

# United Nations hosts forum to address corruption in sport and need for greater child protection

Forum calls for International Sport Integrity Day

Geneva, Switzerland; 6 November 2013: Corruption in sport and its growing and dangerous impact on young people was discussed today at a special United Nations-hosted forum, “**Sport Integrity – a right for youth**”, by leaders from the world of sport, government, international development and child protection.

Organised by the Permanent Missions of Italy and Qatar, in partnership with the ICSS and Lega Pro, the forum saw **HE Sheikh Saoud bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani, Secretary-General, Qatar Olympic Committee**, propose the idea of an **International Sport Integrity Day** to raise awareness of this critical area, which was wholeheartedly supported by the forum.

**HE Sheikh Saoud bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani, Secretary-General, Qatar Olympic Committee** said

“It is clear to all of us in sport that corruption threatens its very essence – fair competition. With our commitment to supporting all those that seek to stamp this out and the vital need to ensure the highest level of global awareness of this issue, I have today proposed an International Day of Integrity in Sport.

“It is only through governments, sport and humanitarian organisations working together that we can move forward and address these important issues at the heart of sport.”

Speaking on the panel entitled ‘**Sport Integrity as a Universal Value for the International Community**’, **Pâquerette Girard Zappelli, Secretary of the Ethics Commission, International Olympic Committee (IOC)** highlighted the similarities between the values of the Olympic Movement and the United Nations. She added that whilst the sport movement can deal with issues involving integrity in sport, it cannot deal with criminal activity and that raising awareness of this at government level is vital to encourage their support for the future of fair sport.

Experts at the forum sought to raise awareness of the threats to sport integrity and young people; showcase and share initiatives and best practice; and identify ways to increase collaboration and information-sharing. It featured a discussion on sports results manipulation in Italy, featuring **Pierluigi Dell’Osso, Acting Chief, Italian Anti-Mafia Directorate** and **Chris Eaton, Director of Sport Integrity at the ICSS**, while representatives from **UNICEF, the World Food Programme (WFP), Right to**

**Play** and **Olympafrica**, explored the importance of protecting children and maintaining sport's integrity if it is to fully contribute to development around the world.

**Mohammed Hanzab, President of ICSS**, said: "Tackling criminal activities and safeguarding the integrity of sport are complex issues that require a collaborative, international approach, which is currently lacking. This forum and the proposal to create an International Sport Integrity Day was an important step towards a much needed coordinated strategy that focuses on the very people criminals often target first – young athletes. He added: "With the infiltration of criminal organisations, young people are particularly vulnerable to approaches and integrity threats such as betting fraud, match-fixing and trafficking.

"At the ICSS, we continue to expand our work through partnerships with organisations such as UNICEF and Foot Solidaire. We passionately believe that early education is crucial and through our '**Save The Dream**' initiative we are supporting a range of activities, such as workshops and educational tools, that teach young people about integrity in sport as well as positive values like fair play, respect, loyalty and team spirit. Only when sport is clean and has these values at its heart can it fully contribute to peace and development around the world."

During the event, the ICSS signed partnership agreements with Lega Pro to address match-fixing and Foot Solidaire to protect young people from trafficking. A further new partnership with UNICEF will see the two organisations work together to ensure the children of Brazil can thrive in a protected environment.