



**FOURTH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF MINISTERS AND
SENIOR OFFICIALS RESPONSIBLE FOR PHYSICAL
EDUCATION AND SPORT**

MINEPS IV

Athens, Greece, 6-8 December 2004

DECLARATION OF ATHENS

- A Healthy Society Built on Athletic Spirit -

We, the Ministers taking part in the Fourth International Conference of Ministers and Senior Officials Responsible for Physical Education and Sport (MINEPS IV), meeting from 6 to 8 December 2004 in Athens, cradle of civilization, culture and sport, birth place of the Olympic Games and of the most durable peace agreement in history, the Olympic Truce, and capital of the most recent Olympic Games and Paralympic Games,

Noting that while the impact of sport on society is greater than ever before, young people are tending to lose respect for its values and we must therefore act urgently so that the public is aware of the efforts to make sport more honest and closer to its original ideals,

Reaffirm our belief that sport and physical education play a key role in society by contributing to national cohesion, overcoming prejudice and exercising a positive influence on public opinion through the sharing of the ethical and universal values they convey;

Highlight the importance of the contribution of international sport meetings to the development of friendship among nations and international solidarity;

Recall that the development of physical education and sport is one of the most effective means of improving, *inter alia*, health, hygiene, the prevention of HIV/AIDS, and the overall well-being of individuals, in particular young people. Physical activities are also an indispensable tool in the combat against inequalities and social scourges, such as drug abuse, which affect all modern societies to a greater or lesser extent;

Recall in addition that the adoption of the International Charter of Physical Education and Sport, the Olympic Charter, the World Anti-Doping Code, the Council of Europe Anti-Doping Convention, the Declaration of Punta del Este (MINEPS III), the Athens Declaration on Women and Sport (2001), the Communiqué of the Round Table of

Ministers and Senior Officials Responsible for Physical Education and Sport (UNESCO, January 2003), the recommendations of several other international conferences on sport, and the adoption of Resolution 58/5 by the United Nations General Assembly on 3 November 2003, enthusiastically welcomed by leaders of physical education and sport, are evidence of the desire of the international community to increase access to physical education and sport, making it available to all, and to promote by all possible means the defence of the principles set out in those documents. Such commitments also reflect the desire of the international community to pursue and intensify the efforts to ensure that physical education and sport play their proper role in education systems, the use of leisure time and the organization of our societies;

Firmly condemn doping, violence and displays of intolerance by athletes and supporters and **reaffirm** our commitment in the face of phenomena that undermine the Olympic ideals and the educational values of sport;

We, the Ministers, are determined, on an urgent basis, to undertake within our governments to:

- ?? implement coherent policies and take specific measures for the development of physical education and sport in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution of UNESCO, the principles of the International Charter of Physical Education and Sport and the Olympic ideals;
- ?? step up our efforts to give sport a more important role as a factor in the development and promotion of human and ethical values, mutual understanding and the bringing together of peoples;
- ?? encourage initiatives to foster the ideals of peace through sport and its contribution to respect for universal human rights;
- ?? mobilize the means and resources for the effective promotion of physical education and sport by encouraging initiatives for active participation at the local, regional and international levels in a spirit of solidarity with the developing countries;
- ?? support the extension and promotion of the practice of physical and sport activities to young girls and women and develop multilateral cooperation in order to promote “women and sport” programmes, thereby deepening democracy in society, as reflected in the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women;
- ?? encourage the promotion and development of traditional games and sports by an international charter as elements of sport for all and an expression of the world’s rich and diverse cultural heritage;
- ?? develop ties of cooperation and collaboration between physical activities and sport and other sectors, such as health, environment, culture, heritage and education so as to encourage common initiatives and influence draft regulations and laws.

Recommend to all governmental, intergovernmental, non-governmental, national, regional and international bodies that they:

- ?? take urgent measures to promote the strengthening of the teaching of physical education and sport, so as to have a better impact on the development of men and women in every country;
- ?? create the necessary conditions to promote access to physical education and sport throughout the world. This access, which contributes to the right of every individual to education, begins at school. Accordingly, physical education and sport must be given a significant share of school hours and the curriculum and qualified staff must be made available;
- ?? promote the development of sport for all, which must become an important task for both governmental and voluntary sport organizations;
- ?? participate actively, in the framework of their respective duties and responsibilities, in the combat against doping in sport and in the establishment of an effective system of anti-doping controls;
- ?? resolve the question of programme funding to encourage an harmonious and balanced development of the different forms of physical activity and sport;
- ?? implement commitments made at the national and international level with a view to improving the position of women with regard to posts of responsibility in sporting bodies at all levels;
- ?? make physical education and sport a critical component of health;
- ?? promote the exchange of experience and good practices through specific projects and strengthen cooperation between sport movements in the developed and the developing countries so as to reduce existing gaps and inequalities;
- ?? encourage at the national level effective cooperation between education and sport authorities, in particular in the field of teacher training and the development of school curricula.

Call upon UNESCO to:

- ?? continue its good work, taking into account the support of Member States, for the development and the adoption of an international convention against doping in sport in 2005, before the Olympic Winter Games in 2006, and ensure its functioning;
- ?? support the holistic development of physical education and sport so that they become an important element in education systems and contribute to education reforms so that greater account is taken of physical education and sport in the school curriculum;
- ?? include on the agenda of regional and international conferences on education items relating to the promotion and development of physical education and sport, as part of the effort to promote the quality of education;

- ?? reinforce the cooperation with the international sport movement, which would testify at the international level to the convergence of the concerns of public authorities and voluntary organizations in service of the development of physical education and sport at all levels and ages;
- ?? use all its authority to help to promote and enhance traditional games and sports;
- ?? ensure that its programmes fully reflect the conclusions and recommendations of MINEPS IV and ensure their implementation in accordance with the expectations of the Member States.

Request the active cooperation of the United Nations, UNESCO, the Council of Europe, international voluntary sports organizations and all other institutions concerned in the action that we are undertaking together as part of the International Year for Sport and Physical Education, which will provide an exceptional occasion for giving new impetus to the promotion and development of physical education and the practice of sport within our societies, thereby contributing to peace in the world.

Adopted in Athens

8 December 2004