

10th Commonwealth Sports Ministers Meeting Ministerial Statement

Theme: *‘Creating an Inclusive and Resilient Sport Sector; Enhancing the Contribution of Sport to the SDGs’*

1. We, the Sports Ministers of Commonwealth member states met on 27 July 2022 alongside the XXII Commonwealth Games in Birmingham United Kingdom (UK).
2. We met during the ongoing recovery of the sports sector from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic to advance Commonwealth consensus and cooperation on areas where we have comparative advantage and can add global value.
3. We considered policy options and programmatic interventions to maximise the contribution of sport towards sustainable development, including responding to considerations of human rights, governance and integrity in sport.
4. We reaffirmed our commitment to accelerating the implementation of key Sport for Development and Peace (SDP) policy to achieve national and regional development priorities and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
5. We considered the importance of sport in implementing national and regional development policies and called for stronger concerted efforts in measurement of the impact of sport as guided by the emerging findings of the Global Sport and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Impact Report.
6. Given the success of early adopters in using the Sport and SDG Indicator Framework, and noting that this common approach to collecting and sharing data is critical for enhancing greater inter-sectoral collaboration and policy coherence at all levels and between relevant ministries and stakeholders, we called for more streamlined measurement, collection of data, investment in evidence-based sport, physical activity (PA) and physical education (PE) policy, for the benefit of all Commonwealth citizens.
7. We welcome the collaboration between the Commonwealth Secretariat and the World Health Organisation (WHO), and the continued engagement on this agenda. We noted the creation and implementation of a Commonwealth non-communicable diseases (NCDs) strategy including ‘Commonwealth Moves’, to provide a systematic approach in utilising sport, physical activity and improved diet as key interventions for reducing the incidence of NCDs across the Commonwealth.

8. We acknowledge the important role that sport plays in health and wellbeing promotion, and that sport continues to provide an important setting for promoting good physical and mental health, particularly among youth populations in the Commonwealth. We note that this interplay between sport and health promotion should be further explored to provide opportunities for effective interventions on the prevention of diseases and promoting measures for good health and wellbeing.
9. We took note of the role of major sporting events and initiatives, such as the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games, as mechanisms for accelerating participation in sport and implementation of key SDP policy to achieve the SDGs in areas of environmental sustainability, disability, inclusion and gender mainstreaming in sport.
10. We reaffirmed our support to the Commonwealth Advisory Body on Sport (CABOS) in its work to accelerate the development and implementation of policies and programmes to assist member countries to optimise their capacity, to enhance the contribution of sport to the SDGs, particularly in low- and middle-income countries and vulnerable states.

In considering Human Rights and Inclusive Development in Sport:

11. We reaffirmed that sport should be used to serve as the catalyst for accountability, protection and action both at the professional and community levels across the Commonwealth.
12. We called for a concerted action to adopt a human rights centred approach—especially through SDG 5 (gender equality), SDG 10 (inequalities), and SDG 16 (strong institutions) in order to realise the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development. We will collaborate and share our human rights good practices, knowledge and experiences, in the development and implementation of a rights-based approach to sport policy, governance and integrity in sport, including advocacy on matters of anti-doping.
13. We call for good governance, including the promotion and protection of human rights and minimising corruption in and through sport, as presented by the International Partnership Against Corruption in Sport (IPACS). We further underscore the importance of implementing the IPACS processes at national level and enhancing the management of international and regional sports bodies as key towards strengthening institutions within the sports sector.
14. We took note of the progress made in promoting safeguarding in sport and welcomed the Model Legislative Provisions on Preventing Abuse of Positions of Trust (PoT) within the relevant areas, including sport, law, education and social welfare sectors to ensure further protection of children and vulnerable groups especially our athletes.
15. We reaffirmed our commitment to the Commonwealth Consensus Statement on Promoting Human Rights in and through Sport, and considered the practical recommendations of the 10 Guiding Actions for implementation of the Statement and hoped to see progressive implementation in accordance with regional and country contexts.

16. We recognised the importance of transparency, accountability and oversight in sport, and reject all forms of exploitation, including instances of forced labour, modern slavery and human trafficking, and called for the prohibition and elimination of all forms of child labour in the sports sector.
17. We acknowledged the need for national, international and regional sport policy frameworks to be delivered in a more co-ordinated way, encouraging collaboration towards a more inclusive, sustainable, socially just, fairer and safer sport sector for all. Our policy must emphasise gender equity across the sporting ecosystem.
18. We welcomed discussions geared towards international collaboration to strengthen measurement and evaluation of sport policy through a human rights lens, in alignment with the guidelines on sport integrity and specifically Action 3 of the Kazan Action Plan (KAP).
19. We noted the work of Commonwealth Secretariat, other partners, and stakeholders in facilitating the promotion and protection of human rights, strengthening public policy to enhance the contribution of sport to sustainable development outcomes and encouraged member countries to engage with these institutions in developing a rights-based sport policy.

In considering joint strategies and collective action for promoting Investment in Sport:

20. We noted the contribution of sport to economic and social development, and that essential investments in sports will enhance participation and physical activity. Further engagement of social enterprises and volunteering in sport is also important to achieve social or community goals. This contribution to economic development includes quantifiable social returns on investment and positive impact on government finance.
21. We welcomed the Commonwealth Report on '*Resourcing Sport's Contribution to Sustainable Development and the Coronavirus Recovery: Mobilising Resources*' which presented the case for investment in sport at a time of recovery from the global pandemic.
22. We commended the efforts led by UNESCO in leveraging more investment in sport through the Coalition for Sustainable Development and Sport (CSDS) under the leadership of Public Development Banks (PDBs), whose aim is to maximise economic, social and environmental impacts of sport activities with entities involved in the sport ecosystem (including governments, local authorities, private sector, civil society organisations and the sports movement).
23. We also welcomed the UNESCO Fit for Life programme, a global initiative using sport to improve wellbeing and equality, which aims to increase grassroots participation in sport and quality physical education (QPE); and support member states to develop inclusive sport and PE policies.

In considering Innovations in sport:

24. We acknowledged the innovative approaches and case studies shared by member countries and partners, and called for greater use of Commonwealth's platform, including the Innovation Hub to serve as a repository for innovations in sport.

25. Looking towards the future, we welcomed the increased capacity building opportunities showcased by the International Platform on Sport and Development (sportanddev) and the forthcoming hybrid Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) and Sports Policy Hub that will deliver targeted learning and certified opportunities for government officials across several thematic areas in the Commonwealth.
26. We recognise the contribution and achievements of the Commonwealth Secretariat in advancing sport for development and peace policy and programmes, strengthening legal and institutional frameworks and facilitating collective action with partners and stakeholders to maximise the contribution of sport to development outcomes
27. We thanked the CABOS Chair and members for their leadership and guidance, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic and received their recommendations with appreciation, and affirmed the value of the alignment of CABOS to Commonwealth Sports Ministers Meeting cycles.
28. We applaud the achievement of the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games as the first global multi-sport event to award more medals to women than men, and for presenting the largest para-sport programme in Commonwealth Games history affirming the Commonwealth values on gender equality, equal participation and inclusion in sport and physical activity.
29. We thanked and commended the UK Government for chairing and hosting a successful meeting, and wished the country every success in hosting the XXII Commonwealth Games.

Birmingham, UK 27 July 2022