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## The need to preserve the European sport model

### Report

Committee on Culture, Science and Education

Rapporteur: Mr José Luís ARNAUT, Portugal

### *Summary*

The European sports model is deeply rooted in European civil society and is an important expression of European culture and attitude towards sporting values. It is a democratic model that serves to ensure sport remains open to everyone, underpinned by the twin principles of financial solidarity and openness of competition.

The unprecedented development of the economic dimension of some professional sports, driven in particular by television rights, puts this European sports model at risk.

To safeguard the interests of sport and the benefits that sport, both professional and amateur, delivers to society, the Parliamentary Assembly urges the governments of member states to uphold the European sports model by acknowledging the specificity of sport and protecting the autonomy of the sports federations.

It also calls on Council of Europe member states that have not yet done so to accede to the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport.



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## A. Draft resolution

1. The Parliamentary Assembly has been instrumental in upholding the values of the Council of Europe: democracy, human rights, the rule of law and respect for cultural diversity. Such values are also present in the ways in which sport is organised in Europe: what is commonly known as the European sports model.
2. The European sports model is neither homogeneous nor perfect. It is however deeply rooted in European civil society and is an important expression of European culture and attitude towards sporting values. It is a democratic model that serves to ensure sport remains open to everyone.
3. It includes all levels of professional and amateur, team and individual, high level and grass roots sport and it is underpinned by the twin principles of financial solidarity and openness of competition (promotion and relegation, opportunity for all).
4. Sport has a specific nature that sets it apart from any other field of economic activity. It has important social, educational and cultural functions. Solidarity between different levels in sport (in particular, between professional and amateur) is a fundamental aspect of the European sports model.
5. The independent nature of sport and sports bodies must be supported and protected and their autonomy to organise the sport for which they are responsible should be recognised. The federation must continue to be the key form of sporting organisation providing a guarantee of cohesion and participatory democracy.
6. The preservation of the European sports model is the best means of safeguarding the interests of sport and the benefits that sport delivers to society.
7. The European sports model should enable dialogue and exchange between the professional and the grassroots levels of sport. This feature of the European sports model is an important means to ensure the healthy development of sport.
8. There is no doubt that the professional level of sport has become more and more of a business and this negative trend has become particularly marked in the last two decades. We have witnessed the internationalisation of sport, and, above all, the unprecedented development of the economic dimension of sport, driven in particular by the value of television rights.
9. Recent scandals in several European countries, involving betting and manipulation of results have seriously damaged the image of sport in Europe. A number of mutually reinforcing mechanisms are needed to reduce the risk of match-fixing, illegal betting or other forms of corruption. These problems will require the more active involvement of the state authorities.
10. The problem of “trafficking” young athletes became apparent in many European countries. It seems that international networks, co-ordinated by agents based in Europe, started to manage this “business”, especially in relation to young athletes coming from Africa and Latin America.
11. The current European sport framework is not sufficiently adapted to deal with this matter and it needs closer collaboration between the European sports authorities and public authorities.
12. Part of the social function of sport is to foster integration and bring people together from different cultural or ethnic backgrounds. Nevertheless, it cannot be ignored that sports events have often witnessed outbreaks of racism and xenophobia. This is part of a more general problem in society, also sometimes related to the problem of hooliganism.
13. Doping has been a recurrent problem in many sports. The Council of Europe has been addressing this problem for many years namely through its Anti-Doping Convention of 1989 (ETS No. 135). Europe has the highest standards in fighting against doping in sport and these are an integral part of the European sports model. Co-operation within the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) is essential not only to preserve but also to try to extend such standards to other regions.
14. The Assembly welcomes the setting up in 2007 of the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport (EPAS) which has now the following members: Andorra, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Latvia, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, San Marino, Slovenia, “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”, and United Kingdom. Serbia and Switzerland will join on 1 January 2008.

15. The Assembly welcomes the Treaty of Lisbon amending the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty establishing the European Community, namely the adopted amendments to Article 149 EC including sport in the primary law of the European Union and the insertion of Article 188 P stressing the need for appropriate forms of co-operation between the EU and the Council of Europe. Sport must be one of the main fields of that co-operation.

