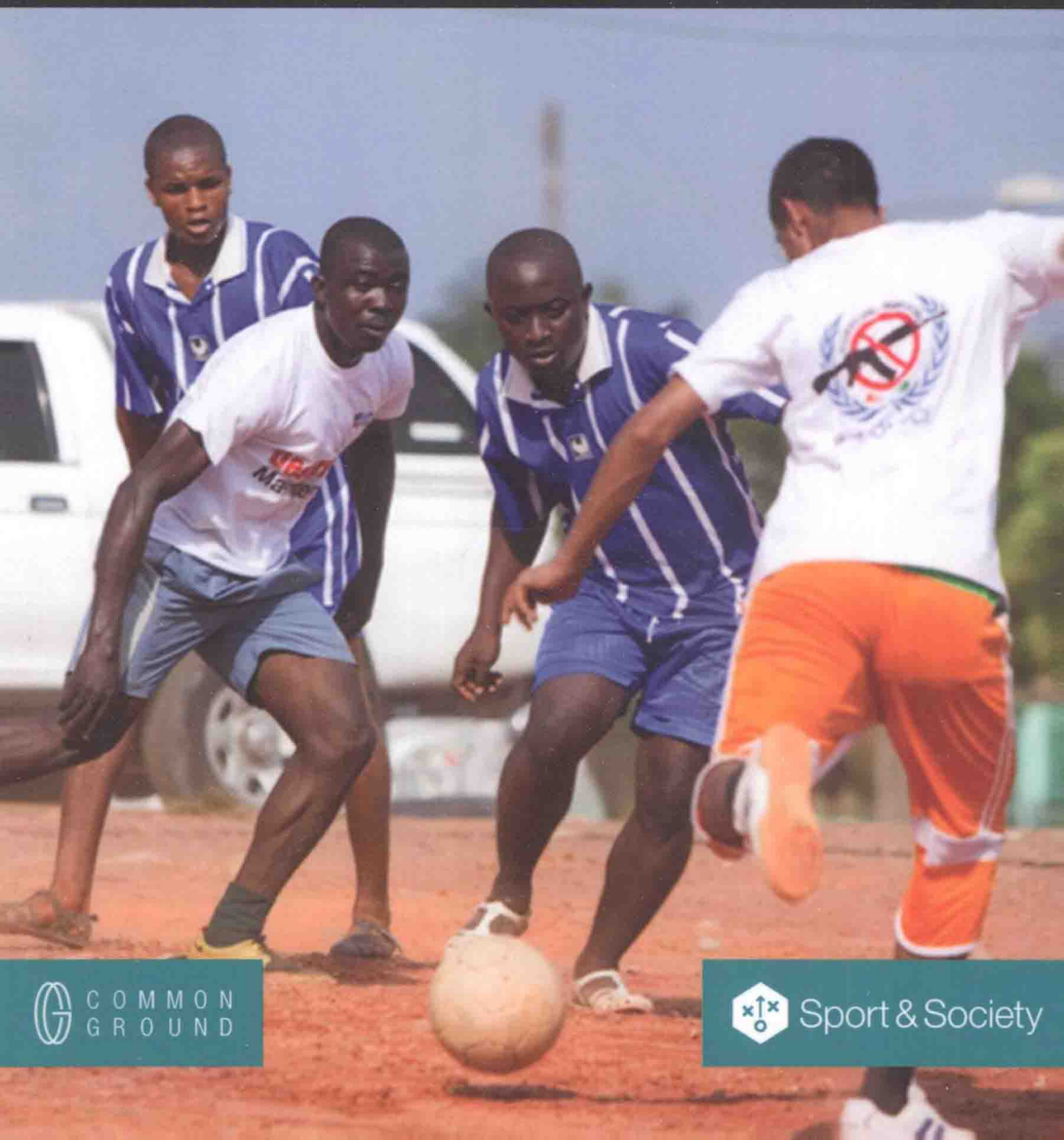


Sport, Peace & Development

KEITH GILBERT & WILL BENNETT



SPORT, PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT

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SPORT, PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT

