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**PRELIMINARY REPORT ON THE DESIRABILITY AND SCOPE OF AN
INTERNATIONAL CHARTER ON TRADITIONAL GAMES AND SPORTS**

SUMMARY

In accordance with one of the recommendations of the International Conference of Ministers and Senior Officials Responsible for Physical Education and Sport (MINEPS IV), the Director-General submits to the Executive Board a preliminary report on the desirability and scope of an international charter of traditional games and sports, with a draft Charter prepared by CIGEPS and endorsed by MINEPS IV.

Decision proposed: paragraph 10.

INTRODUCTION

1. Following the Third International Conference of Ministers and Senior Officials Responsible for Physical Education and Sport (MINEPS III), which was held at Punta del Este in 1999, the Intergovernmental Committee for Physical Education and Sport (CIGEPE) was entrusted with monitoring the implementation of the main conclusions of the Conference.
2. To that end, CIGEPE set up several working groups, among which was a group entrusted with the enhancement and protection of traditional games and sports. In this context, CIGEPE and its Permanent Consultative Council (PCC) took the initiative of furthering the preservation of an international charter of traditional games and sports. A group of experts from CIGEPE, led by Germany and Bangladesh, under the supervision of the CIGEPE working group on this item, was created and the results of their work provided the backbone of the draft international charter of traditional games and sports, whose successive versions were the subject of regional consultations by the various Vice-Chairpersons of CIGEPE and the members of its PCC.
3. The establishment of the CIGEPE working group was mentioned in the CIGEPE reports submitted to the General Conference in documents 31 C/REP/20, 32 C/REP/19 and 33 C/REP/19.
4. Moreover, the Round Table of Ministers and Senior Officials responsible for Physical Education and Sport held at the Organization's Headquarters in January 2003 stressed in its final communiqué that it was important to "revitalize the practice of traditional sports and games, a key expression of cultural identities, and promote their interaction with modern sports".
5. Therefore, the draft international charter of traditional games and sports, drawn up by CIGEPE, was submitted to the MINEPS IV Conference, held in Athens in December 2004. The draft received significant attention from participants, both in commissions and in the plenary – which adopted the recommendations submitted by the commissions, including, *inter alia*, "the submission of the draft charter for traditional games and sports to the next UNESCO General Conference".

EXPECTED PURPOSES AND PERSPECTIVES

6. The purpose of drawing up a standard-setting instrument of a universal nature concerning traditional games and sports is twofold. First, it aims to integrate the socio-cultural dimension into physical education and sport to better reflect the acquisition of "values necessary for social cohesion and intercultural dialogue...in a world of globalization in which cultural identities are under threat and in which learning to live together in peace and harmony is a prerequisite" (cf. Final Communiqué of the Round Table, January 2003, paragraph (a)). The public at large has very little, if any, knowledge of the scope and wealth of cultural heritage in terms of traditional games and sports. Their protection and promotion are part of cultural diversity. Secondly, it also aims to meet the requirements of quality education for all, where the quality of physical education plays an essential part, but requires the introduction of innovative educational approaches, in view of the financial and material constraints affecting education systems in many countries.
7. Indeed, traditional games and sports emerge as an alternative for addressing the structural deficit (exorbitant costs for the sports installations and materials traditionally required for the implementation of the regular PES¹ programme) and also the current constraints (difficult economic context, choices and priorities in relation to government programmes applying increasing pressure

¹ Physical education and sport.

on the aims and purposes of education systems) which make the full development of regular PES programmes difficult – programmes which should no doubt be addressed differently and pragmatically.

8. Such prospects involve drafting guidelines aimed at promoting globally, in a common framework, references used as universal foundations. The preparation of an international charter of traditional games and sports is part of this objective, and aims to give concrete expression to respect for cultural diversity and to strengthen the preservation of cultural identities, through mutual understanding and respect for differences.

CONCLUSION

9. The draft Charter attached herewith is submitted to the Executive Board for information. It is the result of the work of the group of experts which carried out its mandate under the supervision of CIGEPS. The results of their work, which form the subject of this draft Charter, have been validated and approved by CIGEPS, and also by MINEPS IV. Accordingly, without prejudice to the process initiated by CIGEPS, which undertook extensive consultation via its Bureau and consequently the Member States of each of the geographical areas of the Bureau members, the General Conference may wish to decide whether it is desirable to adopt such a standard-setting instrument (similar to a declaration) and to determine the steps, and procedures to be followed and the deadlines to be met for its elaboration and adoption.