16. The Parliamentary Assembly therefore urges the governments of member states to:

16.1. uphold the European sports model based on the twin principles of financial solidarity and openness of competition (promotion and relegation, opportunity for all);

16.2. acknowledge and give practical effect to the specificity of sport and protect the autonomy of sports federations (governing bodies);

16.3. recognise the priceless contribution of hundreds of thousands of volunteers in the field of sport and support them whenever necessary by fiscal or other means;

16.4. accede to the EPAS if they have not yet done so.

17. Finally the Assembly addresses the European sport bodies and urges them to:

17.1. ensure internal democracy, transparency and good governance along the Council of Europe guidelines;

17.2. work together with all interested stakeholders in their respective sports in order to preserve and strengthen the European sports model whilst recognising the diversity that exists between and within different sports in Europe.

## **B. Explanatory memorandum, by Mr José Luís Arnaut**

### **1. Key features of the European model**

1. The European sports model has certain key distinguishing features. First of all, it is a fairly democratic model, in the sense that the structures are built bottom-up from the millions of volunteers and also that stakeholders are represented at a variety of different levels in the overall structure. The institutional composition of sports bodies continues to evolve over time to reflect contemporary realities. Thus, broadly speaking, most team sports in Europe have adapted and developed their structures to ensure appropriate representation of different stakeholder groups, and have used a variety of different mechanisms for this purpose.

2. For example, in the case of football, we have seen the institutional recognition of leagues, clubs and players. The European Professional Football Leagues was set up to group together the largest western European professional leagues. A European Club Forum has been established consisting of more than 100 clubs selected on the basis of sporting performance and geographical representativity. At the same time, the international players' union (FIF-PRO Division Europe) represents the interests of players across Europe. All of these bodies have been recognised and incorporated into the decision and policy-making processes of the European governing body. The latest and most significant development in this sphere has been the creation of the European Professional Football Strategy Council, a new body bringing together representatives of clubs, leagues and players, again under the roof of UEFA.

3. The situation of basketball seems to have been less successful in this respect. Here we have witnessed the development of a separate league body (ULEB) which often seems to be in conflict with the governing body of the sport (FIBA Europe). The split between the professional and amateur aspects and resulting lack of unity seems less likely to serve the overall interests of the sport. In other words, it is preferable to have the various stakeholder groups represented within the structures of the overall governing body.

4. The European sports model is also characterised by an open structure. The principle of openness operates in a variety of different ways. For example, the shared philosophy of team sports in Europe is that clubs from all national associations should have an opportunity to compete at the highest level in European competition. In other words, the door should remain open to clubs from even the smaller or less wealthy countries. If not, competitions cannot truly be called "European" in the first place.

5. The principle of openness also finds expression in the system of promotion and relegation, which is another key aspect of the European model, distinguishing it from, for example, the United States. This feature is also an aspect of the wider philosophy of sporting solidarity to be found in Europe, namely, the idea that every team, however modest, should at least have the chance to follow its sporting dream and to gain promotion to a higher level.

6. Operating alongside the principle of openness is the related matter of financial solidarity. This is, in particular, the concept that a proportion of the income generated by the top level of professional sport should flow down to nourish the grass roots. A healthy grass roots helps, in turn, the professional level to flourish. Again, this is part of the philosophy that underpins the European model and, we believe, is also a wider feature of European society. The redistribution of income to protect the foundation and future development of sport and the recognition that team sport is, after all, a collective or joint venture is a further key feature that deserves protection and strengthening if at all possible. As a corollary, however, and given the large sums of money associated with sport these days, it is essential that the re-distributive function be carried out in a manner that is fully transparent and properly accountable.

7. The organisation of European sport is based on a pyramid structure. In the global context, the international federations are at the top of the pyramid. In the European context, that position is taken up by the European federations (governing bodies). The European governing bodies are themselves composed of national associations that are, in turn, made up of the regional associations, leagues, clubs and players. At the wide base of the pyramid, there are thousands of amateur clubs and players, who actually constitute the overwhelming number of people involved in sport. Based on this overall structure, the European federations are well placed to oversee application of the principles described: democracy, openness and financial solidarity. In addition, the various interlocking "layers" of the pyramid help to ensure that there is an on-going dialogue and exchange between the professional and grassroots elements of the sport. This pyramid model also recognises that sport continues to be based on national organisational structures and that the single federation structure is by far the best means to deliver clarity and efficient administration in European sport.

8. Lastly, however, it may be noted that the pyramid structure may not fit the circumstances of each and every sport in Europe and there may be room for different sports to adapt and develop their structures along other lines, whilst still respecting the key underlying values and principles of the European sports movement.