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Foreword

Mr. Wilfried Lemke, Special Adviser to the United Nations Secretary-General on Sport for Development and Peace

Sport is indisputably one of the world's most popular leisure activities and it describes a fascinating phenomenon: people from all over the world play, attend, watch, listen to, talk about and experience sport at all levels of performance from amateur to elite. Sport is often described as a language that everyone in the world can understand and indeed sport can bring together and unite groups and communities. On an individual level, sport has the capacity to develop people's skills and faculties. In addition, sport has the power to attract large audiences and can play a major role in communicating positive awareness messages on key issues and assist in driving social change.

That is why the United Nations, governments, NGOs, development agencies, sport federations and social entrepreneurs have increasingly been harnessing the power of sport as a low-cost and high-impact tool in their humanitarian, development and peace-building efforts. The deliberate use of sport, physical activity and play as delivery mechanisms in social and humanitarian work has experienced a significant increase in scope and recognition over the past decade or so. In September 2000, the UN Millennium Summit brought together the largest gathering of world leaders in history. In the Summit's final declaration, signed by 189 countries, the international community committed to eight objectives, known as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). In 2003, the UN Inter-Agency Task Force on Sport for Development and Peace published their report entitled "Sport for Development and Peace: Towards Achieving the Millennium Development Goals." The report explicitly stated that "well-designed sport-based initiatives are practical and cost-effective tools to achieve objectives in development and peace" and that "sport is a powerful vehicle that should be increasingly considered by the United Nations as complementary to existing activities."

Today, sport can no longer be considered a luxury within any society but rather it is an important investment in the present and the future, particularly in developing countries. Not only are sport and play fundamental rights that need to be respected and promoted worldwide but sport is also a promising medium to use for social transformation and peace-building. The ever-growing number of projects, initiatives and organizations in the field of Sport for Development and Peace testifies to the usefulness and flexibility of the tool that is sport. At the same time much policy work on national and international levels as well as research has been undertaken. However, resources need to be available; monitoring and evaluation should be mainstreamed in all programming and project work; and research activities need to be further connected. I therefore consider publications such as the present one with its impressive volume of contributions from numerous

perspectives to be essential for the consolidation and increase of the knowledge and evidence base that should underpin all policy and field work.

Since I was appointed the UN Secretary-General's Special Adviser on Sport for Development and Peace in March 2008, I have been visiting a number of developing countries and communities, and witnessed first-hand how sport is used in development and peace projects to bridge divides, foster youth and promote education and development. I have been impressed by many good examples and I am convinced of the great potential of sport, which can be leveraged even more. Therefore, I continue to urge key stakeholders to promote, use and invest in sport for human development. On behalf of the United Nations, I would like to encourage all actors within the Sport for Development and Peace movement to keep researching and harnessing the unique power of sport with the goal of effectively using it to achieve sustainable international development and peace-building.

Preface

Sports diplomacy: A lever for sustainable peace

Joel Bouzou (President L'Organisation pour la Paix par le Sport)

Let's applaud the authors for their initiative of this book that approaches the vital question of the effective contribution that sport can make to development, social cohesion and peace in a methodological and rigorous way. Through relevant illustrations from the field, which give weight to the hypothesis, the diverse texts bring to the fore what for me has been a certainty for more than 30 years: the construction of peace through sport is not a mere "myth"; it covers a multiplicity of realities.

Sports diplomacy is one of the essential facets of any reflection on the use of sport to create peace, because its activation is an integral part of a holistic approach of the subject, and because it can give a lasting stimulus to effective field actions. On a political level, the establishment of peace above all comes from the improvement of relations between States. It is therefore legitimate to question which tools can be effective, and sport is undeniably one of them.

