on sporting performance and economic return.
27. Stakeholders involved in the Roundtable strongly endorsed the value of this formal platform that brought together national government officials, sporting organisations and other key players to discuss protecting and promoting sport integrity and human rights in sporting contexts. They requested the Commonwealth Secretariat and Commonwealth Games Federation formalise this initiative and extend the involvement of private sector and broadcasters in future iterations. The participants underscored that the involvement of nationally-focused actors strengthens the potential for implementation, thus complementing other platforms bringing together international institutions.

Appreciation to the Government of Australia and Commonwealth Games Movement

28. CABOS extended a vote of thanks to the Government of Australia for hosting the 2017 meeting as part of its ongoing support for Commonwealth cooperation on sport policy issues.
29. CABOS also expressed its appreciation to the Commonwealth Sports Movement, the Commonwealth Games Federation and Gold Coast 2018 for supporting the coordination of the CABOS meeting with the Gold Coast 2018 Chef de Mission Meeting. CABOS recommended this cooperation and alignment be repeated for future meetings.

Mrs Louise Martin CBE

Chair, Commonwealth Advisory Body on Sport (CABOS)

13 October, 2017

Gold Coast, Australia