## **2. Specific features of sport – No ordinary “business”**

9. There is no doubt that sport has a specific nature that sets it apart from the normal business sector. There are two particular aspects to this: firstly, the fact that particular structures and regulatory requirements are needed to make sport function most effectively (for example, as an “entertainment spectacle” in professional sport) and, secondly, the fact that sport, unlike most “businesses”, delivers important social, health, and educational benefits to society, as well as providing a healthy outlet for the expression of national and regional cultural diversity.

10. In this connection, it cannot be denied that the most exciting sporting competition is nearly always a well-balanced one, where the outcome remains relatively uncertain. However, what this also means is that, unlike other “normal” businesses, a sports team actually needs its rivals to be of roughly similar competitive strength. If matters become too one-sided there is little chance of producing an exciting and attractive event or competition, whether for television, sponsors or spectators.

11. This unique feature of sport means that governing bodies have to consider appropriate and imaginative ways to ensure that competition stays balanced, and so that financial considerations alone do not dictate the outcome of sporting competitions. Into the category of “balancing” rules, we could place measures such as the central marketing of television rights (and redistribution of income), squad size limits and locally-trained player requirements, and possibly also cost control mechanisms, along the lines operated by certain major league sports in the United States. These sorts of regulations and mechanisms may not be needed in a “standard” business; but the point is that sport is not a “standard” business. It has specific features that require a different approach, precisely in order to ensure that it remains special.

12. As regards the wider benefits that sport delivers to society, nobody can seriously dispute the social, health, educational, training and cultural benefits that sport brings. However, this only reinforces the need to grant proper recognition to the specific features of sport, so that it may deliver these wider societal benefits. Putting the matter differently, it is not only sport that stands to lose if its specific nature is not recognised, it is also society as a whole that will be poorer.

## **3. Autonomy and good governance**

13. Sports bodies should remain independent from political influence and not be representative of any special interest group. The federation should continue to be the key organisation that reconciles and represents the interests of all stakeholders, in a cohesive and democratic manner. Since the federation brings together all their respective interests, its autonomy and ability to organise and govern sport should be respected.

14. At the same time, however, it is important that sports governing bodies be properly equipped to oversee the organisation and functioning of their respective sports. In this connection, reference has already been made to the evolution of institutional structures in European football, the main purpose of which is to ensure that the governing body is sufficiently professional, democratically accountable and responsive to the needs of modern sports administration.

15. In addition, the efforts of sports governing bodies to introduce transparent and objective licensing criteria should be supported. Generally speaking, such systems can be a useful means to help promote financial stability in sport and to achieve sound business management. It is important, however, that licensing criteria are applied in a sensitive manner, having regard to the objective differences that exist between sports and between countries. Sports stadia in smaller countries, such as Luxembourg for example, might not meet very high criteria.

16. There is also an ongoing need for sports bodies to respect and comply with standards of good governance themselves. In this respect, the Council of Europe’s own Recommendation Rec(2005)8 regarding principles of good governance in sport is a useful contribution to the debate. Among other matters, the Council has called on sports bodies to respect democratic procedures based on electoral fairness, it has emphasised the importance of professional organisation and management, and also the need to avoid conflicts of interest

and to ensure accountability and transparency in decision making. The point is that, for the autonomy of sports bodies to be respected, it is a necessary precondition that these same bodies act in the correct manner themselves.

#### 4. Development of sport as a “business” and its increased internationalisation

17. The challenges in sports governance have become even more acute as the world of professional sport becomes increasingly commercial in character. This, of course, only really affects the top professional level of sport but, nevertheless, the greater influence of business is undeniable. Increasing amounts of money have poured into the professional level of sport, driven largely by the development of pay-television and the willingness of pay-TV operators to spend large sums of money for exclusive sports rights, especially in the case of the most popular sports. Football, Formula 1, tennis and golf come to mind.

18. This development has occurred at more or less the same time as an effective “de-regulation” of the football player transfer market in Europe. Following the ground breaking Bosman case of the European Court of Justice (in December 1995) the previous constraints limiting the ability of richer teams to buy all the best players were swept aside. And, of course, the principles of the Bosman case apply equally to all professional team sports in Europe. What this means is that the specific legal environment in Europe creates new challenges for sport and requires well-thought out European solutions.