It is in fact difficult to assess the boundaries of sports diplomacy. Indeed, few academic works specifically focus on this concept and its empirical rendition. In reality, sports diplomacy covers multiple fields of application: strategies to develop a country's international policy, potential paths to foster reconciliation between hostile countries or communities, and the use of sport as a sounding board to criticize certain political situations. Although by no means a description of a defined methodology for sports diplomacy, these few words will seek to explain its multi-faceted character and to identify the modalities of action so that sports diplomacy can serve peace-promotion in more ways than simply symbolically.

A traditional approach to sports diplomacy is to analyse its contribution in terms of enhancing the influence and image of countries eager to be recognized on the international stage. Diplomacy is, amongst other things, the art of persuasion. A prerequisite for persuasion is recognition, visibility and prestige; sport can serve such a purpose. The use of sport as a tool for advocacy is one interpretation of the concept of "*soft power*" in international relations. It is the idea that nowadays the power of a State depends not only on its ability to impose itself internationally by coercion, but also by its ability to influence through its power of attraction, in many areas ranging from the economy to culture. Sport is one of these tools for "*soft power*". In this perspective, sports diplomacy is a vehicle for a State to make known or consolidate its reputation. This notably results in the increasing importance placed on hosting major international sports competitions, especially events such as the Olympic Games, the football World Cup or the Athletics World Championships. In this, sport plays a role in integration and recognition in the concert of nations.

Let's take the example of sports diplomacy in Qatar, which is one of the main pillars of Qatar's international strategy. In recent years, the country has imposed itself on the international stage through various means and its influence is growing in the region, where it is increasingly taking on the role of mediator, becoming a crossroads for communication, as well as a cultural interface. Sport is part of this influential initiative. In 2022 the country will host the football World Cup and attaches great strategic importance to this event which will bring unprecedented worldwide visibility. In addition to the opportunity to be prominent, Qatar also uses sports diplomacy to advance its aim to be a recognized meeting place for peace through sport and to take a pioneering role in this area. For this reason, in November 2011 Doha hosted an original sports meeting which revived the concept of ping-pong diplomacy. Players from India, Pakistan, North Korea, South Korea, Japan, America, China and France competed in doubles matches and diplomats from their respective countries were among the spectators. The crux of this event was organizing mixed doubles matches between teamed pairs of athletes from hostile countries, which demonstrated the power of a sports meeting to bring valuable rapprochement. Where intergovernmental forums sometimes have difficulty in getting representatives from antagonistic countries (South Korea and North Korea, India and Pakistan, etc) to sit round the same table, here sport allowed them to support the same team! This event also provided a place for diplomats to meet in a neutral environment. Exchanges between diplomats are usually characterized by fixed attitudes, a pre-established agenda, well-defined protocol, and possibly a few prejudices... In this case the meeting was apolitical, with no fixed agenda or communication protocol. Thus at its own level, the unifying banner of sport forges links and conveys meaning.

Sports diplomacy as a tool for reconciliation between antagonistic, competitive or rival countries is not new. We often evoke the iconic example of ping-pong diplomacy between China and the United States in the early seventies, which helped to reconcile the two countries - at the time a strategic priority for Washington. Lately much has been said about cricket diplomacy between India and Pakistan in 2005 and 2011, and football diplomacy between Turkey and Armenia in 2009. In both cases, sport brought together the Heads of Government of the competing teams, and thus the highest level of political representation, which gives a significant symbolic weight to these events.

However, we cannot hold false illusions as to the real political impact of these meetings. Sports diplomacy can certainly pass messages and can signify a wish for appeasement or reconciliation; but initiatives may be short-lived if they are not extended beyond the widely-publicized event itself and the official photo.