PROPOSED DRAFT DECISION

10. The Executive Board may wish to adopt a decision along the following lines:

The Executive Board,

1. Recalling the International Charter of Physical Education and Sport, the Round Table of Ministers and Senior Officials responsible for Physical Education and Sport of 2003 and the provisions of the Statutes of CIGEPS,
2. Considering that traditional games and sports form a significant part of the cultural heritage which should be protected and promoted, in particular, with a view to improving the quality of PES in education systems,
3. Bearing in mind the results and recommendations of MINEPS IV,
4. Taking note of document 172 EX/7,
5. Expresses its gratitude to CIGEPS for its initiative with regard to the elaboration of the draft Charter attached for information as an annex to document 172 EX/7;
6. Submits to the General Conference at its 33rd session, for consideration of its desirability and scope, an international charter of traditional sports and games; and
7. Invites it to determine the steps, and procedures to be followed and the deadlines to be met for its elaboration with a view to its adoption by the General Conference at its 34th session.

ANNEX

UNESCO

INTERNATIONAL CHARTER OF TRADITIONAL SPORTS AND GAMES

Preamble

Recalling that the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights has enshrined in its Articles that everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth therein without distinction of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other consideration,

Recalling the principles of the International Charter of Physical Education and Sport adopted by the UNESCO General Conference in November 1978, in particular, which underscores the importance of the national tradition of sport (Article 1.2), sports designed to suit the institutional, cultural, socio-economic and climatic conditions of each country, with priority accorded to disadvantaged groups in society (Article 3.1) and to take into account the opportunities offered by the natural environment (Article 5.3),

Recalling the Declaration of Punta del Este of December 1999, of the Third International Conference of Ministers and Senior Officers in charge of Physical Education and Sport (MINEPS III) that had decided to support a policy of preserving and enhancing traditional sports and indigenous sports and games based on the cultural heritage of regions and nations, including a worldwide list of Traditional Sports and Games, and of encouraging the holding of regional and world festivals (Declaration 8),

Convinced that most of traditional sports and games are already lost, and that the remaining ones are in imminent danger of disappearance and extinction, owing to the various tendencies of globalization, and standardization of the rich diversity of sports heritage in the world,

Taking into account the important values that traditional sports and games offer, through the educational, culture, communicative and health promoting role towards the overall development of the individual human being and one's community,

Bearing in mind that traditional sports and games are expressions of the native culture and life systems contributing to the communitarian identity of human beings,

Considering that traditional sports and games being less susceptible to the temptations of excessive commercialization, manipulation, and doping, can strengthen the values of sportivity and the spirit of "fair-play",

Stressing the importance of the traditional sports and games as a safer and a cheaper means of minimizing medical and social costs, as well as the prevention and dissuasion of juvenile delinquency and violence raising from the lack of opportunities for healthy physical activities,

Further taking into account that traditional sports and games do not demand substantial material and financial resources or investments, but they can contribute to better intercultural understanding and mutual tolerance, both within and among the communities of nations, which will contribute to build a Culture of Peace,

Proclaims this International charter for the purpose of improving broadening the accessibility to healthy recreation, physical education and Sports for All by preserving, supporting and promoting

traditional sports and games all over the world assuring the continuation of the rich diversity of world heritage of sports culture for the services of humankind, and urging the governments; competent non-governmental organizations, educational, cultural and social institutions, communities, families and individuals themselves be inspired thereby, and to disseminate it and to take all efforts to realize it.

Article 1 *The contribution of traditional sports and games to “Sport for All”*

1.1 The fundamental right of movement, sport and games as a constituent of the quality of life and development of a whole personality must be guaranteed both within the educational system and in the other aspects of social life.

1.2 The role, which traditional sports and games can play in the realization of this fundamental right had to be carried out and must be increasingly used.

Article 2 *World heritage of traditional games and sports*

2.1 The different native cultures in the world have brought out a diversity of traditional sports and games. They are expressions of the richness of a nation’s culture. It is a serious task to preserve and promote the practicing of this diversity.

2.2 A lot of the traditional sports and games belong to the national, regional or worldwide cultural heritage. It is necessary to strengthen the acknowledgement of traditional sports and games.

