

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**7<sup>th</sup> June 2014**

## **ICSS President, Save the Dream celebrate youth and sport with Pope Francis**

*ICSS President, Mohammed Hanzab, addresses audience of 100,000 people in Saint Peter's Square*

*Major Italian sports association, Centro Sportivo Italiano (CSI) signs new partnership with Save the Dream*

**Rome, 7<sup>th</sup> June 2014:** Save the Dream, a joint initiative between the International Centre for Sport Security (ICSS) and the Qatar Olympic Committee (QOC), played a central role in a special festival in St. Peter's Square today with Pope Francis to mark the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the **Centro Sportivo Italiano (CSI)**.

As part of a special weekend of activities which celebrated young people and sport, ICSS President, Mohammed Hanzab addressed the gathering at St. Peter's Square, which included an **estimated 100,000 people** today as well as millions more watching live online.

As part of his speech, President Hanzab called on people around the world to eliminate violence, cheating and discrimination in sport and work together to promote positive values like fair play, respect and team spirit. As Save the Dream ambassador, Giusy Versace, also played a key role in today's festival, meeting Pope Francis on his arrival at today's event.

Save the Dream's participation in such a high-profile public event cements the programme's growing profile around the world and follows on from the initiatives' national awareness campaign during matchday 14 of Serie A.

A key reason behind Save the Dream's participation in today's festival, included the fact that an estimated **20,000 children and young athletes from around Italy** gathered in Rome for the festival, providing an ideal platform to promote and raise awareness about the importance of integrity in sport.

Also as part of weekend's activities in Rome, Save the Dream also signed a new partnership with **Centro Sportivo Italiano (CSI)**.

The new partnership with the CSI, who are one of the oldest and largest active sports club associations in Italy, is part of Save the Dream's strategy to empower young people around the world and work with them to protect the purity of sport. The agreement will see the two



organisations work closely together to develop a range of programmes, events and initiatives that will promote ethical values in sport to young people around the world.

Speaking about today, **Mohammed Hanzab, President of the ICSS**, said:

“On behalf of the ICSS, I would like to thank the CSI, who will become an important partner for the Save the Dream project in Italy and beyond. As one of the oldest active sports associations in the country, their significant experience and extensive network will provide an important platform to promote sport values.

“It is an immense honour for the ICSS and Save the Dream to be here in St. Peter’s Square and involved in today’s activities with Pope Francis. I hope that the events today have captured the hearts and minds of many more young people around the world and reinforced the positive impact that sport can play within our society.”

**Massimo Achini, President of Centro Sportivo Italiano**, said: “Since being founded over 70 years ago, the CSI has been a strong believer in expanding its activities at a national and international level to support our ongoing mission to educate and develop young people through sport.

“This new agreement with Save the Dream supports our mission and it is clear that both the ICSS and CSI have a shared vision and goal, which is embodied by extraordinary role models like Save the Dream ambassador, Giusy Versace, herself a former member of the CSI.”

**Giusy Versace** added:

“As a young athlete, it was always a dream of mine to run in St. Peter’s Square and today, that dream came true.

“In particular, today has shown that sport can provide incredible opportunities and tremendous hope to many young people around the world. However, if we do not protect its purity, sport will lose credibility and without credibility, it will have no future.

“At Save the Dream, we aim to teach young people around the world about the importance of safe and fair sport and I hope that today’s activities inspired a new generation of young athletes to take up the mantle and become the role models of the future.”

**-ENDS-**

## **NOTE TO EDITORS**

Videos download links and high-resolution images available upon request.

**ICSS Rome 1** – (L to R) Giusy Versace (Save the Dream Ambassador) and Mohammed Hanzab (ICSS President) wave to the crowd at St. Peters Square



**ICSS Rome 2** - (L to R) Mohammed Hanzab (President of the ICSS) and Massimo Achini (President of Centro Sportivo Italiano) sign a new partnership on 7<sup>th</sup> June 2014 in Rome, Italy

**ICSS Rome 3** – Pope Francis arrives in St. Peter’s Square on 7<sup>th</sup> June 2014

**ICSS Rome 4** – An estimated 100,000 people were present in St. Peter’s Square to celebrate the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Centro Sportivo Italiano

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

### **About Save the Dream**

Save the Dream is an initiative of the ICSS and the QOC, supported by technology partner Ooredoo. The programme is a global campaign that aims to educate, promote and protect the core values of sport for young people and eliminate corruption, violence and discrimination in sport.

In pursuit of these aims, several projects have been undertaken in 2014 including educational workshops in schools across Qatar as part of the Schools Olympic Program; encouraging young sports fans in high schools across Italy through the programme Tifiamo Positivo; and partnering with UNICEF and child protection organisations in Brazil to protect children from violence and discrimination around major sporting events like the FIFA World Cup 2014.

### **About the International Centre for Sport Security (ICSS)**

The ICSS is an international, independent and non-profit organisation. With an aim to improve security, safety and integrity throughout the world of sport; the ICSS works with governments, federations, clubs, leagues and event organisers.

The ICSS provides expertise, services and global knowledge - advising on event and venue safety, strategic security and investigations into corruption in sport.

For more details please visit: [www.theicss.org](http://www.theicss.org)

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