19. What we have seen is that clubs in the largest national pay-TV markets in Europe have enjoyed a huge surge in their spending power and they have used that spending power to buy up the best playing talent in Europe (and beyond). A direct consequence is that the ability of smaller (less financially powerful) clubs to compete has been drastically undermined. Taking the example of football, it is thus no coincidence that the last time Ajax won the European Champions League (previously the European Cup) was in 1995. And apart from the “one off” success of Porto in 2004, no club from outside one of the five big television markets (Italy, England, Spain, Germany, France) has won the competition since. These developments only reinforce the need for sports governing bodies to think imaginatively of new methods to help re-balance sport: precisely to make it more competitive.

20. The influx of money to sport and the *laissez-faire* regulatory environment (often brought about as a consequence of EU law) has created a situation in which a new breed of economic actors – agents – has flourished. Often earning vast sums of money simply by acting as go-betweens in player trade deals, this “profession” has become increasingly difficult to monitor. It seems fair to say that a great deal of money has left sport and has been pocketed by middlemen and, at the same time, team sports have suffered considerable reputation damage in the process. It is, therefore, evident that a more rigorous form of control needs to be introduced to police the activities of agents, particularly in order to protect the interests of young athletes, many of whom come from outside Europe and end up in situations where their personal and/or professional welfare is at risk.

21. The solution to this problem relies on a more effective and robust co-operation between the responsible sports governing bodies and the public authorities, whose task it is to deal with matters regarding immigration and the risk of “trafficking” young people. For example, it seems clear that the issuance of short-term visas and related international transfer certificates should be examined by the sporting authorities and the state authorities working together.

#### 5. Further challenges: match-fixing, betting, and corruption

22. Matters relating to player transfers and the conduct of agents only constitute one of the regulatory challenges facing European sport today. It cannot be ignored that sport has, in certain countries, been badly affected by allegations of match-fixing, illegal betting and other forms of corruption. In this respect, a two-pronged response again seems to be required: 1. more effective regulatory controls by the sports bodies, and 2. closer co-operation with the state authorities, including the police.

23. As regards matters in the hands of the sports bodies, it may, for example, be possible to envisage stricter regulations as regards individuals or entities controlling or influencing more than one club, thus diminishing the risk (or perceived risk) of match-fixing and safeguarding the uncertainty of results. In addition, with regard to betting, it may be possible to reduce the risk of any illicit betting activities by granting more effective intellectual property rights protection for sporting fixture lists. In this way, a more secure contractual relationship could be established between the league or national association (licensor) and betting company (licensee). As part of this contractual relationship, betting companies would be obliged to notify the relevant sports bodies of any unusual betting patterns, so that information could then be passed on to the state

authorities, for the purposes of conducting any criminal investigation. This may serve to foster a more effective “public-private” partnership between sports bodies and the state, in order to combat incidences of illegal and corrupt practices affecting sport.

## **6. Racism and xenophobia**

24. Although there is no doubt that sport can and does serve as a great instrument to bring people closer together, it cannot alone overcome problems of racism or xenophobia. These are wider problems found in our society (as is the case with hooliganism). Once again, it would seem that a combination of criminal (state) laws and disciplinary (sports) measures (for example, sanctions against clubs) are needed to address these issues. Important work has already been undertaken by European political institutions: see for example the recommendation of the Council of Europe’s Committee of Ministers to member states on the prevention of racism, xenophobia and racial intolerance in sport (REC(2001)6) and the Declaration of the European Parliament on Racism in Football and the upcoming campaign of the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport (EPAS) on combating racism and discrimination in sport that will take place in 2008. However, these political decisions still need to be consequentially implemented and thoroughly monitored.

## **7. Violence**

25. Spectator violence is another major problem that sport has been facing in the last decades. Consequently, in order to kick violence out of sport it is fundamental to concentrate on prevention, co-operation and repression. In this context, the Council of Europe enacted the European Convention on Spectator Violence and Misbehaviour at Sports Events and in particular at Football Matches (ETS No. 120), which entered into force on 1 November 1985 and aims to prevent and to control spectator violence and misbehaviour as well as to ensure the safety of spectators at sports events. Future specific actions are absolutely essential in the framework of a structured dialogue between all stakeholders, directly and indirectly related to sport, private or public, both at national and international level.

26. The standing committee of the spectator violence convention is involved in monitoring and implementation of the convention, but its action could be complemented and strengthened. The upcoming campaign of the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport (EPAS) on combating racism and discrimination in sport that will take place in 2008, as well as emerging initiatives by the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, will further develop the fight against racism and xenophobia in sport.

