



Slovensko predsedstvo EU 2008  
Slovenian Presidency of the EU 2008  
La Présidence slovène de l'UE 2008



Ljubljana, 17 March, 2008

## JOINT DECLARATION

of

**The Slovenian Presidency of the European Council,  
The Presidents of the National Olympic Committees of the  
European Union Member States,  
Representatives of the Executive Committee of the  
European Olympic Committees and  
The European Commissioner responsible for sport**

On

### *“Social Significance and Dialogue in Sport”*

Following the Informal Meeting of the European Ministers responsible for sport of the EU member States of Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom, **the Slovenian Presidency of the European Council, the European Commissioner responsible for sport, the Presidents of the National Olympic Committees of the European Union member states, as well as the members of the Executive Committee of the European Olympic Committees, meeting at Brdo pri Kranju on 17 March, 2008:**

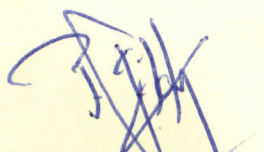
- *Stressing* the importance and significance of sport in modern society, notably from the political, social, cultural and economic perspectives and underlining the role of regular physical activity as a means of promoting health, development, peace, and environment;
- *Recalling* the Action Plan of the Third Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe (Warsaw 16-17 May 2005), and attaching the great importance to

promoting the role of sport in the process of building a more humane and inclusive Europe;

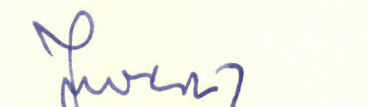
- *Considering* the provisions of the European Sports Charter of the Council of Europe, and in particular, article 2 of the UNESCO International Charter on Physical Education and Sport (Rev. 1991), claiming that everyone has the right to physical activity and sport;
  - *Recalling* the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the outcome document of the special session of the General Assembly on children entitled "A world fit for children" underlining that education shall be directed to the development of children's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential;
  - *Taking note* of growing importance of the macroeconomic impact of sport and its contribution to GDP, job opportunities, private-public partnership, tourism, investments in infrastructures, and to general social standard and welfare;
  - *Reassured* that physical education and sports projects may help to attain the Millennium Development Goals, especially with regard to themes such as health, education, social mobilisation, gender equality, environment and peace among people;
  - *Convinced* that sport can play a positive role in social inclusion and cohesion, intercultural dialogue, environmental understanding and the reintegration of children in post-conflict situations, for example child soldiers;
  - *Being aware* there are 60 million persons with disabilities living in developing countries and their interests and concerns of disabled persons in the developing world are often inadequately addressed;
  - *Considering* the 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, providing that children have the right to play;
  - *Having regard* to Resolution 58/5 adopted by the UN General Assembly on 17 November 2003 entitled "Sport as a means to promote education, health, development and peace";
  - *Having regard* to the UNESCO Convention against doping in Sport, adopted at the 33<sup>rd</sup> General Conference on the 19 September 2005 in Paris;
  - *Taking into consideration* the White Paper on Sport and the accompanying Action Plan Pierre de Coubertin, adopted by the European Commission on the 11 July 2007;
  - *Considering* the Annex IV to the Presidency Conclusions of the Nice European Council Meeting (7, 8 and 9 December 2000): Declaration on the specific characteristics of sport and its social function in Europe as well as Article 149 of the Treaty establishing the European Community as amended by the Lisbon Treaty, signed on 13 December 2007 in Lisbon and object to ratification by every member state;
1. **Express** their satisfaction at the fact that the Slovenian Presidency of the European Council called the first Informal Meeting of EU Ministers, responsible for sport with the National Olympic Committees, European Olympic Committees and the International Olympic Committee in order to initiate a dialogue on the future development of sport in the EU;

International Olympic Committee in order to initiate a dialogue on the future development of sport in the EU.

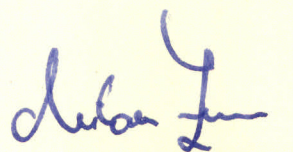
2. **Welcome** the 2008 European Year of Intercultural Dialogue where sport and physical education are excellent means to promote education, health, development and peace, especially for vulnerable groups in society, such as children and the disabled;
3. **Underline** the significant educational and social functions of sport and its importance not only in terms of physical development but also in terms of its capacity to promote social values, such as team spirit, fair competition, cooperation, tolerance and solidarity as well as the promotion and support of human rights through the Olympic values;
4. **Recognise** the social significance of sports organisations, being an integral part of civil society and bringing together people from different social, intellectual and cultural backgrounds, from grassroots level up to and including the elite;
5. **Emphasise** that sports projects can be a cross-cutting means of building capacity in education, health in general, peace-building and to combat social exclusion, violence, inequalities, racism and xenophobia;
6. **Recognise** that, with due regard for national and EU legislation and on the basis of a democratic and transparent method of operation, it is the task of sporting organisations to organise and promote their particular sports;
7. **Agree** that a dialogue between EU ministers for sport, the EU Commission and NOC presidents is essential and that it should address and consider the implications of the principles of autonomy and specificity of sport;
8. **Agree** that the meeting was fruitful and is contributing to the European Union democratic collaboration between public authorities and civil society in sports;
9. **Call on** all parties involved in sport at the European, international, national and local level to take on their responsibility and contribute to further debate on European sport issues at the appropriate level. A structured dialogue with "interested parties" should be one of the urgent priorities of both sides of sport, i.e., the governmental as well as the non governmental side, represented by the civil sport movement.



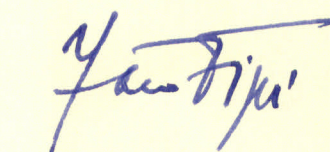
**Patrick Hickey**  
President of  
European Olympic  
Committees



**Janez Kocijancič, Ms.Sc.**  
President of  
The NOC of the Country  
holding the EU Presidency



**Milan ZVER, PhD**  
Minister  
of Education and  
Sport on behalf of the  
EU Presidency



**Jan FIGEL**  
European  
Commissioner  
Responsible for Sport