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**5<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE AU COMMISSION CONFERENCE  
OF MINISTERS OF SPORT (CAMS5)  
22-26 JULY 2013  
ABIDJAN, COTE D' IVOIRE**

**CAMS/MIN/3(V)**

**PANEL DISCUSSION PAPER ON THE CONFERENCE THEME:  
“HARNESSING THE POWER OF SPORT TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE BROADER  
GOVERNMENT DEVELOPMENT AGENDA”**

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1. The theme for 5<sup>TH</sup> Session of the AU Commission Conference of Ministers of Sport is ***“Harnessing the power of sport to contribute to the broader government development agenda”***. This theme has been developed out of the growing evidence and recognition that well-designed sport based initiatives that incorporate the best values of sport can contribute to broader government development agenda and sustainable development.
2. The contribution sport can make to the social and economic development of the African continent is multi-faceted. Sport is increasingly being recognized as a tool for supporting development efforts throughout the world. Sport is a key feature of the changing landscape of socio-economic development across the African Continent and globally. Since sport plays an important catalyst role in society, governments should not view it as a cost, but rather an investment. Sport is a low-cost investment with great impact on the future and provides a strategic intervention and opportunity to shape Africa’s future.
3. Sport for Development and Peace has experienced a rapid increase in profile within the global development discourse over the last decade, and while the African Union has been at the forefront to of these advocacy efforts, this profile has not translated substantively into broader policy frameworks or scalable programming.
4. International research indicates the potential of sport to contribute to development through direct and indirect impacts. The sports attributes range from personal development, development of social relations for individuals, health, education, economic, peace building, gender and youth, empowerment, communication, awareness raising etc.
5. Further, note has been taken that Ministries responsible for sport, agencies and organizations are passionate advocates for the power of sport as a tool for development and peace, but are too often a sealed group interacting only with sports organizations and Ministries, talking to itself. There is a need to identify, encourage and collaborate with non-sport sectors who have the potential to add value to sport for development, such as, UNAIDS, UNICEF, UN High Commission for Refugees, UN Habitat, UAM, etc.
6. Recognition of the potential for sport to contribute to wider development efforts exists across government and non-government actors both within and outside the sport fraternity. In view of the cross-cutting nature of sport, there is a need therefore to engage and encourage multi-sector approaches as the best strategy to maximize interplay between sports and development and encouragement of an intensification of linkages and collaboration with regional bodies including health, education, gender and

youth sectors. Sport should actively seek further engagement and integration with wider development sector. (For example, if increasing physical activity levels forms part of the national strategy to combat non-communicable diseases (NCDs), then the Health Ministries and stakeholders clearly have a role to play in the design, implementation and resourcing of initiatives).

7. In advancing the African Union development agenda on sport for development, the Commission has developed the Policy Framework for Sustainable Development of Sport in Africa (2008-2018) and the Architecture for Sport in Africa as a guide for African governments seeking to strengthen sport contribution to development and peace as recommended by the CAMS3 and CAMS4. The two policy documents present direction and guidance to actualize Africa's commitment to sport development and sport for development and to give due recognition to the central role that governments and non-government actors play in sports.

8. This paper attempts to examine the current positioning of sport within broader development efforts in the African Union and considers implications for African governments.

## THE WAY FORWARD

9. As the Conference theme clearly states "***Harnessing the power of sport to contribute to the broader government development agenda***", sport presents a unique, but under-utilized tool that can contribute to broader government development agenda.

### **There is therefore, a need for debate and clear articulation of the following:**

- How can we broaden the current dialogue to strengthen current initiatives and to encourage more stakeholders, other development actors and global partnerships to harness and integrate the tremendous power of sport into broader national and international development and peace strategies?
- How do we mobilize and encourage of Member States to integrate Sport for Development and Peace strategies and initiatives into their national strategies and policies?
- How do we actualize Africa's commitment to sport development and development through sport and to give due recognition to the central role that governments and non-government actors play in sports?
- How do we facilitate better coordination and harmonization between the different Sports stakeholders in Africa and International Sports Organizations?

- How do we encourage and facilitate sport as a commercial venture for income/revenue generation?
- How shall we ensure pooling together of human, financial and material resources for the benefit of African youth, improve delivery and productivity?
- The African Games has the potential to sustain the operations of the New Architecture for Sport Africa. How shall we collectively engage and ensure complementary nature of missions to maximize the potential of the Games?

10. While much work remains to be done, the information, insights and recommendations obtained through the studies and discussions of issues raised above are an invaluable resource and can be used to help make informed decisions regarding the future of sport in Africa.