The political message must find ways to be applied at a local level in order to become inscribed into sustainable logic. In the India-Pakistan and Turkey-Armenia cases cited above, this could entail organizing "Friendship Games" in frontier regions to encourage grassroots communication between hostile communities. This concept of "Friendship Games" was ini-

tiated in 2007 by the Haitian Olympic Committee and the Dominican Republic Olympic Committee to bring together communities from both sides of the border. The model was then duplicated in 2010 in the Great Lakes region in Africa, between Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo where the event made a very strong local impact and greatly mobilized local populations. By creating an environment of trust between the communities, it also helped to boost cooperation between border authorities (logistics, security, transport, etc.). In this way, sports diplomacy acts at a local level and can then create a virtuous circle. Indeed, rallying populations around events such as these can inspire political authorities and encourage them to invest (themselves) in this momentum.

Another aspect to sports diplomacy is the role of the athletes. Are they ambassadors for their country or ambassadors for peace? They are in fact both. On the one hand, they help to enhance their country's reputation when they win international competitions and contribute to the sense of national cohesion that only sport is able to generate from great victories. On the other hand, they are ambassadors for peace because they are united by the universality of the rules of their sport and by the neutrality of the place where they compete. Athletes have considerable influence on youth, which goes even further as it can be exercised very directly on political decision makers. They are therefore influential spokespeople on multiple levels. Mobilized in development projects or peace initiatives, they can facilitate the transmission of messages and permanently mark mentalities around the values and contribution of sport.

Sports diplomacy at the service of sustainable peace inevitably involves concerted reflection from all actors involved. Transmitting best practices to implement programs based on sport, in the field and in the political arena, are paramount. Whatever the level of action considered, mediation is capital to communicate best practices. To do this, it is necessary for stakeholders involved in cooperation (Governments, sports movement, civil society, etc.) to have a neutral meeting place to encourage communication and reconciliation initiatives, identify intermediaries and think up joint projects. This kind of initiative for cooperation and the role of intermediary surely constitute another variant of sports diplomacy.

This book gives numerous examples of best practices of using sport for peace, development and social cohesion in the field, particularly to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. Sports diplomacy is another pillar, at a more "macro" level to leverage the power of sport as a tool. Thus, in parallel to operational cooperation in the field, priority must also be given to the continuation and strengthening of efforts to raise awareness among political elites and decision-makers about the enormous and largely untapped potential of utilizing sport for peace and reconciliation.

Acknowledgements

We believe that the development of this book provides a much needed addition to the practical and research literature surrounding the relationship between sport, peace and development. As this book is the first of its kind we hope that it is used as an initial baseline text to further stimulate research and practice into this association.

In particular we would like to take this opportunity to thank *Mr. Wilfried Lemke*, Special Adviser to the United Nations Secretary-General on Sport for Development and Peace for providing the 'Forward' to this book and *Mr. Joel Bouzou* who is the President and Founder of the organisation Peace and Sport for writing the 'Preface'. We are grateful for their insightful comments, support and time.

However, there is no doubt that without the support of the authors in this text that it would not have come to fruition. In this respect we would like to take this opportunity to thank each individual author as we know that many interrupted their own work schedules in order to be able to provide the chapters for us. We understand the current problematics placed on academics, practitioners and writers who labour in sport for development and peace programmes and in higher education across the world. Indeed, we realise that for some the development of a chapter for this book was a herculean effort as many pressures had been placed on them in their own separate work environments. Again we thank the authors for their efforts and hopefully we have set the seed for them to join us and be involved in writing for a further text in five years time to review the research on the sport, peace and development. Also our thanks go to the authors who we called upon later in the piece who happily assisted us with chapters which have strengthened and allowed us to broaden the scope of the text and give it a truly international flavour.

There have been others who have kindly spent time and effort supporting the development of this book. One such person is Kathryn Otte the enthusiastic editor from Common Ground Publishing who has been supportive and with us every step of the long and often arduous process towards maturity of this text. Since Kathryn's retirement we have been supported admirably by Stephanie Turza and as such thank her for her insightful ideas and suggestions.

Our thanks go to our respective organisations – the University of East London and Right to Play – and the individuals, to many to mention within them who have provided library, statistical and financial research support for the fine tuning of the book. Without this constant backup and support from our own organisations research work of this kind would not be possible. We thank the academic staff and also the many postgraduate students and the many practitioners who have influenced our thinking and caused us to redirect our thoughts and ideas.