27. Lastly, a harmonised legal framework to deal with threats of violence and hooliganism is also desirable. The Council of Europe has already taken important initiatives aimed at dealing with these problems and this work should be taken forward.

## **8. Doping**

28. Doping in sport is an increasing threat both to the health of athletes and to the moral and ethical foundations of sport. The fight against this threat is a matter for international co-operation. The Assembly considers that the 1989 Council of Europe Anti-Doping Convention (ETS No. 135), the 1999 World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) and the 2003 (updated 2007) World Anti-Doping Code are major weapons available.

29. For many years the Council of Europe has played the leading role in the fight against doping in sport. This is evidenced by many recommendations and resolutions on this problem published since 1967. The adoption of the Anti-Doping Convention created common, high standard foundations for the anti-doping policies in its 49 – European and non-European – states parties. The Council of Europe Anti-Doping Convention has been completed in 2005 by the Unesco International Convention against Doping in Sport, which provides a broad international legal background and enacts the recognition of the role of WADA by states. These conventions have to be further developed to address new challenges (trafficking of doping substances, etc.) and monitored in co-operation, to prevent duplications.

30. The events that led the European representatives to abstain in the election of the new Chair of WADA at the recent meeting of the Foundation Board of that organisation (Madrid, 16-17 November 2007) are worrying and, while continuing to contribute in a constructive manner to the work of WADA, Europe should initiate a review of inter-regional co-operation among public authorities and their contribution to WADA.

## 9. Conclusions

31. The European sports model is deeply rooted in European civil society and is a fundamental expression of European culture and attitude towards sporting values. It is a democratic model, with a pyramid structure, which serves to ensure sport remains open to everyone, in obedience to the wider philosophy of sporting solidarity, namely, in the sense that every team, however modest, should at least have the chance to follow its sporting dream and to gain promotion to a higher level.

32. Sport has a specific nature that sets it apart from the normal business sector because, unlike most “businesses”, a sports team actually needs its rivals to be of roughly similar competitive strength and because sport delivers important social, health, and educational benefits to society, as well as a healthy outlet for the expression of national and regional cultural diversity.

33. The influx of money to sport (driven largely by the development of pay-television) and the *laissez-faire* regulatory environment – also resulting from a strict application of EU law to sport – is jeopardising the ability of smaller (less financially powerful) clubs to compete and thus distorting the European sports model. To overcome the present situation the specificity of sporting activity must be recognised.

34. The specificity must be recognised allowing sport governing bodies, independent from political influence and not as representatives of any special interest group, the establishment and enforcement of “balancing rules” guaranteeing that competitions stay competitive and balanced, ultimately safeguarding the European sports model.

35. The need to recognise and protect the autonomy of sports governing bodies must bring together the imperative of such bodies to respect and fully comply with standards of democracy, transparency and good governance in line with the Council of Europe’s recommendation regarding principles of good governance in sport (adopted in 2005).

36. The new economic reality around sport has also brought a new reality with the growing role of players’ agents. A more rigorous form of control needs to be introduced to police the activities of agents, particularly in order to protect the interests of young players, many of whom come from outside Europe and end up in situations where their personal and/or professional welfare is at risk.

37. The establishment of a more effective and robust co-operation between the responsible sports governing bodies and the public authorities is needed also in order to address such issues as the trafficking of young players, match-fixing, illegal betting and other forms of corruption, fighting against racism, xenophobia and violence in sport and the maintenance of high standards in the fight against doping in Europe.

38. The specific legal environment in Europe creates new challenges for sport and requires well-thought out European solutions.

## **Appendix – Record of the hearing held at the Council of Europe (Strasbourg, 14 September 2007)**

The hearing was opened at 10.45 a.m. by Mr Schneider, chairperson of the sub-committee, France, who welcomed all the participants.

Mr Arnaut, rapporteur, Portugal, thanked the representatives of international sports organisations for their presence. Europe had common values, which were recognised worldwide: culture, human rights and sport. He invited participants to help him identify the issues on which the Assembly should work in order to preserve the European sports model.

The European sports model was democratic, open, based on the promotion/relegation of teams, on financial solidarity and structured as a pyramid. Sport was different from other economic activities and needed therefore specific rules. In this time of globalisation and economic pressure some of the major problems facing sport were: illegal betting, racism, xenophobia, match fixing and corruption. It was necessary to preserve the autonomy of sports bodies and ensure their good governance.

