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YOUTH CRIME PREVENTION
THROUGH SPORTS



ADVANCING
COLLABORATIVE
AND INNOVATIVE
JUSTICE FOR ALL

Integrating Sport into Youth Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Strategies

International community has long recognized that sport is an element contributing to development and peace. This is reflected in the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015 “Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”. The paragraph 37 of the resolution reads: “Sport is also an important enabler of sustainable development. We recognize the growing contribution of sport to the realization of development and peace in its promotion of tolerance and respect and the contributions it makes to the empowerment of women and of young people, individuals and communities as well as to health, education and social inclusion objectives.”

To put this into action, developments have emerged across the globe. This include the Kazan Action Plan, adopted on 15 July 2017 by UNESCO’s Sixth International Conference of Ministers and Senior Officials Responsible for Physical Education and Sport. The Action Plan aims to maximize the contribution of sport to sustainable development with a set of actions to improve health and well being for all (SDG 3), to make society safe and sustainable (SDG 11), to provide quality education and promote life-long learning (SDG 4), to build peaceful, equitable and inclusive society (SDG 10 and 16), to provide economic growth and productive employment (SDG 8), to advance gender equality and empower women and girls (SDG 5), to ensure sustainable consumption and to combat climate change and its impact (SDG 12), to build effective, accountable and inclusive institution at all level (SDG 16).

In terms of the SDG 16, particularly on promoting peaceful society and the rule of law, stakeholders have push forward the effort to use sport as a tool to prevent crime and violence. There emerge initiatives in Thailand as well as in other countries in using sports to build resilience and life skill, particularly for youth population at risk. At the global level, international stakeholders have started to initiate a number of projects reflecting the linkage between sport and crime prevention. This include, inter alia, an initiative on Youth Crime Prevention Through Sport of the United Nations Office on Drug and Crime or UNODC as part of its Global Programme for the integration of crime prevention and criminal justice into the wider agenda of the United Nations.

The CCPCJ proposes for this draft resolution to be further adopted by the United Nations General Assembly by 2019



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The United Nations' Resolution "Integrating Sports into Youth Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Strategies"

The United Nations Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ) in its twenty-eighth session of May 2019 unanimously adopted the resolution "Integrating Sports into Youth Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Strategies". Build on the on-going effort at domestics as well as internationally, this resolution was proposed by the Government of Thailand and co-sponsored by close to twenty countries. This resolution is aimed to provide tangible framework for policy maker and practitioners by underlining the role of sport to achieve sustainable development, justice and peace. In particular, the resolution recognizes the power of sports as an enabling factor, not only for the prevention of youth crime but also for the social reintegration of young offenders. By this way, this Resolution also embraces the promise laid down at the heart of SDGs that no children and youth is to be left behind.

By recognizing that sport can contribute to justice and peace, Member States are asked to advance the integration of sport into cross-cutting crime prevention and criminal justice strategies, policies and programmes. At the same time, Member States are encouraged to emphasize the use of sport as a vehicle to promote the rule of law, to realize gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, to ensure the participation of everyone without discrimination and to promote tolerance, mutual understanding and respect.

Awareness raising is one of crucial elements. The resolution invites Member States and all stakeholders to promote greater awareness and action to reduce crime and to contribute to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through sports-based initiatives. In particular, the UNODC is asked to work closely with International Olympic Committee - IOC and the Federation International de Football Association- FIFA to launch a global awareness-raising campaign benefiting from the 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Summer Games and the 2022 World Cup competition to promote sport and sports-based learning as part of strategies aimed at addressing the risk factors of youth crime and drug abuse.



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The resolution also presses upon the needs of disseminating and sharing information and good practices on the use of sport in connection with crime and violence prevention including the prevention of violence against women and children, as well as in the context of the social reintegration of offenders. To provide best support to policymakers and practitioners, the resolution requests the UNODC to convene an expert group meeting, in close coordination with Member States, related United Nations bodies as well as sport-based international organizations such as the IOC and FIFA to examine effective ways and means of integrating sport into youth crime prevention and criminal justice with a view to analysing and compiling a set of best practices that cater to various stakeholders and enhance system-wide coordination. This expert group meeting is scheduled to take place in Bangkok from 16-18 December 2019.



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Thailand's effort to promote youth crime prevention through sport-based and learning activities

The resolution “Integrating Sports into Youth Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice” was inspired by the work on the ground. In Thailand the Department of Juvenile Observatory and Protection of the Ministry of Justice works in partnership with several NGOs and the private sector to provide seamless support for juveniles to advance their skills, rebuild their lives, and successfully reintegrate into societies. Most notable is “Bounce Be Good” or the BBG Club under the initiative of Her Royal Highness Princess Bajrakitiyabha.

Her Royal Highness Princess Bajrakitiyabha is aware of the importance of development of cognitive and behavioural processes in children and adolescents, especially for the youth who had chosen the wrong path, or the youth who face risk factors for offending. Under Her Royal Highness Princess's initiation, the “BOUNCE BE GOOD” or BBG Sport Club was created in 2016. The main mission of the club is to bring out the best potentials and passions in sports of underprivileged children and youth who had once chosen the wrong path, as well as the children and youth who face risk factors for offending, also build on “sports professional career” for them.

BBG not only brings out the best potential and passion in sport of underprivileged children and youth who had chosen the wrong path, but also offers sports as the new dimension of crime prevention and youth empowerment. Since its creation, there have been more than 370 children and youth participated in the program. None of them has re-committed crime or fallen into the cycle of violence. Among the participants, two have achieved to become top-ranked tennis players of Thailand at the rank of 25th and 35th announced by the Table Tennis Association of Thailand in 2018.

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Now the BBG Sport Club has operated in five provinces of Thailand. The Club works closely with Department of Juvenile Observation and Protection (DJOP), Ministry of Justice (MOJ), and Department of Children and Youth (DCY) of the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security (MSDHS) by cooperating and working with psychiatrists and social service personnel of the Departments, to evaluate the results and create post-punishment development plans.

The BBG Club has now partnered with the Badminton Association of Thailand with a view to create the “BBG Young Badminton” Project provides badminton training to the children and youth in the juvenile vocational training centres.



the United Nations Expert Group Meeting on the “Integrating Sport into Youth Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Strategies.” 16-18 December 2019