Finally, it would be remiss of us not to thank our respective partners Dr. Yuen Ching Ho and Grace Boyle who provided us with moral, psychological and academic support and advice through the development of this book.

Keith Gilbert & Will Bennett [8th June 2012]

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Chapter 1

Restructuring Lives through Sport

Keith Gilbert & Will Bennett

Introduction

This book has been constructed in order to plug a perceived fissure in the literature regarding issues related specifically to the continually evolving and emerging movement of 'sport, peace and development' in university and fieldwork settings around the world. As such we have 'taken on board' the concepts of *theory* and *practice* as they correlate to the excellent work which is currently being produced in various high impact zones¹. In the growth of this book we were cognizant of the fact that these high impact zones of conflict, war, natural disaster and tension are global, and ever changing in time and place. Furthermore that each case of humanitarian support, utilizing the medium of sport, needs to be taken in isolation and dealt with systematically with strong philosophical and conceptual understandings and exemplary monitoring and evaluation practices. We hasten to add here that the quality and quantity of these programs, of course, are dependent on and relate to the amount of aid and the support provided by the established and rapidly developing new world orders. Never-the-less, from the outset we argue that the emerging areas of sport, peace and development as research

1. Impact zones in the context of world-wide areas of greatest need for development programs.

discipline and as practical phenomenon are relatively new and yet in such a short time period of ten or twelve years have impacted positively on many people's lives in many countries across the world. Indeed this world-wide network of fragmented and disparate organisations has expanded quickly into a vast, multi-layered, politically sensitive web of support for people living in different countries and diverse cultures. The 'Sport for Peace and Development International Working Group'² argued that:

'Sport and physical activity are rapidly gaining recognition as simple, low-cost, and effective means of achieving development goals. Over the past decade, agencies, international sport federations, international and national non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and national governments have been using sport as a tool for development and peace'. (2007 p. 3)

We agree with this statement and recognise that in the university sector there have recently been a plethora of excellent journal articles and books which have attempted to deal with the paradigms relating to 'sport, peace and development' (Hoglund & Sundberg, 2008; Sugden, 2008; Coalter, 2007; Donnelly, 2010; Giulianotti, 2011; Giulianotti & Armstrong, 2011; Darnell, 2012) and the role of sport as a solution or panacea to huge problems of humanitarian concern. Indeed, we categorically state, that unlike some other suppositions, that sport cannot be the sole change agent or the device which changes the entire world for the better. Sport is not a panacea and does not exist purely in some utopian society and this is supported by the comments of the UNOSDP (United Nations Office for Sport, Development and Peace) who state that, 'Sport is not a cure-all for development problems. As a cultural phenomenon, it is a mirror of society and is just as complex and contradictory'³ and similarly by the Swiss Agency for Development and Co-operation in their 1985 report on 'Sport for Peace and Development which comments that: 'As great as its potential may be, sport is not a cure-all for all development problems. As a cultural phenomenon, it reflects society in all its complexities and contradictions' (p.16). However, sport when combined with other development ideas does contribute greatly to the well-being of individuals in disadvantaged societies.

With these previous thoughts in mind we changed the wording of this book from the recognised 'sport, development and peace' to 'sport, peace and development'. We argued this point through carefully and feel that development cannot truly occur unless there are certain aspects or types of peace present even in limited areas after conflict, war, or disaster has struck the particular community. This is supported by the comments of Galtung (1998) when he argues that peace is about the negation of different forms of violence and the subsequent attempts through development for societ-

2. Please see (<http://www.un.org/wcm/content/site/sport/home/unplayers/memberstates/pid/6229>) for more information.

3. Please refer to the UNOSDP website <http://www.un.org/wcm/content/site/sport/> for further information and details regarding the United Nations involvement and perspectives on Sport, Development and Peace.