Article 3 *The social and cultural values of traditional sports and games*

3.1 The traditional sports and games contribute to a life of mutual understanding and peaceful behaviour among different cultural and social groups, communities and nations. They are means of their identity. Therefore the significance of traditional sports and games must be strengthened and the opportunities for practising them must be held open for all human beings especially for young people, the physically challenged and disadvantaged groups in the society.

3.2 Traditional sports and games have their own regulations and standards with no need for globalization or standardization. For their further development, due attention should be given on their values, originality, and the needs of those practicing them. They should be protected from any kind of commercialization that affects the cultural heritage and values of traditional games and sport.

3.3 Traditional sports and games while not needing expensive facilities and equipment should be promoted in all parts of the world, especially where the resources are low.

3.4 Traditional sports and games, which did not yet suffer extensive commercialization and doping manipulation, could be used for promoting the morale and the spirit of fair play.

3.5 Traditional sports and games could be an effective tool for the promotion of tolerance, mutual understanding, respect and peace in a culturally diverse society.

Article 4 *Dangers of preserving and practising traditional sports and games*

4.1 All measures should be taken to build awareness towards the significance and importance of traditional sports and games.

4.2 Care should be taken to ensure that the tendencies of globalization and standardization do not lead to wide extinction of traditional sports and games.

4.3 Traditional sports and games could be modernized and adapted cautiously according to the needs of the living generation without affecting their originality. This process must be not misused by touristic interest.

Article 5 *Aims and measures to preserve and promote traditional sports and games*

5.1 Traditional sports and games must be presented at local, national and regional international festivals with high publicity to strengthen the awareness of their values, significance and importance.

5.2 Governmental and non-governmental organizations should extend support for planning and organizing festivals of traditional sports and games at all levels and take into account the special specific needs of groups like the elderly, handicapped, young people, children, etc.

5.3 Traditional sports and games should be incorporated, introduced and promoted in the work of schools, communities, institutions and organizations both governmental and non-governmental.

5.4 Traditional sports and games have to be adopted or implemented in recognized sport programmes like "Sport For All" or "Sport and Health" to promote their popularity and survival.

5.5 Traditional sports and games have to change in a cautious manner in view of the progress of civilization and must be made fit for the exchange of sport within the different cultures.

5.6 All efforts must be made to revitalize traditional sports and games with due respect to the needs of human beings in a modern civilization.

5.7 The governmental and non-governmental organizations are required to integrate traditional sports and games in their respective supporting programmes.

5.8 The mass media are requested to present and promote traditional sports and games in an appropriate manner, in view of their importance and values.

Article 6 *Traditional sports and games as heritage of sport culture*

6.1 Traditional sports and games contribute to the world heritage of sport culture. Research, preservation and promotion of traditional sports and games must be at the centre of a global policy on culture and sport.

6.2 (option 1) Traditional sports and games must be enlisted in a list/encyclopaedia on the World Heritage of Sports Culture. For inclusion in such a list/encyclopaedia, due consideration must be given on the following aspects: special role in the cultural identity of the concerned people, existence of well defined rules in the game, role in promoting regional and local consolidation.

6.2 (option 2) It is essential to draw up a list of sportive cultural heritage compiling traditional sports and games that meet the following conditions:

- A particular role in representing the cultural identity;
- A sportive identity opposed to modern sport;

- Specific regional origins and particularities;
- Historical tradition;
- Cultural complexity and ethical quality;
- The relevance of the designation “Sport for All” whether in the country of origin or during international exchanges.

6.3 It is necessary to establish an Encyclopaedia of Traditional sports and Games at the local, national, regional and international levels. All efforts must be made to attain this objective.

6.4 The research into traditional sports and games and their contribution to the knowledge of the various cultures and mankind must be intensified, broadened out and supported by governmental and non-governmental organizations.

6.5 The effort to conserve dying and bring back lost traditional and indigenous sports and games for the future generation by museum presentation has to be supported.

Article 7 National and international cooperation

7.1 The governments of Member States of UNESCO are invited to increase their moral and material support in preservation and the promotion of the traditional sports and games.

7.2 The Director-General of UNESCO is requested to take all necessary steps to ensure that the aims and objectives of this Charter are fully implemented.

7.3 The Intergovernmental committee for Physical Education and Sport (CIGEPS) of UNESCO is requested to elaborate mid- and long-term strategies for promotion and protection of the traditional sports and games, as well as to monitor the implementation of the same and the goals and objectives of the Charter.