With this report the Council of Europe should send a strong political signal.

Mr Weingärtner, Director of Youth and Sport, presented the work of the Council of Europe in the field of sport and in particular the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport, which had been signed in May 2007.

Mr Pescante, Executive Board member, International Olympic Committee (IOC), pointed out that the world of sport expected much from European institutions and in particular from the Council of Europe, which had a far wider basis than the EU. Without the work of the Council of Europe in anti-doping, WADA would not have been possible. Mr Arnaut had presented an excellent report but it was very much focused on professional football: it should now be widened to non-professional football and to other sports. The problems mentioned did not exist in most sports. Such problems were often on the side of spectators, not of athletes.

A pyramid structure existed in most sports all over the world. Fundamental values such as autonomy and specificity should, however, be preserved. The Council of Europe could do much in raising the awareness of national parliaments and governments to the millions of volunteers working in the field of sports.

Mr Arnaut insisted that the European was different from the American sport model. The dimension of football in Europe was overwhelming and therefore its problems were much more visible. He agreed that sport should continue to play a role in the fight against racism and xenophobia.

Mr Champagne, delegate for special affairs, International Federation of Association Football (FIFA), felt that the European model was in fact a world model. It was in danger as many wished to use sport instead of serving it. Some of the consequences were already there, such as the lack of young European players (as clubs preferred to bring in confirmed players from other continents than train young Europeans). The problems being worldwide, their solutions could not be only European. European institutions should address the lack of fiscal harmonisation, which, for instance, gave an important advantage to British clubs and had an impact on sport results. As a consequence of freedom of movement, those clubs which had more non-local players had been advantaged. For the last thirteen years FIFA had been asking, without success, for the recognition of the specificity of sport.

Mr Poczobut, International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF), noted that the same ideas were being discussed for more than ten years. Europe could share its values with other parts of the world as in the case of anti-doping where WADA had been set up on the initiative of European countries. A special branch of Interpol should be created to deal with anti-doping. In addition Europe should do something about the public financing of sport in general, not only football.

Mr Gaillard, Director of Communications and Public Affairs, Union of European Football Associations (UEFA), was also representing FIBA Europe (basketball), EHF (handball), IIHF (ice hockey) and CEV (volleyball). The pollution of sport by money was not exclusive to football as Formula 1, tennis and golf, for instance, also involved huge financial means. Mr Arnaut's report opened good perspectives. The massive arrival in European sport of non-European money aimed at making fortunes very rapidly was worrying and there were already threats of closed leagues. Also worrying was the interference of justice: the EU Court of Justice had recently denied the specificity of sport while discussing how many grams of nandrolone should be considered doping. It was urgent that the specificity of sport was recognised.

Mr Arnaut recalled that the Council of Europe had no executive power. He hoped that the representative of the EU Council Presidency would convey what was being said to the EU. Another example of the bad influence of money in sport was the declaration by the French football club Paris Saint Germain that its aim for the current year was 8% return on investment, rather than to win the championship.

Mr Géveaux, France, regretted the lack of coherence between the different European legal systems. Measures should be taken to prevent a person or an institution from owning more than one club. The Council of Europe had played an important role in WADA but it needed the support of the sport federations.

For Mr Gjeloshaj, Director of Educational Services, International University Sports Federation (FISU), most reports were about those sports that attracted the attention of the media. The role that sport could play in education was not sufficiently brought forward. It was important to prevent sports stadiums from becoming lawless places, which would happen if for instance racists felt that they were free to express their views there.

Mrs Brasseur, Luxembourg, noted the gender imbalance in the present meeting, which illustrated the fact that sport bodies were very much still a man's business. She favoured a large autonomy for sport federations but these should not adopt too strict regulations, such as those which effectively prevented football matches from taking place in Luxembourg. She had participated in the meeting of European Ministers for Sport when the inclusion of sport in the European treaty had been discussed. In Luxembourg there were no legal sanctions for athletes as it was considered that this was the competence of the federations.

Mr Gaillard assured her of UEFA's solidarity.

Mr Verbruggen, Acting President, General Association of International Sports Federations (AGFIS/GAISF), pointed out that the problems were not specific to sport but were problems of society. Mr Arnaut's report was too much centred on team sports and in particular football. FIFA, UEFA and the two or three other major sport federations stood a world apart from the 60 or 70 sports federations which did not have enough human or financial means. Most had a staff of between nine and 15 and many were much smaller than their national members.

