

## Sport is a common language that unites cultures and breaks down barriers in society': Save the Dream Founder at Peace and Sport International Forum



**25 November; Monaco:** Mohammed Hanzab, Founder of Save the Dream and Chairman of the International Centre for Sport Security (ICSS), highlighted the importance of using sport as a powerful tool to unite young people from different cultures and backgrounds, as well as the diplomatic role it can play in promoting peace and humanity around the world.

Speaking on the opening panel entitled '*Breaking down barriers through Sports Diplomacy*' at the Peace and Sport International Forum, Hanzab highlighted how sport can be used as a tool for diplomacy in society and how the interactions and experiences young people have through sport can be a powerful platform to begin building bridges between different cultures and break down barriers within society.

Speaking at the Peace and Sport International Forum, which is held under the patronage of His Serene Highness Prince Albert II of Monaco, Hanzab said:

“Sport is a common language that is spoken by many people around the world. Sport can play an important diplomatic role in society and it can be powerful platform in breaking down barriers and divisions between people, as well as bringing young people together and fostering greater dialogue and cooperation between different cultures and communities around world.

“At Save the Dream, we believe that the interactions and experiences young people have through playing sport can lay strong foundations for the future and have a significant impact in bringing people together and breaking down divisions that currently exist between people from different cultures and backgrounds.

“As part of Save the Dream’s activities protecting and promoting the values of sport in young people, we recognise that sport is a common language in many countries around the world and have already helped young people around the world to play sport through various projects, platforms and activities.”



Mentioning some examples including the boxer Mohammed Ali, Nelson Mandela and diplomat Henry Kissinger, Hanzab also highlighted on the panel how more athletes and influential figures from civil society should speak out about the role sport can play in bringing people and communities together, as well as highlighting how more resources from major international sport events should be allocated to projects that use sport as a diplomatic tool between different cultures and communities.

He added:

“Sport can unite children and young people from all corners of the world and - whilst social media is an important platform that can connect, inspire and help to share a positive image of humanity

-developing strong values like fair-play, respect and teamwork are best achieved by actually playing sport and interacting with others on the field of play.”

In addition to highlighting social media as one platform, Hanzab also mentioned the growing role and influence of e-sports in the lives of young people and highlighted how governments and policy-makers should explore how to use e-sports platforms as a vehicle to promote the positive values and benefits of sport and encourage young people to go out and play.

Hanzab concluded:

“As Founder of Save the Dream and Chairman of the ICSS, I am honoured to speak at the Peace and Sport International Forum and meet with other like-minded organisations who believe in the power of sport to inspire young people and who are actively working to help create a stronger, more peaceful society.

“As Save the Dream looks forward, I hope that we can build on our recent work delivering projects and empowering young people through sport in countries including India, Haiti, Brazil, Italy and Qatar.”

As part of his participation on the *‘Breaking down barriers through Sports Diplomacy’* panel, Mohammed was speaking alongside:

- **Pal Schmitt**, Former President of Hungary from 2010-2012, IOC Member since 1983 and Head EU's Sports Diplomacy Advisory Group.
- **Juan Carlos Sainz Borgo**, Dean of the University of Peace in Costa Rica.
- **Afarin Shahidzadeh**, Vice-President of National Institutions and Local Mechanisms, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.
- **Kash Siddiq**, Founder of Football for Peace