Mr Arnaut said that he did not intend to address professional sport to the detriment of amateur sport. He was well aware of the particular problems of the small federations. However small, these should work with transparency and professionalism.

Mr Bertels, Executive Director, International Hockey Federation (FIH), informed the participants that his federation had 122 member associations, of which 42 were in Europe. The FIH had a staff of only 13. He wondered to what extent the European sports model should be a priority compared to the needs of other continents. It was important to keep sport interesting, as also stated in paragraph 9 of Mr Arnaut's report, and to export its values to other continents. On the other hand, he could not agree with the challenges indicated in the report.

Mr Arnaut recalled that the Council of Europe was a European organisation and therefore his report dealt with sport in a European perspective. He asked Mr Bertels to make a further submission of what would be the challenges worth addressing from the point of view of his federation.

Mr Ryan, Director, Association of Summer Olympic International Federations (ASOIF), pointed out that the European sports model should be seen in the global context.

Mr Mazzi, President, European Motorcycle Union (JEM), regretted that much had been said about team sports and not enough about individual sports. He drew attention to the fact that too constraining environmental laws might kill some sports. Fiscal harmonisation at the European level was needed.

Mr Legendre, Chairman of the Committee on Culture, Science and Education, France, complimented the participants for the quality and frankness of the debate.

Mr Geistlinger, Secretary General, International Biathlon Union (IBU), wondered how Europe could offer a sports model that was attractive for other continents without risking losing its own values.

Mr Guillaume, President, International Billiards and Snooker Federation (IBSF), said that his federation was 100% amateur and had 38 million players in China alone. In England there was a professional league linked to Eurosport which did not follow the European sports model at all. The word "voluntary", which was a key aspect of European sport, was missing from the report. Some countries lacked a democratic tradition and this had consequences on the level of sport.

Mr Pescante thanked the organisers of the hearing and called for the dialogue to be pursued. The world of sport was the best ally of the Council of Europe in its aim of improving young people. The Council of Europe had the authority to call on governments not to interfere with sport when this could be avoided. Racism, even on the field of sport, was the competence of the law.

Mr Arnaut thanked all the participants for a constructive and open dialogue.

Mr Schneider closed the hearing at 1.30 p.m.

### **List of participants**

#### **Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe**

Mr José Luís Arnaut, Portugal, rapporteur

Mrs Anne Brasseur, Luxembourg

Mrs Åse Gunhild Woie Duesund, Norway

Mr Jean-Marie Geveaux, France

Mrs Sinikka Hurskainen, Finland

Mr Luchezar Ivanov, Bulgaria

Mr Jacques Legendre, Chairman of the Committee on Culture, Science and Education, France

Mrs Maria Manuela de Melo, Portugal

Mr Edward O'Hara, United Kingdom

Mr Azis Pollozhani, "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia"

Lord Russell-Johnston, United Kingdom

Mr André Schneider, Chairman of the Sub-Committee on Youth and Sport, France

#### **Experts**

Mr Hans Bertels, Executive Director FIH – International Hockey Federation

Mr Jérôme Champagne, delegate for special affairs, FIFA, International Federation of Association Football

Ms Monika Flixeder, Senior Manager, EHF, European Handball Federation

Mr William Gaillard, Director of Communications and Public Affairs, UEFA, Union of European Football Associations

Mr Michael Geistlinger, Secretary General, IBU, International Biathlon Union

Mr Kolë Gjelošhaj, Director of Educational Services, FISU, International University Sports Federation

Mr Pascal Guillaume, President, IBSF, International Billiards and Snooker Federation

Mr Vincenzo Mazzi, President, UEM, European Motorcycle Union

Mr Andrew Moger, Co-ordinator of News Media Alliance and Adviser to European Publishers Council

Mr Mario Pescante, Executive Board member, IOC, International Olympic Committee

Mr Jean Poczobut, IAAF, International Association of Athletics Federations

Mr Andrew Ryan, Director, ASOIF, Association of Summer Olympic International Federations

Mr Hein Verbruggen, Acting President, AGFIS/GAISF, General Association of International Sports Federations

Mr José Eduardo Vieira, Chairmanship of the EU Council, Senior Adviser, Secretariat of State for Youth and Sport, Portugal

#### **Apologies for absence:**

Mrs Judit Faragó, Executive Vice-President, ITTF, International Table Tennis Federation

## Secretariat of the Council of Europe

Directorate General IV – Education, Culture and Heritage, Youth and Sport

### *Directorate of Youth and Sport*

Mr René Weingärtner, Director of Youth and Sport

Mrs Ita Mirianashvili, Sport Department

Mr Stanislas Frossard, Sport Department

Ms Irena Aradavoaipei, Sport Department

### *Secretariat of the Parliamentary Assembly*

Mr Christopher Grayson, Head of Secretariat for Culture, Science and Education

Mr João Ary, Secretary to the Committee on Culture, Science and Education

Mr Rüdiger Dossow, co-Secretary to the Committee on Culture, Science and Education

Mrs Julie Bertalmio, administrative assistant

Mrs Sandra Ksis, assistant

Reporting committee: Committee on Culture, Science and Education.

Reference to committee: [Doc. 11159](#) and Reference No. 3315 of 16 March 2007.

Draft resolution adopted unanimously by the committee on 10 December 2007.

Members of the committee: Mr Jacques **Legendre** (Chairperson), Baroness **Hooper** (Vice-Chairperson), Mr Wolfgang **Wodarg** (Vice-Chairperson), Mrs Anne **Brasseur** (Vice-Chairperson), Mr Hans Ager, Mr Kornél Almássy, Mrs Donka Banović, Mr Lars Barfoed, Mr Rony Bargetze, Mr Walter **Bartoš**, Mrs Marie-Louise Bemelmans-Videc, Mr Radu Mircea **Berceanu**, Mr Levan Berdzenishvili, Mrs Oksana Bilozir, Mrs Guðfinna Bjarnadóttir, Mrs Maria Luisa Boccia, Mrs Margherita Boniver, Mr Ivan Brajovic, Mr Osman Coşkunoglu, Mr Vlad Cubreacov, Mr Ivica Dačić, Mr Joseph Debono Grech, Mr Ferdinand Devínsky, Mr Daniel Ducarme, Mrs Åse Gunhild Woie **Duesund**, Mr Detlef Dzembitzki, Mrs Anke Eymer, Mr Relu Fenechiu, Mrs Blanca Fernández-Capel, Mrs Maria Emelina Fernández Soriano, Mr Axel Fischer, Mr José **Freire Antunes**, Mr Ioannis Giannellis-Theodosiadis, Mr Stefan Glăvan, Mr Vladimir Grachev, Mr Andreas Gross, Mr Raffi **Hovannisian**, Mr Rafael Huseynov, Mr Fazail İbrahimli, Mrs Halide İncekara, Mrs Evguenia Jivkova, Mr Morgan Johansson, Mrs Liana Kanelli, Mrs Cecilia **Keaveney**, Mr Ali Rashid Khalil, Mr József Kozma, Mr Jean-Pierre Kucheida, Mr Markku **Laukkanen**, Mr Yves Leterme, Mrs Jagoda Majaska-Martinčević, Mrs Milica Marković, Mr Tomasz Markowski, Mrs Muriel Marland-Militello, Mr Andrew **McIntosh**, Mr Ivan Melnikov, Mrs Maria Manuela **de Melo**, Mrs Assunta Meloni, Mr Paskal Milo, Mrs Christine **Muttonen**, Mrs Miroslava **Němcová**, Mr Edward **O'Hara**, Mr Kent Olsson, Mr Andrey Pantev, Mrs Antigoni Papadopoulou, Mr Azis **Pollozhani**, Mrs Majda Potrata, Mr Lluís Maria de Puig, Mr Zbigniew Rau, Mrs Anta Rugāte, Mr Indrek Saar, Mr André Schneider (alternate: Mr Philippe **Nachbar**), Mr Urs Schweitzer, Mr Vitaliy Shybko, Mrs Geraldine Smith (alternate: Mr Robert **Walter**), Mrs Albertina Soliani, Mr Yury Solonin, Mr Christophe Spiliotis-Saquet, Mr Valeriy Sudarenkov, Mr Petro Symonenko, Mr Mehmet **Tekelioğlu**, Mr Piotr **Wach**, Mr Emanuelis Zingeris.

NB: The names of those members present at the meeting are printed in bold.

See 7th Session, 24 January 2008 (adoption of the draft resolution); and [Resolution 1602](#).